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COIN TOSS: REESTABLISHING A RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RHETORIC AND ATHLETICS IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

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COIN TOSS: REESTABLISHING A RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RHETORIC AND ATHLETICS IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

In the following pages, I consider the troublesome relationship between rhetoric and athletics in American higher education and how this relationship plays out in the first-year composition classroom. Specifically focused on Division I universities and the high-profile and high-revenue sports of football and men's basketball, I move from illustrating how athletics was instrumental to the rise of rhetoric during fifth and fourth century BCE Greece, to theories of multimodality in the contemporary first-year composition classroom. Throughout, my emphasis is on charting how the field of composition and rhetoric has exacerbated this troublesome relationship but is well-positioned to advocate on behalf of student-athletes and (re)discover fruitful connections between athletics and rhetoric.

Introduction

On Friday, November 11 2011, the Michigan State University Spartans' men's basketball team took on the Tar Heels of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The game was played on the deck of the U.S.S. Carl Vinson, a 95,000 ton Nimitz-class aircraft carrier in Coronado, California. With President Obama and basketball Hall of Famers Magic Johnson and James Worthy in attendance, the match-up between these perennial powerhouses ushered in the 2011-2012 season of college basketball. The Spartans fell to the highly talented Tar Heel team and, just four days later, the same Michigan State squad faced off against the Duke University Blue Devils in New York City's Madison Square Garden—2,700 miles away. Again, the Spartans lost, but the outcome of these match-ups is tangential to the fact that a college basketball team, in the span of four days, traveled from East Lansing, Michigan, to California, back to East Lansing and then onto New York City. All the while the student-athletes practiced (probably) and studied (hopefully). And all this occurred during the final weeks of the fall academic semester.

The Oklahoma Sooners' men's basketball team has a similar account. Competing against St. Louis University in Anaheim, California—the site of an early season tournament—the Sooners found themselves on the wrong end of an 83-63 score. Played on Sunday, November 27, the game did not end until around 11 pm CT. Monday morning at 8 am, the basketball players were reporting on campus in Norman, Oklahoma for mandatory tutoring sessions.[1] One player mentioned to me that the team arrived in Oklahoma at 4 am that morning. Again, all this travel occurred during one of the more challenging times in the academic calendar.

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[1] One position I hold at the University of Oklahoma is Program Development Coordinator in Athletic Academic Services. As such, I have the opportunity to work closely with student-athletes during their

This push toward sports at the expense of studies is a recent and unsettling development. Describing his experience as a student at Notre Dame in the late 1960s, Allen L. Sack writes, "after we won the national championship in 1966, the Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, then president of Notre Dame, refused to let the team play in a postseason bowl game, because that would make it difficult for us to prepare for final exams—an inconceivable stance for a president of a Division I institution to take today" (para. 2). Sacks is correct; a president or chancellor would probably not make the same decision today. Athletics, not academics, have heavily influenced a university's public perception; individuals love or hate schools, not based on academic merits, but sports teams.[2] Academics have suffered and faculty groups, the vanguards of a university, are just now beginning to offer productive reform-minded proposals, which place greater emphasis on the "student" part of "student-athlete."

*

In American higher education, a variety of factors have continued to widen the gap between athletics and academics. For one, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) academic compliance mandates—stipulating how and when an individual may offer a student-athlete academic assistance—are vaguely constructed bylaws yet call for harsh enough penalties to cripple a school if an individual or group of individuals were to break one. Additionally, the pressure to build a winning, revenue-generating program

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mandatory tutoring sessions. At OU, all student-athletes enrolled in first-year composition courses are required to have tutoring sessions for two hour a week.

[2] For a more in-depth discussion of individuals identifying with a university or college through sports, see pp. 174-184 in J. Douglas Toma's *Football U.: Spectator Sports in the Life of the American University*.

causes a school to consider a student-athlete’s athletic potential more important than any academic weaknesses, which, in turn, result in matriculating student-athletes not capable of surviving a university’s academic rigor. Increased demands on student-athletes’ time—charity appearances, practice schedules, traveling for road games—eat into important time that could be directed toward study. Thus in American higher education, athletics and academics struggle to coexist, often hindering student-athletes’ learning and staining a school’s academic reputation.

Fields such as education and sociology have spoken on this topic often and with passion. Bearing eye-catching titles about the scandal-riddled endeavor that is college sports (e.g., *Beer and Circus, Varsity Green: A Behind the Scenes Look at Culture and Corruption in College Athletics, Unpaid Professionals, College Sports, Inc.*), these texts generally depict intercollegiate athletics as a sinful enterprise, anathema to the academic mission of higher education. However, the field of composition and rhetoric, a field committed to teaching, advocacy of under-prepared or marginalized groups, and labor issues, has been relatively mute regarding college sports and the academic/athletic rift. Resultant of composition and rhetoric’s muted response and through espousing specific rhetorics in the classroom that hinder the learning processes of student-athletes and erect unnecessary barriers between the classroom and the athletic field, this dissertation argues that the gap between athletics and academics grows larger. While my stance may seem pessimistic, a large portion of this dissertation argues our field is well-positioned to be positive advocates for academic reform and pioneers in remarrying athletics and academics.

*

The uneasy relationship between school and sport is reaching a tipping point; composition and rhetoric must react. A December 2011 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* screamed the following headline across the front page: "What the Hell Has Happened to College Sports? And What Should We Do About It?" While the *Chronicle* is not hesitant to promulgate a rhetoric of excess through shocking headlines or images on their covers (a November 2011 issue displayed the unsettling photo of a UC-Davis campus policeman pepper-spraying peacefully protesting students in the face), the headline decried the growing chasm between athletics and academics, the increase of scandals in college athletic programs, and the general unrest among academics regarding the place of college sports on campuses of higher education.

Certainly the *Chronicle* has spoken previously on the growing force that is intercollegiate athletics. However, the majority of their pieces—save for the commentaries not typically written by *Chronicle* staff but by academics—focus on the financial aspects of athletic programs. In 2009, the *Chronicle* published two articles on the world of student-athletes and athletic departments. In September 2009, Libby Sander and Brad Wolverton's article "Debt Loads Weigh Heavily on Athletic Programs" focused on the financial burden imposed on athletic programs through the financing of mammoth stadiums—Oklahoma State recently completed a $288 million renovation, while the University of Minnesota wrapped up the construction of a new football stadium costing $289 million. Sander and Wolverton write that while the NCAA and the National Association of College and University Business Officers have collected some data on the debt major athletic programs are accruing, the fear of the NCAA and academia is that athletic programs are spiraling deeper into debt with the burden of payment ultimately falling on the shoulders of the college, not the athletic department. Just two months later, the *Chronicle* published an article focused on the financial strain on Stanford University's athletic department. Sander reports that despite an operating budget of around $75 million, Stanford is looking at the possibility of cutting athletic programs. This possibility is all the more unsettling for Stanford athletics which, as the alma mater of sport greats such as Tiger Woods, John Elway, and John McEnroe and recipient of 116 national championships, has long marketed itself as the "Home of Champions."

Yet this December issue of the *Chronicle,* largely ignoring financial concerns regarding athletic programs, is different; it speaks to deeper, more pressing challenges: the mercurial relationship between school and sport, which causes a divide that is at once rhetorical and material. With their bold headline, with close to one-fourth of the issue devoted to the topic, and with commentary by writers such as Frank Deford, basketball Hall of Famer Oscar Robertson, and the late president emeritus of the University of North Carolina system William C. Friday, the December 2011 issue signals a pivotal shift in the relationship between athletics and academics. Academics are not only concerned with pointing out what many perceive to be a gross level of revenue and expenditures in times of budget-belt tightening for academic departments. Instead, the academic community and others are positioning athletics as a terminally ill enterprise eroding the academic integrity of higher education as evidenced by myriad recent incidents: a former assistant football coach at Penn State accused of sexual assault, the FBI probing a point-shaving scandal at Auburn University, an athletic academic staff member writing papers for members of the North Carolina men's football team, a freshman basketball player at the University of Oklahoma taking money from a financial advisor, several TCU football players arrested in a police sting for drug possession with intent to distribute, and the list goes on and on. All the incidents have taken place since 2010 and all occurred at "big-time" programs, schools with a tradition of success on the athletic field.

Yet the tolling of the drums of disgust and reform has been sounded before. Groups such as the Knight Commission, the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics, and the Drake Group, have offered concrete proposals for academic reform in athletics. Additionally, a quick search of texts devoted to charting the history of American colleges and universities reveals passages, or in the case of Frederick Rudolph's *The American College and University: A History,* a whole chapter, devoted to the rise of intercollegiate athletics and the schism between practitioners of academics and practitioners of athletics. But the constant theme since the mid-nineteenth century is these drum beats fail to marshal substantial change. As athletic departments and programs grew, slowly overshadowing academics, rhetoric and composition was notably silent, focusing instead on freshman composition courses, entrance exams, and writing handbooks. This silence, I suggest, is not traditionally representative of our field. Typically, we have concerned ourselves with pressing issues inside *and* outside of our writing classroom, especially those that impact the daily events on our campuses. However, athletics grew alongside and without the research voice of composition and rhetoric resulting in the challenging place in which we now find ourselves. Below, I briefly work through the history of college sports in relation to higher education with specific focus. Additionally, I point to key moments in English studies which run parallel to key moments in college sports.[3] More unsettling is that the history of college sports is peppered with opportunities which should have tipped English studies off that college sports were growing and running counter to the academic goals of higher education.

The Rise of College Sports and the Disinterest of Faculty

In their infancy, college sports were student-run extracurricular endeavors (*A History* 178). Students organized the first football game between Rutgers and Princeton in 1869; students at Michigan in 1881 coordinated road games in northeast and squared off against Harvard, Princeton and Yale in the span of a week; in 1883, five years before Yale hired an official head coach and 18 years before Princeton did, New York City was caught up in the thrill of a Thanksgiving match-up between Yale and Princeton.[4] The fervor of collegiate sports engulfed the eastern half of the U.S., and in their earliest days sports were free from the shackles of presidents, administrators, and boosters. Interestingly, the same year as the Princeton Yale match-up, the Modern Language Association (MLA) formed with the "primary interest . . . in demonstrating that the study of English and modern literatures was as intellectually legitimate and pedagogically beneficial as studying Latin and Greek" (Stewart 734). And just two years later at Harvard, Adams Sherman Hill, the chair of the English department, managed to "get sophomore rhetoric moved to the freshman year and dubbed it English A" (Russell 53), which later in 1900 become the only required course at the college (Russell 50) and the model for writing instruction across the U.S. (Russell 50; Kitzhaber 33). As athletics slowly grew in size and scope, so did English studies, a subset of which is composition and rhetoric. Unfortunately the two grew on divergent paths: one concerned with the logistical challenge of a lengthy road trip; the other concerned with carving out academic turf. The two ignored each other's development, facilitating a rhetorical and material divide still impacting all stakeholders of American higher education.

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[3] Of course, it would be ahistorical to refer to the field of composition and rhetoric during this period. However, the concerns which currently animate composition and rhetoric—for example, the teaching and theorizing of writing, exploring the production of written and spoken texts—were a feature of the larger and more amorphous field of English studies. Thus when I refer to "our field" later in the introduction, I am envisioning the field of English studies, a discipline out of which composition and rhetoric grew.

[4] Except for three years, Yale and Princeton met for an annual football game in New York City from 1880-1896. Woodrow Wilson, a coach and enthusiast of football, was an upperclassmen at Princeton when the New Jersey campus hosted the rivalry game for the second time in 1898. See interchapter #3 for a more detailed history of Wilson interest in academics and athletics.

Seven years after the Yale-Princeton match-up, two important decades began in the history of American higher education. John R. Thelian points to the period between 1890 and 1910 as the time when the "American public became fascinated with undergraduate collegiate life" (*A History* 157).[5] Calling this period the "Gothic Age of the American College," Thelian describes how "the prototypical athletic association underwent a transformation [through a] professionalization of the staff, namely the hiring of an athletic director and coaching staff" (*A History* 178). The move toward professionalization had dramatically altered the landscape of higher education.[6] In his chapter titled "The Rise of Football," Rudolph contends,

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[5] Princeton, one of the oldest football programs in the nation, had a player-coach (titled "captain") until 1901, the year prior to Woodrow Wilson assuming the presidency of the school. One of the more humorous side-notes regarding Princeton's football captaincy is that in 1889 and 1890, the captain was Edgar Allan Poe, grandnephew of the poet. Winthrop M. Daniels relays seeing professor at the time Woodrow Wilson "come striding out upon the field, take his place behind the eleven with Captain Poe, and proceed to whip the team up and down the field" (qtd. in Baker 14). Not only is the anecdote humorous, but Daniels illustrates the seriousness with which Wilson approached football.

[6] In addition to the move toward professionalization, these two decades witnessed a change in the personality of the students who played football. As Henry Wilkinson Bragdon illustrates, photographs of Princeton football players of the 1870s reveal "well groomed and neatly dressed" (211) men. Photos of the 1890's players, however, show men with "unruly mops [of hair] . . . sloppy uniforms, and sneer[ing]

> Therefore, when the apparatus of athletics grew too large and complex for student management; when the expenditure of much time and much money was required in the recruiting, coaching, feeding, and care of athletic heroes; when, indeed, all these things demanded a more efficient and perhaps more subtle touch, the alumni jumped to the opportunity which student ineffectiveness and faculty indifference gave them. (382-83)

Out of the hands of the students and faculty uninterested in the extracurricular activities of their students, athletics grew in size and scope, aiding in the marketing, branding, and financial bolstering of a university. Universities adopted colors proudly worn by supporters; mascots, some of which were fear-inducing (the Lions of Columbia; the Wolverines of Michigan), and some laugh-inducing (the Purple Cow of Williams College; the Sagehen of Pomona College), were enlisted to personify the school.[7] Fans displayed the orange and black of Princeton and the blue and white of Yale during the annual Yale-Princeton football game played in New York on Thanksgiving Day. The writer of a December 1893 *New York Times* article, estimated the crowd that year to be 23,000 (larger than the typical crowd at today's NBA games) ("The Orange"); people also came for a "parade of carriages packed with college boys and alumni [that] moved up Fifth Avenue past windows and store fronts draped with Yale blue and the Princeton orange and black" (Bragdon 211).

Powerful individuals reigned over the newly transformed college sports enterprise. Thelian describes the successful efforts by Walter Camp, Yale head coach

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at the cameraman" (211). Moreover, when Princeton beat Yale in 1893, Frank Presbery reported players returned to the locker room and stood "naked and covered with mud and blood and perspiration and singing the doxology from beginning to end" (qtd. in Bragdon 212).

[7] See Thelian's *A History* pages 159-160, for a more detailed account of the rise of mascots and pageantry in collegiate athletics.

from 1888 to 1892, to divert monies from smaller revenue sports, such as swimming and gymnastics, to football. Through these clever, some could say devious, tactics Camp deployed an "entrepreneurial strategy that allowed a coach and athletics director to gain leverage over both student groups and academic officials" (*A History* 179).[8] At the University of Chicago, Amos Alonzo Stagg, a disciple of Camp's, became the athletic director in 1892. Through equally shrewd tactics, Stagg procured himself a tenured faculty position, an administrative appointment as athletics director as well as football coach, a departmental budget exempted from customary internal review, and a direct line of reporting to the president (*A History* 179). On a more innocuous level, in 1893 Harvard created a salaried graduate manager of athletics who was put in charge of the entire athletic program, leading Rudolph to assert that "this widely copied university office institutionalized alumni voice in athletic affairs and added an important new dimension, and problem, to college and university administration" (384).

In English studies, the MLA was busy creating and then suddenly in 1903 eliminating the Pedagogical Section of the organization; forming, in 1887, the Phonetic Section; emphasizing its commitment to the "advancement of the philological study of modern life and culture" (qtd. in Stewart 737). Closer to the English studies' classroom, the Board of Overseers of Harvard College charged a committee to study the "composition and rhetoric problem" (Kitzhaber 44) at Harvard. According to Kitzhaber, the committee's findings, released in three reports (1892, 1895, and 1897), can be easily summarized: “since the fault lay with the lower schools, let Harvard raise its entrance requirements and make the schools mend their ways” (45, 46). Less than ten years following the initial committee’s report, freshman composition at Harvard became the only required course and “became the model for required freshman-composition courses around the country” (Russell 50). Again, as Stagg consolidated university power, the field of composition and rhetoric turned its eyes elsewhere.

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[8] Camp is an engaging figure to study. Often described as the "Father of American Football" (Smith 63), Camp was also a prolific writer, penning articles for periodicals such as *Harper's Weekly,* as well as publishing a book of tactics for the card game bridge titled *Condensed Auction for the Busy Man.* For additional reading on Stagg, see Robin Lester's *Stagg's University: The Rise, Decline, and Fall of Big-Time Football at Chicago.* Not only does Lester focus on how Stagg consolidated power at an academically prestigious football, he charts how football was eventually abolished at Chicago in the 1930s.

Shady decisions by those putatively invested in facilitating an environment conducive to the academic mission of a university led President Charles Eliot of Harvard in 1892 to declare the “foolish and pernicious expenditures on sports” to be “repulsive” (qtd. in Lucas 178). Eliot went so far as to call for the banishment of football at Harvard, perhaps more for the sheer brutality of the sport than its impact on academics.[9] While other colleges, Cornell for example, looked to reign in college sports by “insist[ing] that games be played on college grounds and that players be bona fide students in good standing” (Bragdon 212), for Eliot banishment was needed; the idea of athletics regulating itself was not an option: “It is childish,” he determined, “to suppose that athletic authorities which have permitted football to become a brutal, cheating, demoralizing game can be trusted to reform it” (qtd. in Smith 206).[10]

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[9] The student run newspaper the *Wesleyan Argus* suggested Wesleyan University abandon football in 1888, but it appears the suggestion was influenced by the poor record of the team and not out of fear of player’s safety or the possibility of athletics trespassing on academic turf. It was during this year that Woodrow Wilson, then a faculty member at Wesleyan, is said to have given an inspirational “blackboard talk” (Bragdon 172) before the Princeton-Wesleyan game, a game that Wilson would have had immense interest in as a Princeton alum. During this talk, Wilson stressed “speed in running off plays” (Bragdon 172) over a century before a hurry-up style of offense would characterize the offensive attack of many college football teams. Unfortunately, Wesleyan would go on to lose to Princeton 44-0

[10] Wilson, then a faculty member at Princeton, sided with Cornell believing college sports, specifically football, was instrumental in developing men’s character (Bragdon 212). At the 1894 Contemporary Club in Philadelphia, Wilson stressed that football encouraged two vital themes: “the role of the gentleman in society and the importance of leadership” (Bragdon 212), arguments proponents of football still made today.

However, football stayed.[11] Eliot could not bolster enough support even though President Harry Garfield of Williams College, echoing Eliot's concerns, said in 1908, "Here [at Williams College] . . . there is grave danger of departure from the essential idea of a college as distinguished from an institute of physical culture" (qtd. in Lucas 178). Many university presidents were sounding warning bells regarding athletics, while back at the department of English, our field was concerned with forming professional organizations such as the MLA and the NCTE, missing the opportunity to advocate on behalf of the academic mission of our universities and colleges. The parallel growth of athletics and English studies, specifically composition, was most clearly seen at Harvard, which claimed four football national championships between 1890-1910 (the two decades Thelin argues are quite pivotal in college sports' history), witnessed a heated debate regarding the safety of football, and was the only English departments to "establish their national reputation for work in writing . . . between 1875-1900" (Brereton 98). Despite the growth of English studies and the rise in required first-year writing courses, many Americans now believed a university's mission was to field a football team (Rudolph 387); pastors cut sermons short on Sunday to make time for the "big-game" (Lucas 177). As Woodrow Wilson noted, while president of Princeton, "Princeton is noted in this wide world for three things:

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[11] One reason for Eliot losing the battle against football at Harvard was that he ran square into the boisterous then-President Theodore Roosevelt, a proponent of the game. While Roosevelt most certainly admired the jingoistic tendencies of the game, he pushed hard for the game to be "played on a thoroughly clean basis" (qtd. in Brands 553), especially after his son Ted sustained an injury playing the game as an undergraduate at Harvard. While other leading voices in the nation, including Eliot, became pushing for abolishing the game because "its violence could not be curbed" (Dalton 290), Roosevelt invited representatives from Harvard, Yale, and Princeton to the White House in hopes of "minim[izing] the danger" without making the game "too ladylike" (qtd. in Dalton 290). This meeting was the first step toward the eventual formation of the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (later renamed the National Collegiate Athletic Association). For more information regarding Roosevelt's role in the formation of the NCAA, see John J. Miller's *The Big Scrum: How Teddy Roosevelt Saved Football*.

football, baseball, and collegiate instruction" (qtd. in Zimbalist 7). While Wilson was an ardent academic, one gets the sense that the order of these three things is intentional: football first, teaching third.

In 1928, while others were constructing basic writing classes at Harvard and Yale and forming English clinics, Yale's athletic association reported a gross revenue of $1,119,000 with a net profit of $384,500 (Rudolph 389).[12] The following year, one of the first comprehensive accounts of intercollegiate athletics was compiled: the 1929 Carnegie Foundation Report. Specifically titled *American College Athletics* and prepared by Howard J. Savage, the report was a detailed 347 page account, becoming "the canon . . . for reform proposals and policy analyses about the place of intercollegiate sports in American colleges and universities" (*Games* 13). Here is one of the largest missed opportunities for English studies to contribute to exposing gross athletic expenditure and increased levels of violence in intercollegiate athletics. Instead of being written by a member of the academic community, the report was compiled, composed, and released with Savage, a staff member for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (CFAT), as the lead author. The report focused largely on players' safety, hygiene, and conduct and rules on the playing field with only "some attention…paid to the bearings of college athletics upon the principles and practice of education" (3). Too concerned with crafting documents which reported on the state of *our* playing field, university staff and faculty members left the first comprehensive report on the state of intercollegiate athletics to a staff member at CFAT. While the report garnered widespread media attention (headlines in the *New York Times* shouted about the scandals that riddled college sports), the focus was not on ensuring that athletics would always fall under the academic purview of a university, instead the focus was on, among other things, the size of a playing field.

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[12] While the financial numbers reported by Yale above are a far cry from the record high $112.9 million reported athletic expenditures at the University of Texas at Austin in 2009 (beating out the number two school, The Ohio State University, by close to $10 million [Clotfeller 18]), these numbers speak to the dramatic growth of football and, as a result, collegiate athletics

An additional missed opportunity for composition and rhetoric to have affected the state of intercollegiate athletics was during 1890-1910, the period in which Thelian argues were instrumental in the establishment of intercollegiate athletics. According to John C. Brereton's edited collection *The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College, 1875-1925,* here is a sampling of what garnered the attention of our field during the nascent years of college athletics; Charles Francis Adams, Edwin Lawrence Godkin and Josiah Quincy's *Report of the Committee on Composition and Rhetoric* (1892); Barrett Wendell's "English at Harvard University" (1895); William Edward Mead's "Report of the Pedagogical Section: The Undergraduate Study of English Composition" (1902); and Edwin Campbell Woolley's *Handbook of Composition* (1907). Certainly one could look at these titles and suggest the work during these two decades is exactly what the field of composition and rhetoric should be concerned with: reporting and researching on writing in the classroom. And I cannot disagree that a central function of our field is just that. However, such a myopic view of what our field is capable of, or even what our field should be concerned with, is damaging. I am not suggesting that this work is not a valuable contribution to our field. What I am suggesting is that in addition to constructing college-level entrance exams at Harvard, we could have also been advocating for writing on behalf of the safety of students playing college sports since they were the very students who graced our writing classrooms. I am in agreement with Gwendolyn Pough when she passionately confesses in her 2011 Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) Chair's Address that she is "a little weary of our own profession…digging in our heels and demanding that everything have something to do with writing or the first-year writing course as if that is the only thing we do" (305-306). When reading the histories of the academy, I get the sense that our field was indeed putting our heels into the ground, refusing to face the swelling athletic departments. It would have behooved us to have set aside our 1929 Warner Taylor authored *A National Survey of Conditions in Freshman English* and aided in the construction of the Carnegie Foundation Report, released the same year and announcing the need for more concrete reform of athletics. In addition to surveying the conditions of required writing classes, we would have done well to survey the conditions of the growing athletic departments, departments that would impact more than the freshman writing classroom and have lasting implications on the mission and visions of higher education in America. Again, not to discount Taylor's survey as less important than advocating for student-athletes or assisting in the creation of a document outlining athletic areas in need of reform, but our field missed positively influencing a pivotal moment in the creation of the modern athletic department. The students at Harvard, a school that started the required first-year writing course and whose president decried the brutality of football, were enrolled in the required writing classes still in existence today, and we missed a chance to advocate for their safety, for a chance to ensure that academics would always be at the fore of campus life, and to mine the sorts of reading and writing undertaken in athletics and see what these literate practices and teach us, something I work through in chapter 3.

The history of American higher education with an eye toward the rise of athletics is peppered with incidents which should have tipped-off our field that something was amiss with college sports: the tenured faculty position and departmental budget exempt from internal review given to head football coach and athletic director Stagg in the early 1890s; the increased number of injuries to students, students most assuredly taking our required writing courses, caused by playing unregulated sports; high net profit posted by the Yale athletic association in 1928; and the muckraker 1929 Carnegie Foundation Report. But our eyes and ears were turned elsewhere.

While our field has written careful histories of our field, even going so far as to write important micro-histories which take into account the literacy practices of marginalized groups, we have left the history of athletics in American higher education to the fields of education and sociology, falsely believing that what occurs on the athletic field does not affect the writing classroom. Forgetting the reciprocal material and rhetorical relationship between athletics and academics in fifth and fourth century Greece, a period from which our current rhetorical schemata were born, we write histories which forget the theoretical benefit of sketching a rhetorically based history describing the synergies between athletics and academics. But more dangerously, while concerned with legitimizing the work we do, with constructing college entrance writing exams, with forming professional organizations and surveying required freshman composition classes, we have ignored the growing tensions between athletics and academics.

Today, despite record-setting budgets and revenue and despite the scandals across the landscape of higher education as a result of college sports, we still largely ignore athletics. At the 2012 CCCC, less than ten months after the December *Chronicle* issue re-sounded the drum of reform, the President of the NCAA, Dr. Mark Emmert, spoke on academic reforms legislation to an audience of twenty or so at conference attended by upwards of 3,000 scholars/practitioners of rhetoric and writing. A special interest group titled "Rhetoric, Sport and Student-Athlete," which also met at the 2012 CCCC, drew three attendees. Neither of the co-chairs, the ones who submitted the proposal for the special interest group, showed. The drums were sounded; composition and rhetoric did not listen.

Helpfully, a small number of scholars have undertaken the important work of intertwining athletics and academics and invited our field to explore finally, for one of the few times since Cicero and Quintilian wove metaphors of athleticism and competition into their work, the material and rhetorical relationship between athletics and academics.

Rhetoric's Concern with Merging Athletics and Academics

For Debra Hawhee, fifth and fourth century BCE Greece, typically seen as a primary foundation of the field of composition and rhetoric, is a time in which athletics and academics peacefully coexisted, and, as a result, the two developed a reciprocal relationship: the development of rhetoric facilitated the development and crafting of athletic performance, and the other way around. The early Greeks believed that when one practiced wrestling—a common athletic endeavor for the time—one learned to anticipate the moves of an opponent. Successfully anticipating these moves and countering them, led to pinning an opponent. In the same fashion, a rhetor engaged in oratorical debate, might transfer the knowledge of the bodily movements of an opponent in wrestling to anticipating the verbal rhetorical movements of an opponent in debate. Again, anticipating these movements could aid in victory. Gorgias's *Encomium to Helen* exemplifies this need to anticipate the rhetorical jousting of an opponent. Attracted to *dissoi logoi* (arguing the weaker side), Gorgias spells out in ornate epideictic form why Helen should not be held culpable for fleeing to Sparta with Paris and starting the Trojan War. In the text, Gorgias understands and responds to the assertions regarding Helen's guilt, and he cleverly side-steps them as one would an opponent on the athletic field.

We see additional evidence of athletic rhetoric when Gorgias is quoted in Clement's *Miscellanies*: "A conduct as such as we have requires two kinds of excellence, daring and skill; daring is needed to withstand danger, and skill to understand how to *trip* the opponent" (DK 82 B7; emphasis added). According to Clement, Gorgias spoke these lines at the Olympic Games. Yet Gorgias wrote these lines in an intentionally ambiguous manner; with the infinitive phrase "to trip the opponent," we, as listeners/readers, are not sure if Gorgias deploys "trip" literally or metaphorically. Surely, the use of "trip," spoken at the Olympic Games, summons images of athletic competition: one wrestler sliding a foot underneath the other in hopes of a match-winning pin; however, we have long known athletics was not the sole vehicle for competition at the Games. *Epideixis* (public or private oral demonstration) figured prominently in public gathering spaces like the Olympic Games. Thus, I suggest Gorgias intentionally embedded a dual meaning in the verb "trip"; with an instantiation of competitive rhetoric in these lines, the ancient rhetor deliberately blurred the line between athletics and academics.

Additionally, in his fourth century treatise *Antidosis,* Isocrates contends that "it is acknowledged that the nature of man is compounded of two parts, the physical and the mental" (289). Pointing out that education requires the "twin arts—parallel and complementary" (289) of philosophy (education of the mind) and gymnastics (education of the body), Isocrates asserts "both the teachers of gymnastics and the teachers of discourse are able to advance their pupils to a point where they are better men and where they are stronger in their thinking or in the use of their bodies" (291). While Isocrates is typically viewed as the progenitor of the liberal arts education, earlier pedagogues, for example Sappho and her school for women close to 300 years earlier, too merged athletics and academics into a student's education. Regardless of where the dual physical/intellectual focus in education found its genesis, the concept was common in Greece from the seventh to third century.

With special focus on rhetoric, Hawhee explores this paring in *Bodily Arts: Rhetoric and Athletics in Ancient Greece.* While traditional scholars of classical rhetoric (e.g., Kennedy and Guthrie) have depicted the Sophists primarily as teachers, Hawhee envisions what she calls the "sophist-athlete." Doing so allows her to focus on the athletic and competitive aspect that drove fifth and fourth century Greece and influenced the early Sophists. Rhetoric at the time was not an abstract concept, but could be captured, embodied, and performed thus blurring the mind/body distinction.

Central to this notion of captured, embodied, and performed is the *agōn* (or contest), and the elusive concept of *aretē* (virtuosity).[13] The purpose of the constant struggling was to obtain *aretē*. Obtaining *aretē* was not a singular occurrence. Rather, one repeatedly embodied *aretē* through public action and a "repeated *style* of living" (18; emphasis in original). This public action, for the early Sophists, was most commonly found in festivals where the forum for excelling in rhetoric and athletics was the same. The *agōn* thus became the nexus in which rhetoric, athleticism, and pedagogy became intertwined. At the close, Hawhee laments the current neglect of embodied practice and corporeal experience and argues for reinserting the "body's centrality in learning and performing" (195) into contemporary pedagogies. This embodiment of rhetoric propelled early Greek rhetoric but was lost as Greece's power waned under the rise of Rome.[14]

While Hawhee hints at the erasure of the body in current pedagogies, Julie Cheville documents it in reporting the results of a two-year ethnographic study of the women's basketball team at the University of Iowa in *Minding the Body: What Student-Athletes Know About Learning.* Cheville's results lead her to argue that the "conceptual orientation central to knowledge acquisition in sport was relatively useless in college classrooms that disassociated cognition from concrete activity and interaction" (8). Yet her assertion is more than simply a discussion of transferring knowledge from one field to another. Cheville's assertion returns us to Hawhee's larger implication that the body and the mind have, since the work of Isocrates, been cleaved apart, and conceptually Cheville works toward merging them. The cleavage and merging of mind and body, Cheville suggests and I agree, are both rhetorical acts. She is asking us to consider how "for all learners, bodily activity gives rise to…embodied mental structures" (11). For student-athletes, these "embodied mental structures" are better developed and refined through constant practice. Yet for athlete and non-athlete, Cheville holds, the body matters.

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[13] Hawhee struggles to find an English equivalent to *aretē*. The term has been typically translated as "virtue"; however, Hawhee is uncomfortable with this translation as she sees it moving close to moralizing. Instead, she reads *aretē* as "virtuosity" which "signals the concept's status as a condition the ancients repeatedly tried to achieve, a condition not unrelated to art and skill" (17). It is worth mentioning that the term is variously spelled by Hawhee. In *Bodily Arts* she prefers the spelling I have provided throughout: *aretē*. In her 2002 *Philosophy and Rhetoric* article, she, or the editor, prefers *arête*.

[14] As H.I. Marrou documents in *Education in Antiquity*, Roman citizens, who gleaned much of their culture from the Greeks, jettisoned the importance of athletics in education. While Marrou speculates that this was a result of the Roman aversion to homosexuality (prevalent in Greek society) and to the Greek practice of competing in the nude, the reasons for the Romans separating athletics from academics are tangential to the fact that Rome facilitated the bifurcation. Instead of positioning rhetoric as an embodied athleticism, Romans began likening rhetoric to war and battle through jingoistic tropes. In *A Dialogue of Oratory*, the Roman statesmen and historian Tacitus provides the following thoughts on rhetoric conceived of as spoken eloquence: "what can be safer than to practise an art armed with which man can always bring aid to friends, succour to strangers, deliverance to the imperilled, while to malignant foes he is an actual fear and terror, himself so intrenched…within a power and a position of lasting strength?" (737-738). Here, rhetoric is personified as a warring general and viewed as a bastion of defense. The question is indicative of the Roman belief of rhetoric. Rome placed rhetoric on a pathway away from athletics and the pathways between the two have continued to go in divergent directions, directly impacting American institutes of higher education today.

Establishing a reciprocal relationship between athletics and academics at the university level is theoretically critical. As Hawhee has shown, athletics and intellectual work mutually support each other. As she asserts, rhetoric was "learned, practiced, and performed by and with the body as well as the mind" (144). The long historical context for our field suggests a dynamic and positive relationship between athletics and academics. However, the gap between the two fields has grown larger. If we continue either to facilitate rhetorically a split between athletics and academics or passively observe the ever-widening split, then we do our schools a disservice. While we should strive for this reciprocal relationship, the field of composition and rhetoric has, as I have mentioned, been strangely quiet on college sports and student-athletes.

However, the field is well-positioned to be a leading voice for several important reasons which I touch upon as I provide an overview of the episodes forming this dissertation.

In chapter 1, "Wrestling with the Sophists: Establishing a Reciprocal Relationship between Rhetoric and Athletics," I discuss classical writing and rhetoric, specifically pre-Aristotelian rhetoric in fifth and fourth century Greece and argue athletics was instrumental to the rise of rhetoric. Here, athletics and academics harmoniously coexisted. Proficiency in athletics, generally a form of gymnastics, aided in the refinement of academics, generally *technê* (art or skill) of speech. The two developed a reciprocal relationship with the first generation of Sophists such as Protagoras and Gorgias undertaking oratorical performances at the Olympic Games alongside wrestling men. If we concern ourselves with the split between athletics and academics, then we must at least consider a period where the two were married. Claiming these rhetors as the progenitors of the current rhetorical schemata that influence current composition and rhetoric studies, our field is best positioned to look at the works of rhetors who encapsulated this marriage. To this end, scholarship trends toward exploring an individual Sophist or highlighting connections between current issues and sophistic thought (McComiskey, Schiappa, Welch), and so I undertake work that examines how athletics shaped and propelled sophistic pedagogy. The highly athletic culture in which the first generation of Sophists arose provides exigency for further (re)examination of the early Sophists Protagoras and Gorgias. I look toward the little-studied area of what John Poulakos calls "competitive rhetoric" and to suggest how attending more fully to the development of this rhetoric sketches a stronger picture of Protagoras and Gorgias as models of praxis, as teacher-athletes and athlete-teachers.

Before scholars/practitioners of composition and rhetoric can facilitate the re-bridging of athletics and academics on university campuses, we need to illuminate the interplay between these two areas.

In chapter 2, "Play Literacy, Textual Problems: The Dangers of Multimodal Composition Rhetorics for College Football and Basketball Players," I bring the discussion into the contemporary first-year composition (FYC) classroom. I study the recent push toward multimodality in the college writing classroom to suggest how the uses of these specific rhetoric(s)/pedagogies hinder the learning processes of student-athlete, specifically football and basketball players, enrolled in FYC courses. I provide a reading of college football and basketball plays as an example of multimodal rhetoric. While recent developments in composition studies have lauded the benefits of multimodal assignments in the college writing classroom, I argue that through a student-athlete's repeated engagement with these multimodal plays—before and after practice, during game day, studied alone or in groups during the off-season—they are operating within a discourse that de-privileges the self and shuns dialogic meaning-making. To do so, I first examine five basketball and football plays taken from Division I university playbooks and suggest the construction and execution of these plays demands that players undertake an archaic and disabling view of knowledge production, a view at odds with the meaning making processes typically espoused in the college writing classroom. Thus, while scholars/practitioners of multimodality typically laud the emancipatory bent to this rhetoric—in that students suddenly have a wealth of modes at their disposal for a construction of an argument, freeing them from the shackles of alphabet-centric prose and 8 1/2 x 11 sheets of white paper—we might do more harm than good if we forget to pay attention to the politics of multimodality. Careful not to dismiss all of multimodality—Cynthia Selfe's work with aurality as an additional mode in composing has the potential to do wonders for visually challenged students—I suggest how specific instantiations of multimodality directed for an audience partially composed of student-athletes widens the fissure between athletics and academics.

Yet a proverbial silver-lining exists. Multimodal plays have a two-pronged effect on student-athletes enrolled in our writing classes. While I firmly believe a student-athlete's consistent engagement with multimodal plays hinders the effectiveness of contemporary writing pedagogies (more specifically those pedagogies driven by recent theories of multimodality), recent explorations of an ecological view of writing suggest methods for properly incorporating student-athletes into the writing classroom. Chapter 3, "Embodying the Sophists, Distributing the Play: Tracing Trajectories of College Football Literate Activity," then, offers an ecological understanding of the literate activity of college football and basketball. Finding genesis in Marilyn Cooper's 1986 article "The Ecology of Writing," and gaining traction in the work of David Barton, Margaret Syverson, and Kristie Fleckenstein, et al., an ecological model of writing suggests "dynamic interlocking systems which structure the social activity of writing" (Cooper 368). Extrapolating on these "dynamic and interlocking systems," Cooper calls for examining the systems of ideas, purposes, interpersonal interactions, cultural norms, and textual forms (Cooper 369) that swirl around writing. Working within these systems allows Cooper to stress that writing occurs in an environment, positioning this view of writing against the image of a "solitary author [who] works alone, within the privacy of his own mind" (Brodkey 365). Moreover, an ecological theory of writing emphasizes the distributed and embodied nature of composing, two components which figure prominently when discussing texts as multisemiotic, not multimodal. Therefore, I operatize multisemiotic as an appropriate descriptive term for the texts in which student-athletes engage. I argue that leveraging an ecological theory of multisemiotic composing alleviates the obstacles erected when using the term multimodal, obstacles described in chapter 2 and leads into a first-year writing pedagogy tailored for student-athletes.

Chapter 4, "Speaking Concretely: What Composition and Rhetoric and Athletics Have to Teach Each Other; Or, What Do I Do With the Large and Indifferent Football Players in the Back Row," follows in the wake of chapter 3 by moving away from theory and into praxis. I consider how an understanding of the literate activity of high-profile Division I athletics can refine FYC pedagogy and how the field of composition and rhetoric—specifically the subfield of writing center studies—can improve the quality of writing tutoring student-athletes receive in athletic academic services, a common branch of Division I athletic departments. I suggest that a curriculum influenced by the multisemiotic and extracurricular practices of student-athletes would emphasize two components: socially situated interaction and resemiotization. After focusing on a policy statement, syllabus, and paper assignment designed with these two components in mind, I then move to thinking about athletic academic services and how faculty in composition and rhetoric can impact how staff members in this branch work with student-athlete writers. In this section, I focus solely on the Prentice Gautt Academic Center in the University of Oklahoma's athletic department and consider what I believe to be outdated and constrictive methods of working with writers used the staff members—myself being one. My large question is how student-athlete writing tutors can adhere to important and restrictive NCAA compliance mandates which dictate how one can interact and assist a student-athlete writer and still adhere to novel pedagogical developments for how to work with a writer, developments which often collide with NCAA compliance mandates. The answer, I argue, is found in the NCAA manual, specifically the Principle of Conduct of Intercollegiate Athletics 2.5:

> Intercollegiate athletics programs shall be maintained as a vital component of the educational program, and student-athletes shall be an integral part of the student body. The admission, academic standing and academic progress of student-athletes shall be consistent with the policies and standards adopted by the institution for the student body in general.

I suggest that when the writing center advocates for pedagogically effective and novel methods of working with writers, and sees their (the writer's and the writing center's) efforts bear fruit, then athletic departments must—according to Principle 2.5—fall in line and adopt the same methods. The most effective way for student-athletes to receive proper writing pedagogy from their mandatory tutoring sessions is for the writing center, a center typically staffed by those of us in composition and rhetoric, to advocate for stronger writing pedagogy across our campuses.

Finally, in the conclusion, "'Oh, for the Tongues of Angels': The Rise of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics," I continue the solution-oriented tone of the previous chapter and look to other avenues in which composition and rhetoric can position themselves as advocates for student-athletes. In his important and unpublished dissertation, *One Foot In: Student-Athlete Advocacy and Social Movement Rhetoric in the Margins of American College Athletics*, William James Broussard deploys social movement rhetoric to analyze black male student-athlete advocacy in revenue generating sports (e.g., football and basketball) over a two-year period. Looking toward non-profit organizations that facilitate this advocacy, such as the Black Coaches Association and the Drake Group, Broussard asserts the ultimate ineffectiveness of these non-profit organizations in their bid for academic reform and the need for scholars in composition and rhetoric to take-up the important work of student-athlete advocacy. Unfortunately, Broussard fails to articulate a clear reason why the composition and rhetoric is the next logical place to go after non-profits. To this end, I too look toward an academic reform minded group: the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics formed in 2002 at the University of Oregon and now composed of 58 faculty senates at the 120 Division I universities. However, I suggest reasons why our field is not only well-positioned to advocate for student-athletes but why we should also effectively ally with the COIA. Exploring the COIA's use of irenic rhetoric in their published white papers, speeches—a portion of this chapter's title is taken from a speech given by co-founder James Earl— and policy papers, this chapter sketches a history of the COIA and highlights the importance of faculty-backed reform movements. I explore the utilization of irenic rhetoric to quell growing tensions between academics and athletics. While I appreciate the anticipatory aspect of agonistic rhetoric, the inherently masculine overtones currently hinder its effectiveness. For example, the Drake Group, a nationally prominent academic reform group formed in 1999, has often been ignored because of their incendiary rhetoric in published documents and professional conferences (Lederman). Though agonistic rhetoric was a vehicle for coalescing athletics and academics in classical Greece and I argue our field should return to the fusion of athletics and academics at American institutes of higher education, agonistic rhetoric cannot be our vehicle as its masculine and jingoistic tones clash with the dialectical nature inherent in many contemporary rhetorics. Instead, we should look toward irenic rhetoric as rhetoric arising during polemical or challenging discussions (written or verbal) which positions itself as the mediator between two clashing sides. Irenic rhetoric then, as adopted by the COIA, has opened up avenues of collaboration between, for instance, the NCAA and the American Association of University Professors. At the close of the chapter, I suggest how a history of the COIA responds to composition and rhetoric's long history regarding the intersection of rhetoric and civic engagement as seen in the early work of Isocrates and still can be found in the current work of scholars like Ellen Cushman and Linda Flower.

Interspersed are brief interchapters devoted to painting a rich picture of people who create synergies between athletics and academics: Myron L. Rolle, Prentice Gautt, Woodrow Wilson, and Sherri Coale. While I am largely concerned with the ever-widening chasm between these two areas, periodically people arise who bridge the gap between athletics and academics, freely playing in both. I hold up these individuals as emblematic of the ability to succeed in what we have positioned as different and conflicting spheres.

Collectively, then, these chapters construct a composition and rhetoric perspective on the growing chasm between athletics and academics at institutes of higher education. When student-athletes walk into their—and our—college writing classroom, they bring with them unique "funds of knowledge" (Moll and González 160). As we, scholars and practitioners of composition and rhetoric, continue to chart these funds of knowledge and understand how difference—manifested in myriad ways—impacts an individual's writing and entrance into the space we typically call FYC, as we advocate on behalf of our students and those in our community, as we continue to explore how extracurricular instantiations of literacy impact curricular writing practices, we do well to turn our gaze toward student-athletes and the athletic culture ingrained at many of our universities and colleges. When we look at how our classroom pedagogies facilitate or stymie writing, we must also focus on our student-athletes; when we look toward advocating for our students, we should merge our training in rhetoric and composition to advocate on behalf of our student-athletes in publications and committees; when we open up new possibilities for what counts as literacy and how novel understandings of literacy affect classroom practice, our eyes and ears should be sensitive to what our student-athletes are showing us and telling us.

Chapter 1: Wrestling with the Ancients: Establishing a Reciprocal Relationship Between Rhetoric and Athletics

> *It is acknowledged that the nature of man is compounded of two parts, the physical and the mental . . . Since this is so, certain of our ancestors . . . invented and bequeathed to us two disciplines, physical training for the body, of which gymnastics is a part, and, for the mind,* philosophia *. . . [t]hese are the twin arts—parallel and complementary—by which [pupils'] masters prepare the mind to become more intelligent and the body to become more serviceable, not sharply separating the two kinds of education, but using similar forms of instruction, exercise, and other forms of discipline*
>
> —Isocrates, *Antidosis*

Pindar, one of the more famous Greek poets, described athletic victory in odes. Writing largely in the fifth century, Pindar stands in the grand tradition of lyric poets such as Ibycus and Simonides. With forty-four complete and extant victory odes, Pindar wrote verses in praise of an athlete's victory at the Olympic Games. Through the Olympian odes, readers gain a deeper understanding of how the games operated. The following selection from Olympian 8, subtitled "For Alcimedon of Aegina, Winner in the Boys' Wrestling," is indicative of a Pindarian ode:

> Handsome to look upon, his deeds matched his beauty;
> by his victory in the wrestling match
> he proclaimed Aegina of the long oars as his fatherland,
> where Themis the Saviour, throned besides Zeus, …
> is especially honored among men.
> When much hangs in the balance and it inclines this way
>   and that,
> a man may wrestle hard to make a straight, apt judgment

…

May future time never grow weary of this work. (ll. 19-29)

In these strophic lines, Pindar praises the physical strength and beauty of the victor, the victor's homeland (in this case the Greek island of Aegina located in the Sardonic Gulf) and aligns the athletic deeds of the victor with the grandiose feats of the gods and goddesses. While Pindar's verse has been studied for its beauty—Jeffrey Walker writes of Pindar's "dazzling and baroquely figured brilliant" (195)—as well as its rich historical details, the lines point us toward the presumably reciprocal relationship between language and athletics.[15] This reciprocal relationship is most clearly evidenced by the borrowing of terms between the two.[16]

The first use of "wrestling" in our excerpt describes the event in which Alcimedon gained victory; Pindar uses the second to describe the mental exertion needed to arrive at "straight and apt judgment." "Wrestling" becomes a term that can be transported from the intellectual to the physical sphere, from language to athletics. Pindar's plea at the close of this excerpt—"May future time never grow weary of this work"—not only invites his listener/reader to remain forever aware of the great athletic deeds of the young Alcimedon, but again speaks to the important relationship between language and athletics. Thus, we not only read the concluding line as a nod toward Alcimedon's presupposed athletic immortality, but we read the phrase "this work" as a way of merging language and athletics.

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[15] Here I intentionally use the term "language" over "rhetoric." While one could certainly make the case that rhetoric was always already present—Kennedy appears to do so when discussing Homeric rhetoric (5)—I draw a distinction between oral/written persuasive language and rhetoric. I understand oral/written persuasive language, exhibited by Homer, Sappho, and Pindar, for example, to have a much more tenuous and nascent understanding of audience, style, delivery and performance. Additionally, oral/written persuasive language did not seem to carry with it the sense that it could be taught to others. Instead, as seen in the opening lines of the *Iliad*, it was divinely inspired. Rhetoric, on the other hand, solidifying in the fifth century and seen in the work of the Sophists and later with Artistotle, has a stronger understanding of audience, style, delivery, performance and even persuasion. The Sophists believed it could be taught—for a fee, of course.

[16] In *Bodily Arts*, Debra Hawhee argues rhetoric does not use athletic *metaphors* (5-6). Pointing to Ruth Padel who argues that the Presocratics did not distinguish between the metaphorical and literal as we as prone to do today, Hawhee contends we should read the use of vocabulary from athletics influencing rhetoric as "borrowing." In other words, the early Sophists truly were engaged in competition.

In this chapter, I trace the reciprocal relationship constructed between rhetoric and athletics during the rise of rhetoric, arguing that athletics was instrumental to the rise of rhetoric.[17] I focus on rhetoric's beginnings in the fifth century as early Sophists were writing handbooks on wrestling and oration, and I end with the codification of rhetoric in Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* at the close of the fourth century. When tracing the reciprocal relationship of sports and rhetoric, I consider how rhetoric manifested itself through unique pedagogical strategies which the Sophists positioned against the dominant Platonic method of instruction. Thus an understanding of athletics' role in the rise of rhetoric invites an understanding of athletics' role in pedagogical practices.

During Pindar's time, rhetoric was at best a loose amalgamation of thoughts and practices coming from the work of Corax and Tisias in Sicily.[18] Figures like Gorgias, Protagoras, and Isocrates, explored further in this chapter, are often at the fore in crafting spoken and written language as rhetoric, a teachable *technê*.[19] In their understanding of rhetoric, these figures continued the tradition of merging athletics with language, a tradition that can be traced back to Homer, and was a tradition that riled

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[17] I employ the term "reciprocal" to signify the mutually influential relationship between athletics and academics. Here reciprocal is not synonymous with interchangeable; instead, reciprocal highlights the interconnected and complementary relationship between these two activities where refinement in one invites and allows refinement in another.

[18] For an additional treatment of the enigmatic Corax and Tisias, see D.A.G. Hinks's "Tisias and Corax and the Invention of Rhetoric." It is worth pointing out that more recently George A. Kennedy has suggested Corax and Tisias were the same person (21).

[19] *Technê* is one of the more challenging Greek words to translate into English. Often, but insufficiently, translated as "art," the term has no aesthetic associations. Instead, as W.K.C. Guthrie helpfully explains, "its incorporation in our 'technical and 'technology' is not fortuitous. It includes every branch of human or divine skill, or applied intelligence, as opposed to the unaided work of nature" (115 n.3).

Plato.[20] Rhetoric and athletics became intertwined. Proficiency in rhetoric led to a proficiency in athletics, and the other way around. Heeding Pindar's call to "never grow weary of this work," these rhetors constructed what John Poulakos calls "competitive rhetoric" which mirrored and resulted from the highly athletic milieu of fifth and fourth century Greece.

This chapter positions competitive rhetoric as a unique tool for Gorgias, Protagoras, and Isocrates—people situated among athletics and rhetoric. Additionally, I invite the field of rhetoric and composition to read early rhetoric as proliferated through athletics. While rhetoric's rise has been connected to the spread of democracy as well as the popularity of poetry—allowing participants to extend florid speech to civic purposes—a history of rhetoric should take into account the borrowing of terms and concepts from athletics. In other words, athletics became one discursive space through which rhetoric wrote itself into existence.

This is not to say scholars have ignored the important connection between early Greek athletics and language. Debra Hawhee, in "Bodily Pedagogies: Rhetoric,

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[20] The playwright Aristophanes also deserves mention as one who opposed these early rhetors, particularly the Sophists, though he does not lambast the interweaving of athletics and language as does Plato. First performed in Athens in 423, just several years after Gorgias arrived in the city, *Clouds* contends the sophists were "undermining the ethical infrastructure of the society" (Poulakos 19) through developing a student who will become

> …[A] villain and fine speaker,
> Liar, dodger, braggart, sneaker,
> Shuffler, well-versed in deceit,
> Unprincipled, accomplished cheat!
> Clever in the legal courts. (ll. 447-452)

In these rhythmic lines, Aristophanes focuses on the pedagogical outcome of sophistic rhetoric and what this outcome means for state law. Mentioning "the law" and "the jury-courts" casts a judicial aspect to his critique: if the Sophists continue teaching, the ancient playwright suggests, ominous judicial consequences will arise. Performed during a time where the Sophists' novel pedagogical techniques were first challenging traditional Greek education, Jacqueline de Romilly suggests the play attacks "rejection of traditions…and the lying art of defending one's own interests by specious argument" (*The Great Sophists* 10) both indicative of sophistic thought.

Athletics, and the Sophists' Three Rs," explores how this athletic milieu influenced the Sophists' pedagogical training. Ultimately, Hawhee contends "sophistic pedagogy emphasized the materiality of learning, the corporeal acquisition of rhetorical movements through rhythm, repetition, and response" (160). She is moving toward a theory of "*bodily art*" (144; emphasis in original)—understood by her to be an art, more specifically a rhetoric, "learned, practiced, and performed by and with the body as well as the mind" (144). Hawhee continues this line of thought regarding embodied rhetoric in her *Bodily Arts,* her full-length study.

As the field of rhetoric and composition looks to the work of Ancient Greek rhetors as foundational to our classroom practices and contemporary rhetorical theories, our field is well-positioned to sketch a more complete picture of how the highly athletic culture of Greece influenced early rhetoric and subsequent pedagogy. Doing so allows us to understand properly the intertwining and reciprocity of rhetoric and athletics and, more importantly, provides us with a way to diminish the ever-widening gap between athletics and academics seen in many American institutions of higher education. While rhetoric and composition has jettisoned athletics from academics, the two were intertwined in ancient Greece. To this end, I first flesh out sophistic thought and provide brief biographical sketches of Gorgias, Protagoras, and Isocrates before examining the influence of a highly athletic milieu on sophistic thought and resultant pedagogy. Next, I explore Plato's reception of the Sophists and suggest that a reason for Plato's aversion toward the Sophists was the reciprocal relationship they established between athletics and rhetoric, a reason little-discussed by scholars. At the close, I reflect on how a more nuanced understanding of the role of athletics in the rise and eventually codification of rhetoric can impact the current climate of rhetoric and composition. As the contemporary gap between athletics and academics yawns ever-wider, how can rewriting the history of rhetoric to include an understanding of the role of athletics be of benefit?

The Sophists: Contemporary Rhetors in a Classical Age

The term *sophist* derives from *sophos* and s*ophia,* translated by W.K.C. Guthrie and G.B. Kerferd as "wise."[21] Guthrie contends the term "first…connoted primarily skill in a particular craft" and was associated with the literary figure we call Homer (27).[22] While current scholars in rhetoric and composition, as well as other fields, use the term to refer to a nomadic, cosmopolitan and loosely codified group of rhetors operating in the fifth and fourth century, during these centuries the term was in dispute: Aristophanes called Socrates a Sophist in the *Clouds*; Socrates praises Diotima as the "perfect" Sophist in the *Symposium* (208c); in *Gorgias*, Plato's Socrates rails against the self-professed Sophist Gorgias. [23] Despite the fluidity of the term, scholars typically agree on common Sophistic attributes. Working from a relativistic ideology, the Sophists of the fifth and fourth century, typically referred to as "the older Sophists," were immersed in questioning the issue of transcendent truth and were destabilizing the absolutes which pervaded Greek society, especially the writings of Plato. The Sophists did not believe in general laws applicable to all; instead, they saw laws as dependent upon location and/or circumstances. Believing Protagoras's statement "that of all things the measure is man" (DK 80 A 13), the Sophists celebrated human potential through embracing *logos* as a teachable *technê,* undermining the aristocracy through democratizing education and freely mixing athletic and rhetorical training.

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[21] Kennedy provides the additional translation of "expert" for the *sophos* (29), while de Romilly provides the translation of "professionals of the intelligence" (*The Great Sophists* 1).

[22] Hawhee uses Homer throughout *Bodily Arts* to illustrate the literary connection made by the Greeks between athletics and language. For additional material on Homer and athletics, see pages 18-28 in E. Norman Gardiner's *Athletics of the Ancient World.*

[23] I use "nomadic" in the strictest literal interpretation of the term. Yet when doing so, I am aware of Gilles Deleuze's concept of a nomad as one who operates outside the periphery of despotic power, thus able to critique a despot and her/his institutional power structures (see "Nomad Thought" and pages 351-423 in Deleuze and Felix Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, specifically chapter 12 "1227: Treatise on Nomadology—The War Machine." For additional information regarding reading the Sophists through the lens of Deleuze, see Poulakos's *Sophistic Rhetoric in Classical Greece* pages 25-28.

In *Sophistical Rhetoric in Classical Greece,* John Poulakos elaborates on two key changes in Hellenic culture that provided an impetus for sophistic rhetoric: the shift from an aristocracy to a democracy and the growth of the middle class.[24] Democratic ideology spurred on sophistic thought and the Sophists worked as "energetic catalysts, accelerating its rate and enlarging its scope" (13), while the growth of the middle class allowed the Sophists, often void of nobility and citizenship, room to prosper financially. This shift toward democratic rule following the overthrow of the tyranny in Syracuse in 467 opened the door for public speaking and the need for oral epideictic or forensic argument directed toward jurors and assemblymen. Thus the move toward democracy was a move toward rhetoric, leading Richard Leo Enos to suggest that the "motives for promoting rhetoric were as much political as intellectual" (1). And Enos continues, outlining the importance of germinal rhetoric to the rise of democracy:

> Rhetoric was recognized as a source of political power . . . [because it was] an instrument for overthrowing monarchial and tyrannical governments . . . and . . . as a source of power within democracies . . . where control of public opinion through proficiency in discourse was essential. (Enos 3)

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[24] Kerferd, writing prior to Poulakos, suggests Pericles played a vital role in the Sophist uprising in Athens. Studying Plato's *Apology* and *Protagoras,* Kerferd contends Pericles provided private patronage for the Sophists (19-23).

A tendency of rhetoric toward "control of public opinion" is a reason for Plato's aversion toward rhetoric in the *Gorgias,* yet at the same time this tendency is also a reason for the flourishing of rhetoric in the fourth century.[25] While much of the Sophists' writing has been lost, we have been able to develop a strong picture of their epistemology for the early Sophists were teachers, roaming from town to town exacting a fee for tutoring lessons.[26] It was through their pedagogy that sophistic epistemology was most clearly elucidated.

Positing a fragmented society where truth depended of a variety of factors, the Sophists anticipate contemporary rhetorical theory which attends to the fluidity of language and the intersection of the self and the social in the construction of knowledge. If we follow Michael Gagarin's argument in "Did the Sophists Aim to Persuade?" the Sophists anticipate contemporary rhetorics which do not position persuasion as a chief or even attainable goal. Through a close-reading of Gorgias's *Encomium to Helen,* Gagarian critiques Plato's depiction of Gorgianic logos on display in Plato's *Gorgias* and suggests Gorgias aimed for the "serious exploration of issues and forms of argument, the display of ingenuity in thought, argument and style of expression, and the desire to dazzle, shock and please" (289). In the eyes of Gorgias—and Gagarian suggests we read these goals of Gorgias as goals of the first-generation of Sophists as a whole—entertainment is more important than persuasion. Thus, a "Sophist's reputation depended . . . on his skill at finding a novel and clever way to argue an untraditional view" (285).[27] While I am uncomfortable with extending results from an explication of a Gorgianic text to other first generation Sophists—I agree with other scholars who suggest we should not approach the Sophists as a monolithic population—the move toward critiquing Plato's depiction of the Sophists in his dialogues, as well as moving the discussion away from persuasion and toward the topic, style, and arrangement of an argument is productive.[28] As a result, we can place the work of the Sophists comfortably alongside contemporary rhetorics which, in turn, illumine the continued relevancy of sophistic thought to contemporary rhetorics and even pedagogy.

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[25] In *Gorgias,* Plato famously equates rhetoric to "cookery" (462) and "make-up" (463).

[26] For a helpful discussion regarding Socrates's aversion to tutoring for pay, see David L. Blank's "Socrates versus the Sophists on Payment for Teaching." After working through Socrates's disdain for tutoring for pay—one reasons being Socrates would have not been able to select his own pupils, instead working with any willing and able to meet the price demands—Blank explores how Socrates selected his pupils.

More important, however, is Gagarian's push to focus on the dazzling and entertaining aspects of sophistic rhetoric. Without directly acknowledging athletics, Gagarian invites us to view exhibitions of sophistic rhetoric—and these Sophists were indeed exhibitionists—as a spectator sport. Thus, public performance and entertainment here became an extension of athletics. Gorgias and Protagoras publically performed to entertain and demonstrate the rhetorical prowess they could impart to their students—for or a fee, of course. While Isocrates was loath to perform (he was a shy and poor public speaker), his writing was meant to entertain as were the speeches he wrote for others to perform. As Marina McCoy asserts, Isocrates worked in "close imitation or adaptation of dramatic or oratorical forms" (9-10). Again, the emphasis is on entertainment as an extension of athletic performance.

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[27] Throughout, the masculine pronouns "his" and "he" are intentionally used by myself and others when discussing the Older Sophists. This group was entirely male and as were the Sophists' pupils. As the field of classical rhetoric continues the important work of unearthing the woman's voice, I look forward to learning of lost *female* older Sophists. For a helpful discussion of the education of women during this period, see "The Educational Work of Sappho" in chapter III of Marrou. Also see Cheryl Glenn's *Rhetoric Retold*, specifically chapter 2, for a rich discussion of female orators in classical Greece.

[28] See pages 80-107 in Ekaterina V. Haskins's *Logos and Power in Isocrates and Aristotle* for a more in-depth discussion of persuasion and the Burkean concept of identification at work in Isocrates and Aristotle. Riffing off Judith Butler, Louis Althusser, Gagarian and others, Haskins explores how Isocrates and Aristotle invoke drastically different audiences, leading to differing reifications of Panhellenism culture in their texts.

Gorgias of Leontini

The Sophist Gorgias prospered most grandly. An Ionian, he was born in the city of Leontini in Sicily around 490. Tradition speaks of Gorgias as student of the philosopher Empedocles, and he may have been in contact with the early rhetors Corax and Tisias, as Syracuse, Tisias's hometown, is roughly 50 miles south of Leontini.[29] We know his father was Charmantides. His brother, Herodicus, was a physician; he also may have had a sister. In 427, Leontini sent Gorgias as ambassador to Athens in hopes of receiving military assistance against Syracuse. Leontini gained independence from Syracuse in 464 and constructed a democratic alliance with Athens in 433/32. However, the peace was short-lived as Syracuse besieged Leontini in 427 at which point Gorgias was sent to Athens, where, according to Guthrie, "he took the city by storm with his novel style of oratory" (270) performing at the Olympic Games alongside athletic performances and eventually taking time to write a now-lost handbook on wrestling. This visit to Athens was a pivotal event in Gorgias's life. As a result of his visit, Athens "reinforced her commitment to democratic Leontini in 425 . . . with forty-five ships" (Enos 7).

While the historical narrative ends on a somber note—Syracuse defeats Athens and regains control over Leontini and squashes democratic rule—Enos looks towards these events as central to the development of Gorgias as a rhetor as well as central to the proliferation of rhetoric. Enos contends that in Athens, Gorgias "used his oratorical skills to sustain Athenian support," and "[a]fter his political duties, Gorgias utilized that same power in rhetoric to shape an educational force that would flourish" (9). What Enos has ignored is that Gorgias's educational force was advertised largely by *epideixis* (public or private oral demonstration) hinted at by Guthrie above. As John Beversluis reports, the seasoned Sophist could "point to a long string of sold-out performances and the enthusiastic testimonials of countless transported and bewitched audiences" (294). These audiences were "transported and bewitched" (Kennedy 34, 35) through Gorgias's elaborate, almost magical, oratorical style.[30] Gorgias's style was overly antithetical and symmetrical. Aware of the way his words sounded, he utilized alliteration and assonance which has caused modern critics like Kennedy to describe Gorgianic speech as a "tintinnabulation of rhyming words and echoing rhythms" (34). Additionally, "clauses were constructed with persistent parallelism and attention to corresponding length, even the number of syllables in each clause was equalized" (Kennedy 34). It was during these performances that Gorgias is credited with describing "how to *trip* the opponent" (DK 82 B7; emphasis added). With the dual-meaning in the verb "trip," Gorgias is not only exhibiting his playfulness with language, but he is pointing toward his understanding of an athletic dimension to rhetoric, one of his many contributions to sophism.

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[29] See note 3 for additional information on Corax and Tisias.

Protagoras of Abdera

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[30] For an extended discussion of Gorgias and magic in speech see de Romilly's *Magic and Rhetoric in Ancient Greece* pages 1-23.

While in *Helen,* an oral exhortation full of antitheses, triplets, alliteration and tropes designed to excuse Helen of Troy's decision to abscond with Paris and exhibit Gorgias's rhetoric performance, Gorgias is able to sketch a convincing case for understanding and excusing Helen's actions, the competitive concept of having two sides to any issue comes from Protagoras.[31] Born about 490 in Abdera in Thrace, a city in remote northeast Greece, Protagoras traveled to Athens and befriended Pericles.[32] According to Philostratus, Protagoras's father was Maendrius, "a man of extraordinary wealth among the Thracians, one who entertained Xerxes himself in his house" (DK 80 2).[33] Like Gorgias, Protagoras was a teacher of Lysias.[34] In 444 he was appointed to write laws for the Athenian city of Thurii. He died circa 420.

Tradition tells us Protagoras drowned on a sea voyage following his expulsion from Athens. He had been "convicted of impiety" (Kerferd 43), and his books were burned in the agora. According to Diogenes Laertius's *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, Protagoras was accused of impiety as a result of his pseudo-agnostic statement: "Concerning the gods, I cannot know either that they exist or that they do not exist; for there is much to prevent one's knowing" (DK 80 B4). As a result, "Athenians expelled him; and they burnt his works in the market-place, after sending a herald to collect them from all who had copies in their possession" (Diogenes Laertius 465). While he perished under unfortunate circumstances, in *Meno* Plato writes glowingly of Protagoras: "For I think he [Protagoras] died when he was close to seventy, after forty years spent in his profession. And in all this time, down to the present day, *his reputation has not faded*" (DK 80 A8; emphasis added). Considering the harsh stance Plato takes against Protagoras and the Sophists in general in *Gorgias* and *Protagoras,* the near panegyric Plato directs toward Protagoras is curious. However, as Kerferd remarks, it is worth remembering that Protagoras died as a result of impiety, the same crime for which Socrates was convicted.

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[31] Most biographical details regarding Protagoras are first found in Diogenes Laertius's *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*. *Lives* totals ten books and provides biographical details on figures ranging from the well-known Plato, who is given a book of his own, to lesser-known philosophers. Curiously, both Isocrates and Gorgias are not present.

[32] Plutarch relates an anecdote about Pericles and Protagoras spending a whole day "trying to decide whether, according to the most correct judgment, one ought to regard as the cause of the mishap the javelin or the man that threw it rather than the directors of the games" (DK 80 10). There is a timeless aspect to this argument, as we currently have the same argument regarding whether we should fault the gun maker, the tobacco industry, the bartender, for the killing, the lung cancer, the DUI, or should the individual purchaser/consumer be to blame. Unfortunately, Plutarch does not relate the answer to this gnarled query.

[33] Diogenes Laertius differs on Protagoras's father suggesting instead that it was Artemon (DK 80 1).

[34] The Sophist Lysias is credited with writing "On the Refusal of a Pension to the Invalid." Like Isocrates, he preferred writing speeches for others to perform over performing himself. Opting for a forensic approach, Lysias wrote in a plain style with a clear structure emphasizing pathos over logos (like Gorgias's *Helen*). Plato critiques Lysias's speeches throughout *Phaedrus*.

According to Plato's *Sophists* (232 d-e) and later by Diogenes Laertius, Protagoras wrote a now-lost text titled *On Wrestling*, just like his fellow rhetor Gorgias. While we do not have access to *On Wrestling,* we do have access to sources quoting fragments of Protagorean thought which provide a glimpse into how he merged rhetoric and athletics. For example, he was "the first to say that on every issue there are two arguments opposed to each other" (DK 80 6a). Couching rhetorical debate in athletic terms, in a context of a discussion of wrestling, helps usher in a novel understanding of rhetoric. During this period, rhetoric embodied competition; individuals debating each other in open-air contests and anticipating each other's points and counter-points as a wrestler would anticipate an opponent. Thus it is no wonder that this ancient rhetor would understand and be the first to state that argument is a one-to-one verbal struggle.

Protagoras's career is full of other firsts, as well. He was the first to distinguish between the tenses of verbs, to introduce the method of discussion which is called

Socratic (Diogenes Laertius 465), and to exact a fee of a hundred minas.[35] He was also the first to expound on the importance of the right moment, to conduct debates, and to introduce disputants to the tricks of argument. His contention that "Of all things the measure of man, of things that are, that they are, and of things that are not, that they are not" (DK 80 B1) encapsulates sophistic thought, as does the statement "Speech can make the weaker stronger" (DK 80 B 6b).[36]

Isocrates, Pupil of Gorgias

Born to a wealthy family in Athens in 436, Isocrates is hailed as one of the ten Attic Orators. After the loss of much of his property following the Peloponnesian War, Isocrates trained as a logographer, an early form of lawyer. Isocrates wrote forensic speeches for others to use in their defense as he, unlike his teacher Gorgias, shied away from speaking in public. His greatest achievement was his teaching and his firm commitment to civic duty. After opening a school in 392, Isocrates found himself at odds with Plato and Plato's academy.[37] In his waning years, Isocrates defends his pedagogy in the paideutic work *Antidosis*.[38] In this text, explored in more detail later, Isocrates elucidates the important connection between athletics and academics and draws parallels between teachers of discourse and teachers of gymnastics.

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[35] Both Diogenes Laertius's *Lives* and Hesychius's *Onomatologus* support the view that Protagoras was the first to charge one hundred minas.

[36] Schiappa devotes extensive energy to the first quote. Arguing that this statement is the most "important and as difficult to interpret and understand" of any extant statement from the Older Sophists (117), Schiappa invites his readers to rethinking the contemporary translation. He additionally argues for viewing this quote as a response to Parmenides's poems and Eleactic monism (117-130). Parmenides was an early Greek philosopher who founded the Eleactic school of philosophy. His school taught that time and existence is uniform and changeless, going as far as to argue that change was impossible. For a Sophist ideology that espoused man's ability to alter one's current situation through language and believed strongly in the power of man, a philosophy that taught otherwise could very possibly have been the catalyst for Protagoras's most famous quote.

[37] After opening his school around 392, Isocrates positioned himself against Plato's academy leading to a long-lasting debate between the two chiefly over the term *philosophia* (Φιλοσοφία) and how best to teach it. Often and unfortunately translated as "philosophy"—George Norlin's translation of *Antidosis* makes this mistake—*philosophia* is the precursor to modern philosophy and was an unsettling term in the fourth century.[37] For Plato, *philosophia* concerned itself with arriving at an understanding of the eternal forms through the soul recollecting knowledge. Conversely, Isocrates emphasized the need for a civic nature to *philosophia* and how best to translate this civic nature to the masses. In *Electric Rhetoric,* Kathleen Welch suggests we read Isocratean *philosophia* as "the development of judgment" (38) connected to

This confluence of athletics and academics is also seen in Isocrates' commitment to civic duty. The *Aeropagiticus* was written within several years of *Antidosis*. During this period, Athens was navigating tumultuous political troubles. Democratic and oligarchic rule were colliding, and the Areopagus Court's power had eroded. Founded as a powerful, aristocratic judicial council, oligarchy supported the Court. In 462/1, the Court was reformed and lost much of its power, and as a result, according to Isocrates, Athens lost much of its moral focus. In *Aeropagiticus,* Isocrates provides this lost moral focus for his beloved city and presses for the return of the Court's power. Praising Athens' ancestors—Isocrates is taken to valorizing the past throughout the text—Isocrates writes "It was not possible to prepare everyone for the same occupation . . . so they [the ancestors] gave each an occupation that fit his economic situation" (44). As a result, "Those who had sufficient means were forced to occupy themselves with horse training, gymnastics, hunting, philosophy, seeing that some people achieve preeminence through these pursuits and others refrain from the majority of vices" (44). For Isocrates, civic duty was achieved through rhetoric. In this excerpt from *Aeropagiticus,* Isocrates believes Athens can be morally re-set through linking gymnastics with other culturally elite pursuits. He even suggests a focus on gymnastics will help one "refrain from the majority of vices," lending a virtuous

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training the population and even remarks that Norlin translates *philosophia* as "philosophy," he is inaccurate and provides the "wrong connotation" (39). Eventually, Plato won out and our current understanding of Western metaphysics is what Plato understood and believed it to be.

[38] Isocrates was 82 at the time, dating the writing of *Antidosis* to 354-353 BCE.

cadence to gymnastics. In *Antidosis,* athletics is linked with discourse and here athletics is linked with virtue and an undertaking for those with “sufficient means.” Regardless if Isocrates speaks of pedagogy or civic duty, his topic often hinges on athletics.[39]

The Sophists as Verbal/Physical Combatants

In his chapter “Sophistical Rhetoric and Its Circumstances,” John Poulakos introduces competitive rhetoric. Calling competitive rhetoric a “cultural activity” (34), Poulakos suggests this form of rhetoric was “normalized and internalized through the organization of the Olympic Games” (32) and “pushed competition beyond the boundaries of the stadium and into the rhetorical forums of the court and the Assembly”

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[39] As explored later, this athletic bent to the rhetoric of Isocrates and the Sophists irked Plato. Yet curiously, while Plato bashes the Sophists, he appears to have a held Isocrates in some level of esteem. He never creates a crude caricature of him as he does with Gorgias and Protagoras. Nor does he name a dialogue in Isocrates’s supposed honor. Additionally, at the close of the *Phaedrus*, Plato praises the ancient rhetor. After an extended dialogue in the countryside between the impressionable Phaedrus and the learned Socrates, Phaedrus asks Socrates’s opinion of Isocrates. In framing his response, Socrates frequently compares Isocrates to the Sophists Lysias—whose speeches form a large portion of *Phaedrus*:

> It seems to me that his natural talents are too good to be judged by the standards of Lysias and his school; moreover he appears to posses a nobler character. I should not be surprised, when he grows older, if in that kind of writing that he now essays he could surpass all that have ever embraced the subject professionally . . . ; and further still, if this is not enough for him, some divine impulse may well lead him to greater heights; for by his very nature . . . there is a tincture of philosophy in the man’s thought. (279a)

This brief excerpt has been often read as sarcastic. And certainly, Plato is taken by hyperbole at times such as when he talks of Isocrates surpassing “all that have ever embraced the subject professionally” and the odd phrase “if this is not enough for him.” Yet if all that Plato directs toward Isocrates is a potentially sarcastic paragraph at the close of a dialogue largely positioned against the Sophist Lysias, then Isocrates must have engendered some level of respect in Plato otherwise Plato would have lampooned him unmercifully.

The uncertainty regarding Plato’s reception of Isocrates is one reason Isocrates is often not positioned as a Sophist in the vein of Gorgias and Protagoras. However in this chapter, I follow the lead of Jaeger, Welch and others who paints a convincing case for viewing Isocrates as a Sophist who “embraced writing, experimented with and empowered prose genres, and maintained ownership of a remarkably powerful and long-influential educational institution, one that preceded and then competed directly and fiercely with Plato’s academy” (Welch 10). These traits—writing, experimenting with genre, constructing and running schools, competing with Plato—are hallmarks of the sophistic movement of the fourth and third century Greece. And like the older Sophists, of which Isocrates is traditionally not included membership in, his work was instrumental in the rise and flourishing of rhetoric during the fourth century. Therefore, here, I read Isocrates as a Sophist.

(33). For the Sophists, words became a weapon one could wield in competition. Nigel Spivey, after placing the Sophists squarely in the surrounding festivities of the Games, echoes Poulakos's argument regarding the importance of the Games for the Sophists: "One of [the Sophists] specialties," Spivey writes, "was demonstrating the sort of combative oratory suited to assemblies and courts: so they put on shows of such verbal *dexterity* and *aggression* in front of Olympic crowds" (XIX; emphasis added). The use of the words "dexterity" and "aggression" by Spivey in connection with Sophistic rhetoric is curious, as these are words not typically reserved for rhetoric. However, for the Sophists, verbal wrangling was a space, very much like the wrestling mat, in which dexterity and aggression were needed. While the competitive aspect of the Sophists was manifested in their rhetoric (as Poulakos and Spivey assert), it is also present in their pedagogy. Through exploring sophistic pedagogical techniques as well as Isocrates's *Antidosis*, we can see the reciprocal relationship between athletics and rhetoric/pedagogy.

Athletic Rhetoric

We see evidence of athletic rhetoric, which Poulakos reads as competitive rhetoric, when Clement quotes Gorgias in his *Miscellanies*: "A conduct as such as we have requires two kinds of excellence, daring and skill; daring is needed to withstand danger, and skill to understand how to *trip* the opponent" (DK 82 B7; emphasis added). According to Clement, Gorgias spoke these lines at the Olympic Games where athletes displayed their athletic prowess and where "Actors declaimed, poets recited epic odes, painters shamelessly displayed their oeuvres" (Perrottet 12).[40] In it is this context of viewing arts and athletics as physical skills worthy of acclaim as well as fodder for entertaining the masses that Gorgias crafts these ambiguous lines; with the prepositional phrase "to trip the opponent," we, as listeners/readers, are not sure if Gorgias deploys "trip" literally or metaphorically. Surely, the use of "trip," spoken at the Olympic Games, summons images of athletic competition: one wrestler sliding a foot underneath the other in hopes of a match-winning pin; however, we have long known athletics was not the sole vehicle for competition at the Games. *Epideixis* figured prominently in public spaces like the Olympic Games. Evidence suggests Gorgias intentionally embedded a dual meaning in the verb "trip"; with an instantiation of competitive rhetoric in these lines, the ancient rhetor deliberately blurred the line between athletics and academics. Poulakos persuasively suggests that if we "assume a reciprocal influence between rhetoric and culture" then "symbolic contests in a highly competitive environment are to be expected" (Poulakos 34). First arguing Gorgias and Protagoras seem "to have made a connection between verbal disputation and wrestling and to have written handbooks on both" (35), Poulakos goes on to illustrate how sophistic rhetorics' vocabulary is heavily influenced by the language of athletic events: just as "one athlete could outdistance, outlast, or outplay another, a given discourse could outwit, outmaneuver, or outdazzle another" (35-36). This stance helpfully supports Gagarian's claim that the Sophists were not so much interested in persuasion as they were in physical conflict and struggle as entertainment, and the "outdazzling" mentioned by

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[40] The forty-thousand plus spectators attending the Games were harsh critics not only of athletic displays but also artistic displays. Tony Perrottet relays the following brief anecdote: "The tyrant Dionysius of Sicily had his verse read by the finest professional actors, but it was so bad that the crowd looted his tent" (88).

Poulakos strikes to the heart of Gorgias's Olympic Games speech. He was interested in erasing the lines between literal and metaphorical tripping of an opponent.

Tripping an opponent prefigures what current scholars call "critical pedagogy." For the Sophists, competitive rhetoric "helped produce the awareness that words do more than announce the world . . . they also question it, challenge it, attack it, defend it, or maintain it" (Poulakos 33).[41] Through two opposing sides engaging in verbal sparring, early rhetors were able to examine critically and question the use of language. While Poulakos points out that our traditional progenitors of classical rhetoric also weave competitive metaphors into their discussions of philosophy and rhetoric, the Sophists go further through debating and supporting the weaker and or less attractive side in an attempt to gain a greater understanding of the stronger or more attractive side. Through actively wrestling with both sides of an argument, Sophists were able to bring what scholars today might think of as a critical pedagogical approach to prevailing notions, ideologies, and concepts.

Athletic Pedagogy

As with sophistic rhetoric, sophistic pedagogy took place in a society imbued with athletics. Scholars point to the establishment of the first Games in Olympia in 776 as a watershed moment in Greek history. With the advent of the Games, the Greeks began a longstanding tradition that, despite ceasing in the late fourth century, continues to give scholars a glimpse into the culture of ancient Greece. The ancient Olympic Games, as they are called today—to differentiate them from the modern Olympic

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[41] Susan Jarratt, too, sees this connection to critical pedagogy and works through this connection. See pages 107-112 in *Rereading the Sophists*.

Games revived in 1896—are an apt metaphor for historical Greek society with their roots in mythology and only allowing free Greek-speaking men to compete.[42] Also, the events allowed rival city-states the chance to exert dominance over one another, strengthening the jingoistic tendencies of the period. With fewer events than the Modern Games, victors were often immortalized in statues or poetic odes like those by Pindar.

With the importance of the Games, and athletics in general, to city-states, physical education became a regular component of not only sophistic pedagogy but even Plato's academy and his suggested curriculum in the *Republic*. H.I. Marrou argues the following athletic events were central to physical education in the gymnasium: running, long jump, throwing the discus and javelin, wrestling, boxing, and pancratium.[43] Overseeing physical education was the *pedotribe,* who wore a purple cloak and carried a "long forked stick which he used . . . to administer vigorous correction to a clumsy pupil or anyone caught cheating . . . in the course of a match" (Marrou 127). Yet more than simply an enforcer of the rules, the *pedotribe* "needed to have a profound knowledge of the laws of hygiene and of all the rules and prescriptions about the development of the body that had been amassed by Greek medical science" (Marrou 123).[44] For the *pedotribe*, the education of the body was connected to the education of the mind, a common understanding and one that Lucian satirically examined in *Anacharsis, or Athletics* in the second-century.

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[42] Stephen G. Miller points out that women of marriageable age were prohibited from attending the Olympic Games; however, Miller illustrates a notable exception to this rule—that of the mythological figure of Atalanta. Raised in masculine activities by her father, Atalanta is commonly depicted on vase paintings wrestling Peleus, Achilles's father. Like Penelope in *The Odyssey*, Atalanta developed a challenge for her many suitors: if one could beat her in a footrace, she would marry him; if he lost, she would kill him. Many men were killed before a young man (variously named) won the race through distracting Atalanta with apples. The moral of this tale is quite unfortunate; no matter how athletically successful a women becomes, apples or any frivolous object can provide distraction. See pages 150-160 in Miller for a continued discussion of women and athletics.

[43] While these athletic events are commonplace, it is important to briefly point out some basic differences between the ones we are now familiar with and the ones in which the Greeks participated. Running took place on a straight flat track and the runners would run barefoot on foot ground picked clean of rocks and covered with a thick layer of sand (Marrou 126); the long-jump was only counted successful if the athlete landed with both feet making a clear impression in the sand (sliding did not count), and athletes jumped holding dumb-bells in each hand for balance; with discus and javelin throwing, the key differences lay in the preferred method of throwing and the material with which the discus and javelin was composed; wrestling was important as the last event in the *pentathlon*, which crowned the overall best-athlete and included the four previous events; boxing took place without a ring or rounds, and the fight was finished when the fighters were exhausted or one admitted defeat; finally, *pancratium*, spelled *pankration* by Hawhee, is the most "violent and brutal event in ancient athletics" (Marrou 123). Mixing boxing and wrestling, this sport allowed biting, kicking, spitting, everything but putting fingers in the opponent's eyes or mouth. Taking place on muddy ground, the competitors would be covered in mud during the event. For additional information on this violent and now-defunct sport see pages 212-221 in E. Norman Gardiner's *Athletics of the Ancient World.*

Anacharsis is a humorous dialogue, between Solon, an Athenian logographer and Anacharsis, a Scythian visiting Greece in hopes of gaining wisdom, about physical training as a part of a school's curriculum. The two engage in a lengthy talk in which athletics, largely those very activities described by Marrou, forms a substantial portion. Describing his reaction upon walking into a gymnasium, Anarchasis says, "Some of them, locked in each other's arms, are tripping one another up, while others are choking and twisting and groveling together in the mud, wallowing like swine" (3). Anarchasis continues and describes a scene akin to the one Marrou provides us:

> Others, standing upright, themselves covered with dust, are attacking each other with blows and kicks. This one here looks as if he were going to spew out his teeth . . . But even the official there does not separate them and break up the fight—I assume from his purple cloak that his is one of the officials; on the contrary, he urges them on and praises the one who struck the blow. (5)

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[44] The laws of hygiene should not be overlooked as an important component of the instructor's job. Since Greek athletes always performed in the nude (Marrou 126), the body needed to be prepared for competition. First, the athlete would be massaged, then oiled down and massaged a second time. Marrou contends the purpose of the oil was for hygienic reasons and not practical ones (i.e., make the body slippery during wrestling or boxing) since following the oil, the body would be covered in a thin layer of dust (127).

Anarchasis, and one can imagine the satirist Lucian ventriloquizing Anarchasis, wonders, "what good it can be to do all this, because to me at least the thing looks more like insanity . . . and nobody can easily convince me that men who act in that way are not out of their minds" (5). Solon ultimately accounts for Anarchasis's skepticism regarding wrestling as a culture difference ("It is only natural . . . that what they are doing should have that appearance to you [that of insanity] since it is . . . very much in contrast with Scythian customs" [7]). The rich description from reading a primary account of Greek athletics, provides a wealth of material for understanding and describing the culture in which sophistic pedagogy arose, took root, and grew.

Returning more specifically to sophistic pedagogy, Marrou argues that the Sophists were faced with the practical task of creating a capable statesman. An important task, as well as a common one, the first Sophists placed a unique spin on the current Greek educational system. Through the then radical belief of teaching whoever could pay (not simply those of the aristocracy), the Sophists ushered in "a form of teaching that was wider in scope, more ambitious and more effective than any previous system" (Marrou 48). Marrou praises the Sophists:

> They deserve our respect as the great forerunners, as the first teachers of advanced education . . . In spite of the sarcasm thrown at them by the Socratics with their conservative principles, I shall continue to respect them because, primarily, they were professional men for whom teaching was an occupation whose commercial success bore witness to its intrinsic value and social utility. (49)

Instead of opening schools themselves, Protagoras and Gorgias, and other early Sophists, would wander from town to town and respond to the needs of the area.[45] In terms of content, their pedagogy would, as many have previously pointed out, rely on relativistic thought: "They never," Marrou states, "taught their pupils any truths about being or man, but merely how to be always, and in any kind of circumstances, right" (51). Alongside the art of persuasion, the Sophists would focus on the teaching of speech in a linear fashion. The master would supply his pupils with a speech to copy and to study and "later, pupils would be told to use them as models in compositions of their own" (Marrou 54). Finally, on top of this insistence of form, the Sophists would teach invention strategies. While it is true, as George A. Kennedy reminds us, we cannot be quite sure what went on during the tutoring sessions, Kennedy and Jarratt both agree with Marrou that a central activity involved the pupils listening to the Sophists deliver a speech and then the pupils imitating and memorizing a speech that was then delivered before the Sophists (30). Guthrie further suggests that students used a textbook called *Contrary Arguments* (181-182), which Jarratt believes "contained sets of contradictory statements—commonplaces—which the student would memorize and employ in constructing legal cases and arguments for the assembly" (83).[46]

On the surface, these pedagogical strategies do not seem too novel. Socrates, too, would lead his pupils down a pre-established path. The difference lies in the epistemological differences between Socratic pedagogy and sophistic pedagogy. First, Kennedy argues that the Sophists allowed room for creativity and originality in oral composition (33). Prior, pupils were encouraged to imitate; Sophists encouraged originality; for the Sophists knowledge was created. Additionally, while Socrates believed in this transcendent Truth, the Sophists, as already mentioned, adhered to a more fluid and relativistic truth with a lower case "t." As such, a more attuned understanding of audience accompanied sophistic pedagogy; Sophists needed to be able to respond to the immediate demands of an audience (real or imagined) and could not rely on the notion that they were speaking or writing to a homogenous audience that believed in a transcendent Truth. Taking this idea to its logical conclusion asks us to consider that sophistic tutoring too took on a relativistic and more audience dependent slant. Just as sophistic rhetoric needed to adapt itself to its audience, sophistic pedagogy needed to adapt itself to its pupils. In sum, sophistic pedagogy tutoring sessions were pupil, not teacher, centered. And all the while, a milieu of competition surrounded the teaching and pervaded the rhetoric.

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[45] Isocrates, on the other hand, opened a permanent school.

[46] Jarratt's nod "to constructing legal cases" echoes Aristophanes's concern in *Clouds* that the Sophists would pervert justice.

This pedagogical intermixing of athleticism and rhetoric is most clearly seen in Isocrates. Unlike Gorgias and Protagoras, Isocrates established a formal school around 392 and set out to defend his method of instruction, and by extension himself, in *Antidosis*. The latter third of the text is devoted to Isocrates's views on discourse, emphasizing the relationship between thought and speaking. He launches into his belief about the nature of education:

> It is acknowledged that the nature of man is compounded of two parts, the physical and the mental, and no one would deny that of these two the mind comes first and is of greater worth . . . Since this is so, certain of our ancestors . . . invented and bequeathed to us two disciplines . . . physical training for the body, of which gymnastics is a part, and, for the mind, philosophy . . . These are

> the twin arts—parallel and complementary—by which their masters prepare the mind to become more intelligent and the body to become more serviceable, not separating sharply the two kinds of education, but using similar methods of instruction, exercise, and others forms of discipline. (289)[47]

Since Isocrates believed the training of the mind and body to be "parallel and complementary" arts, it is puzzling that he initially concedes that the "mind comes first and is of greater worth." Yet this move toward granting primacy to the mind does not, I argue, dilute the strength of his novel pedagogical argument. Isocrates is responding to and working in a period inundated with binaries: *nomos*/*physis*, rhetoric/dialectic, mind/body. These binaries are present in sophistic thought as, for example, Protagoras's belief that there two sides—not three, four or innumerable—to any argument. And these binaries are present when Aristotle opens his *On Rhetoric* with the then-shocking statement that rhetoric is an *antistrophos* to dialectic and dedicates book II to unpacking binaries of emotion: anger/calm, friendship/enmity, fear/confidence among others.[48]

Isocrates, then, writes in this spirit. Yet acknowledging these binaries is not the same as thinking the two are mutually exclusive. Yes, the mind and the body, for Isocrates, are distinct. He even goes so far to declare the mind to be of greater worth, but he is not precluding any relationship or dependency between the two. He accepts the dominant opinion regarding the primacy of the mind, reeling in his readers by stating commonly held truths, and then he makes the powerful move of arguing for the reciprocal relationship between the mind and the body. The importance of this passage is not stating the common belief that humans were composed of a mind and a body and that the mind was of greater worth but is when Isocrates moves his readers past common beliefs and toward a new understanding for the need to view the mind and the body as interconnected and reciprocal functions.

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[47] The excerpt is taken from Norlin's translation. Yun Lee Too translates the phrase "parallel and complementary" as "complementary, interconnected, and consistent with each other."

[48] *Antistrophos* has been commonly translated as "correlative" or "counterpart." Kennedy's prefers to keep the original Greek term in his translation as the term, like *technê*, does not have a clear English corollary.

Isocrates continues and argues that "both the teachers of gymnastics and the teachers of discourse are able to advance their pupils to a point where they are better men and where they are stronger in their thinking or in the use of their bodies" (291).[49] Here Isocrates fleshes out a moral dimension to the confluence of rhetoric and athletics, a moral dimension additionally hinted at in *Aeropagiticus*. The emphasis Isocrates places on the civic nature of discourse for the masses is an emphasis with which the older Sophists could agree. While Gorgias and Protagoras were not as concerned with crafting "better men" as Isocrates was, the Sophists were largely concerned with education. And like Isocrates, the Sophists were invested in the reciprocal relationship between language and athletics. In the excerpt from *Antidosis*, we see this relationship. The mind and the body need refinement in the pursuit of the liberal arts education. Yet beyond the need to refine both, Isocrates viewed the mind and the body as interconnected, even reciprocal. This understanding of the reciprocity of the mind and the body was glimpsed in the rhetoric of the Sophists, as well as in Pindaric odes,

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[49] In *Against the Sophists,* Isocrates again provides concrete suggestions for education: students must have the aptitude, learn and practice different kinds of discourse, the teacher must "leave out nothing that can be taught" and set an example for his students (175). For additional information on Isocratean education and his lasting influence, see Marrou's Chapter VII, "The Masters of the Classical Tradition, II. Isocrates," which provides a helpful explication of Isocrates's contribution to secondary education and the teaching of rhetoric, as well as pages 103-108 in Martin Bernal's invaluable text *Black Athena* in which Bernal constructs a more complete picture of Isocrates through examining his contribution to Panhellensim and Greek cultural pride.

Lucian's satire, Homer, and even Aeschylus's *The Eumenides*.[50] Here, the reciprocity is manifest in pedagogy.

Plato's Aversion to Sophistic Athletic Rhetoric

It is curious that the seemingly practical desire of the Sophists (i.e., training men the crucial skill of speaking well in courts of law and assemblies [*The Great Sophists* 6]), did not deter the vilification of the Sophists by the likes of Plato and Aristophanes. However, it was the act of charging a fee for this practical training that irked many. As the Visitor from Elea in Plato's the *Sophists* succinctly says, the sophist is "a seller of his own learning" (231d). This dismissive comment by the Visitor, who seems to be a spokesman for the near silent Socrates in the dialogue, suggests the multilayered level of frustration Plato has with the Sophists. Certainly, the act of charging a fee for the transmission of knowledge is revolting to Plato, but in the same dialogue the Visitor characterizes the Sophists as "wholesaler[s] of learning about the soul" (231d). As Plato believes in a soul's immortality and that one should seek to improve and better the soul through contact with eternal forms, he is aghast at the sophistic notion of not only selling learning but selling learning about the soul.

Of greater interest here, however, is how Plato's *Sophists* and *Protagoras* attack the Sophists by criticizing their merging of rhetoric with athletic performance or competition. The intertwining of athletics and rhetoric/pedagogy by the Sophists positioned them against their powerful contemporary Plato. As Poulakos and others have argued, Plato's reception to the Sophists was mixed, but primarily negative. However, little has been said regarding Plato's reaction to the Sophists' intertwining of athletics and rhetoric/pedagogy despite the many times in his dialogues where Plato employs athletic vocabulary in a derogatory statement directed toward the Sophists.

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[50] Near the conclusion of *The Eumenides*, the final installment in Aeschylus's dramatic trilogy, Athene and the Chorus are presiding over the trial of Orestes. Accused of killing his mother Clytemnestra, the Chorus asks Orestes a direct question: "Did you or did you not kill your mother?" Orestes admits to the murder, and the Chorus responds, "So there's the first round, and we have won it." Here Aeschylus equates rhetorical jousting with literal wrestling, even borrowing a term ("first round") from wrestling to understand rhetorical success. See H.C. Baldry's *The Greek Tragic Theatre* pages 19-35 for an exploration of the role of competition in Greek drama.

Using stylometrics (study of style) and cliometrics (a quantitative approach to the study of history), scholars typically place Plato's dialogues into three periods: early, middle, and late. *Protagoras* comes from his middle period, while *Sophists* is from his late period. It would be misleading to read the words of Gorgias and Protagoras provided by Plato and the description Plato gives given of sophistic thought in *Phaedrus* and *Sophists* as an accurate representation of these diverse and influential rhetors. For one, Plato was, at the best of times, antagonistic to the Sophists, to rhetoric, and to the concepts of belief and persuasion. Plato depicts these Sophists in his dialogues unfairly. Stacking the deck, so to speak, Plato designs arguments predicated on quick question and answer, a method of *logos* at complete odds with the sophistic preference for building an argument through verbose and elaborate declamations. When Gorgias, for example, seeks to construct an argument, he writes the long and elaborate *Helen*. When Plato's character Gorgias seeks to construct an argument, Plato limits him to the "very fewest possible words" (*Gorgias* 449). Others have pointed out Plato's misleading depiction of his verbal challengers. In *Cross-Examining Socrates: A Defense of the Interlocutor's in Plato's Early Dialogues*, John Beversluis sketches a more sympathetic portrait of Gorgias, Protagoras, Crito, and other leading Sophists who Plato attacks in his dialogues. While I appreciate the careful attention Beversluis pays these interlocutors—favoring historical evidence over a Platonic description—my goal in this section is not to arrive closer to an *accurate* representation of, say, Protagoras. The goal here is to understand how Plato characterizes individual and collective Sophists, and his derogatory use of athletic metaphors when representing sophistic thought. Understanding, for example, that Plato, at times, misrepresents Protagoras does not take away from how Plato viewed Protagoras or his concerns with early instantiations of Protagorean rhetoric. Rightly or wrongly grounded, these were Plato's concerns and his understanding of the work of Gorgias, Protagoras and the loose group of early Sophists. Being interested in how the Sophists were understood by their contemporaries invites us to look toward the Platonic dialogues' link to sport.

While *Sophists* fails to flesh out Plato's understanding of rhetoric—odd considering *Sophists* comes from the later period of Plato's work where the aged philosopher is warming to the concept of rhetoric—the dialogue provides the reader with a curious conception of the Sophists. The description of the Sophists does not come from the mouth of Plato's Socrates; instead, it comes from one of the more puzzling figures in Plato's *oeuvre*: the Visitor from Elea. Often called the Stranger in current commentaries, the Visitor from Elea takes center stage in this dialogue, working through typical Socratic question and answer with Theaetetus while Socrates attentively listens nearby.

Socrates starts the dialogue by asking the visitor to distinguish between a "*sophist, statesmen,* and *philosopher*" (217a; emphasis in original), to which the visitor replies "Distinguishing clearly what each of them is…isn't a small or easy job" (217b). From then on, Theaetetus and the visitor engage in a "conversational give-and-take"

(217e in hope to, as the visitor states, "begin the investigation [of] the sophist—by searching for him and giving a clear account of what he is" (218c). Shortly thereafter, the visitor describes the sophist as "an athlete in verbal combat" (231e). This description of the Sophist is the fifth one in an unfortunate list including "hired hunter of rich young men" (231d), "wholesaler of learning about the soul" (231d), and "seller of his own learning" (231d). At the close, the visitor provides a pithy and damning definition of the Sophists:

> Imitation of the contrary-speech-producing, insincere, and unknowing sort, of the appearance-making kind of copy-making, and word-juggling part of production that's marked off as human and not divine. Anyone who says the sophist is of this "blood and family" will be saying, it seems, the complete truth. (268c)

To which Theaetetus succinctly replies: "Absolutely."

While *Sophists* is about the Sophists, no individual Sophists appear in the dialogue. Instead, we need to consult *Gorgias*, *Hippias Minor*, and *Protagoras*. In *Protagoras*, Plato explores the Sophists' claim to be teachers of virtue. Believing virtue cannot be taught, additionally believing that charging a fee for teaching this difficult subject is wrong, Plato sends the reader into his dialogue. After Socrates examines Hippocrates on the true nature of the sophistic art, Hippocrates replies, "he is master of the art of making clever speeches" (312d). At this point, the great Sophist Protagoras arrives on the scene. From here, an "exhausting, knock-down dialectical encounter" (Beversluis 258) occurs in which, as the reader most assuredly could guess, Socrates's position on the teaching of virtue wins out and a defeated Protagoras fawningly admits, "I say now that I should not be surprised if you become one of the leading philosophers" (361e). While this dialogue provides readers with a clear conception of Plato's position on virtue and the impossibility of teaching virtue, Plato throws periodic jabs at the athletic disposition of Protagoras which give additional evidence for Plato's aversion toward the intertwining of rhetoric and athletics.

Moving through a quick question and answer regarding "good" and "bad" between Socrates and Protagoras, Plato gives his reader a glimpse into Socrates's thinking: "At this point I thought Protagoras was beginning to bristle, ready for a quarrel and preparing to do battle with his answers" (333e). While here Socrates reads Protagoras as ready for physical combat, Protagoras later admits to this disposition in himself: "'Frankly, Socrates…I have *fought* many a contest of words, and if I had done as you bid me, that is, adopted the method chosen by my *opponent*…'" (335a; emphasis added). Later in the same dialogue, Socrates says he "was like a man who has been hit by a good boxer: at his words and the applause things went dark and I felt giddy" (339e). Socrates later uses the boxing imaginary when he describes the lyric poet Simonides's attempt to deliver a maxim with a "triumphant knockout" (343c).

Poulakos reads these instances of athletic borrowing in the dialogues as examples of the competitive rhetoric practiced by the Sophists. Understanding the highly athletic culture in which rhetoric arose, Poulakos asserts that "the language of athletic events supplied a rich vocabulary for the discourse for and about rhetoric" (35). The claim seems too modest. Poulakos stops short of describing the use of athletics in rhetoric as athletic *metaphors*, but Hawhee, who argues we should not read the intertwining of athletics and rhetoric as metaphorical (see footnote 2), seems more persuasive. However, these athletic jabs not only signal the highly competitive environment in which then Sophists operate, but signal how this environment entrenched itself in the growth and proliferation of rhetoric. For Plato, the Sophists represented a challenge to his ideology and subsequent pedagogy. Disinterested in contacting the eternal forms that animate our quotidian existence and espousing the importance of recollection in contact with these forms, the Sophists believed in fluid truths and encouraged writing which Plato viewed as a corrupter of memory. Moreover, the Sophists were the first to practice rhetoric, the intermixing of public oratory, performance, entertainment and *logos*, a practice opposed to Platonic dialectic. Part and parcel of rhetoric was athletic performance; the Sophists did not distinguish between the two and, when verbally assailing the Sophists, neither did Plato. Through attacking the intertwining of athletics and rhetoric, through sprinkling these athletic digs in these dialogues, Plato inadvertently signals the importance of athletics to the rise of and eventual codification of rhetoric.

While Poulakos goes out of his way to illustrate how Plato was "not far from the Sophists" in regards to "rhetorical athleticism" (38), I believe he is missing the bigger picture. Plato is not attacking athletics—the evidence Poulakos and Plato himself provides suggest the very opposite, in fact. In *Republic,* Socrates expounds on his understanding of *philosophia*, political theory and a city (Kallipolis) ruled by philosopher-kings. In Book III, Socrates and Glaucon are discussing education, the need to refine both the body and the soul in education and the role of physical education. Socrates asks Glaucon: "did those who established education in music and poetry and in physical training do so . . . to take care of the body with the latter and the soul with the former, or with some other aim?" (410b-c). Glaucon is unsure so Socrates answers his own question: "It looks as though they established both chiefly for the sake of the soul" (410c). For Plato, the soul holds a place of prominence. It was through the soul that one gained contact with the eternal forms. The soul is immortal and in need of constant refinement through dialectic. In Plato's ideal community, the soul is refined not only through music and poetry but also through physical training. Thus, when reading Plato's dialogues concerning rhetoric, one cannot read Plato's attacks on the Sophists' athletic bent as simply an attack on athletics. Plato, too, embraced the need for physical training as Isocrates does in *Antidosis*. What Plato is attacking is the *teaching of rhetoric* and for the Sophists, rhetoric, pedagogy, and athletics were intertwined. Today, the field of rhetoric and composition has continued in the Platonic tradition of cringing over the intermingling of rhetoric and athletics.

An Athletic History of Rhetoric & Modern Implications

Previous scholarship, while helpful in explicating sophistic thought and pedagogy, fails to elucidate how athletic culture provided an impetus for competitive rhetoric. Kennedy, a seminal figure in the field of classical rhetoric, limits his discussion of Gorgias to lofty eloquence, flowery prose, and a tintinnabulation of rhythm. Kennedy's panegyric never explores the role of athlete in Gorgianic rhetoric. This role, along with that of rhetor and pedagogue, finds its genesis in the highly athletic milieu in which Gorgias taught, thought, and wrote. Even Bruce McComiskey's recent study, *Gorgias and the New Sophistic Rhetoric,* is more interested in providing a reading of Gorgias's extant texts as interrelated than illustrating how these texts position Gorgias as a liaison between athletics and academics. Gorgias's role as athlete does not even figure into McComiskey's analysis. Additionally, he looks to militaristic developments and the uneasy tension between Athens' democratic government and oligarchic sentiment for historical context instead of the equally vital competitive athletic culture. When McComiskey reads agonism as war and not sport, as I do here, he misses an important thread woven through the rise of rhetoric: the importance of athletics. Scott Consigny's *Gorgias: Sophist and Artist* is guilty of the same myopic view. Consigny sketches the key obstacles to articulating a clear and comprehensive account of Gorgias and then delineates two contemporary strategies scholars have undertaken as a way to overcome these obstacles (the "objectivist" and "rhapsodic" approaches) and suggests the shortcomings in both. While ultimately a helpful work on Gorgias—especially Consigny's ability to compartmentalize the many discussions on Gorgias—he fails to take into account any athletic bent to Gorgias's character, pedagogy, or ideology.

So too with work devoted to Protagoras. One of the most recent and more helpful texts on Protagoras is the second edition of Edward Schiappa's *Protagoras and Logos*. Schiappa provides a close-reading of extant Protagorean fragments and revisits his original assertions regarding the development and coining of *rhêtorikê* by Plato and the subsequent implication for discussions of Protagoras. However, while Marrou, Miller, Poulakos and others have pointed to the highly competitive environment in which sophistic thought arose, studies on Protagoras have ignored these important connections, instead focusing on who coined the term "rhetoric" and how best should we interpret Protagoras's pseudo-agnostic statement regarding the gods.

Debra Hawhee gets closest to unpacking the reciprocal role of athletics and academics where she focuses on an athletic rhetorical body which allows "a focus on rhetoric's connections to athletics [that] enables a view of rhetoric as a bodily art" (*Bodily Arts* 14). In *Bodily Arts,* "practice" and "embody" are both key terms and both contain connotations of production. Rhetoric is produced through constant competition. Central to competition is the idea of the *agōn* (or contest). This is the place where, Hawhee contends, bodies became "bodies capable of action and…identity formation" (15). *Agōn* emphasized the gathering aspect of competition and struggle, not a one-time goal and/or prize driven endeavor as our current athletic competitions are. The goal was to sharpen one's skills through constant conflict.

Additionally, swirling around in the *agōn* was the elusive concept of *aretē*. The purpose of the constant struggling was to obtain *aretē*. And obtaining *aretē* was not a one-time occurrence; rather one repeatedly approached and embodied *aretē* through public action and a "repeated *style* of living" (18; emphasis in original). This public action, for the early Sophists, was most commonly found to be festivals where rhetoric and athletics would share a similar venue. Here is where the early Sophists would engage in agonistic practices and pursue *aretē.* Clement's *Miscellanies* provides a brief excerpt from a speech delivered by Gorgias at the Olympic Games: "According to Gorgias of Leotini, 'A contest such as we have requires two kinds of excellence, daring and skill; daring is needed to withstand danger, and skill to understand how to trip the opponent'" (DK 82 B 8). Gorgias, in this excerpt, provides a connection between athletics and rhetoric. This connection is further established towards the end of his speech, "For surely speech, like the summons at the Olympic games, calls him who will, but crowns him who can" (DK 82 B 8). As can be seen, connecting Poulakos to this line of thought, the festivals were the space in which competitive rhetoric was enacted and embodied. The *agōn* became the nexus in which rhetoric, athleticism, and pedagogy became intertwined.

Critical to *agōn* was sophistic *metis* (bodily cunning or intelligence of the body). While the sophist hoped to gain *aretē* through *agōn*, *metis* was a key vehicle or mode to achieve this end. To further elucidate the term, Hawhee looks to figures who have exhibited *metis*: Odysseus and two animal tricksters, the octopus and fox. Pointing to the instance in *The Odyssey* where Odysseus returns to Ithaca and is disguised by Athena as a beggar, Hawhee argues that this example shows that *metis* needs to be developed and does not exist on its own. Too, *metis* is a response to a situation. The animal-tricksters, Hawhee argues, "provide a critical linking point between mythico-heroic and mortal instantiations of *metis*" (53). The octopus and fox, as illustrated in poetry and vase painting, exhibit elusiveness and disguise; the fox "specializes in finding ways to escape and in making the weaker stronger and vice versa, while the octopus blend[s] into the environment through shape-shifting" (57). Altogether, *metis* is seen as a corporeal response where the body is crucial.

While Hawhee argues *metis* is critical to sophistic athleticism, it is important to note that what is critical to the sophist-*teacher* is critical to the sophist-*athlete*. While taking part in the *agōn*, the sophist would employ *metis* through exhibiting elusiveness and craftiness (it is important to keep in mind Protagoras's desire to make the "weaker argument the stronger" [DK B 6b]); additionally, *metis* was woven into sophistic pedagogy as can be seen in Gorgias's *Helen*. Here Gorgias picks up Protagoras's exhortation to make the weaker the stronger and argues on Helen's defense. Remembering Marrou's discussion of the Sophists mode of tutoring in which pedagogues would use a linear approach (the master would provide a copy of a speech, the students would copy it and then deliver one of their own), suggests that Gorgias may have used *Helen* as a model speech. If so, the walls between sophistic athleticism and sophistic pedagogy become porous at best.

In the current histories of early Greek rhetoric that are being published, Hawhee's is the only one to examine athletics. One cannot help but wonder in writing how different the relationship in higher education between athletics and academics would be if the histories in *our* field would have paid closer attention to the vital role of competition and athletics for early rhetoric. Yet, the field of rhetoric and composition has mostly ignored these connections. The current gap between athletics and academics has been rhetorically constructed, leaving rhetorical and material consequences in its wake. Our field, one dedicated to rhetoric and writing, has said very little on this gap though the progenitors of our field spoke often, eloquently, and importantly on athletic-pedagogy. As we undertake the important work of reuniting athletics and academics, for the benefit of the student-athletes in our classes, for the benefit of our communities, for the benefit of ourselves, we would do well to rethink and rewrite a history of composition with an eye toward athletics.

At the beginning, I suggested Greece encapsulated the ideal marriage between athletics and academics. Disciplinary boundaries were not heavily drawn at this time; one could be a generalist, as the early Sophists claimed to be. And because of the generalist attitude surrounding education, knowledge from one field could seep into another. This borrowing, as mentioned already, was not metaphorical. Sophists and others of this period believed rhetorical performances were competitive just as wrestling was competitive. As Hawhee points out, both sport and rhetoric concern themselves with the *agōn,* the constant struggle in which *aretē* is obtained, if only for a fleeting period, and *aretē* is obtained through corporeal *metis*. Just as Odysseus and the wrestlers of the first Ancient Olympic Games hoped to capture a glimpse of *aretē* in a public forum, so too did Gorgias, Protagoras and their pupils. To speak of Gorgias and Protagoras as teachers is not enough, nor is it adequate to speak of these rhetors as sophist-athletes. A true picture of the epistemology that swirled behind the words of Gorgias and Protagoras would locate these men in a nexus of sport, rhetoric and teaching. The connections undergirding this nexus propelled the athletic, academic, and pedagogic successes of the first generation of Sophists. And it is my firm belief that a more acute awareness and understanding of the synergies of this nexus can go a long way toward helping the modern rhetors who combine athletics and academics, the individuals in today's institutes of higher education who are located in a nexus of sport, rhetoric and teaching: the modern day student-athlete.

Interchapter #1: Myron L. Rolle

Myron L. Rolle's life is an olio of accomplishments:

Saxophonist in a high school band. Sports editor of the school newspaper. Lead role in high school production of *Fiddler on the Roof*. Master's degree in public administration and medical anthropology. Given keys to the cities of Lafayette, Louisiana and Sarasota, Florida. Named one of the twenty smartest athletes by *Sporting News*. Rhodes Scholar. NFL Draft pick.

In our sports-enthused culture, academics do not often sit comfortably alongside athletics. But for Rolle, former starting safety for the Florida State Seminoles football team and 2010 Rhodes Scholar recipient, they do.

Rolle enrolled in FSU as a highly recruited athlete. Florida, Oklahoma, Penn State, Miami and Texas all made offers to the Rolle, the cousin on two former NFL players. Selecting FSU, Rolle made an immediate impact on the field for the Seminoles and was named Atlantic Coast Conference Defensive Rookie of the Year. Fast forward to his junior year in 2008 and Rolle had already graduated with a degree in exercise science and a 3.75 GPA and was in the process of starting 12 of the Seminoles' 13 games, as well as interviewing for and winning a Rhodes Scholarship.[51] Before he jetted off to St. Edmund Hall, Oxford University, Rolle completed a MA at FSU.

The interview for the Rhodes was in Alabama. That same day, the Seminoles were scheduled to take on the Maryland Terrapins in Maryland. Though the NCAA does not allow student-athletes access to private charted flights, it made an exception for Rolle. After his interview—which during he touched on "health-care reform and the

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[51] Rolle isn't the first student-athlete to win this prestigious awarded. Out of the 32 Rhodes for 2013, five went to student-athletes.

2008 election, the Bible and *The Great Gatsby* (Lipka)—Rolle boarded the private plane of an FSU booster and co-founder of Outback Steakhouse, flanked by reporters from *Sports Illustrated* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, to head up north. ESPN, which aired the match-up, scheduled the game for the evening, and Rolle started. The Seminoles won; Rolle recorded two tackles.

Despite his varied accomplishments, Rolle has struggled to convince others that his academic life and athletic life are mutually beneficial, not contradictory enterprises. Rolle's former defensive coordinator, one of the best in the nation before he retired in 2009, Mickey Andrews, "publically criticized him for spending too much time studying" (Lipka). NFL coaches, general managers, and scouts, as well as analysts at major media outlets such as ESPN, worried taking a year off from football to study at Oxford would hurt his NFL draft potential. Prior to the draft, it is common for NFL team personnel to interview players. Rolle mentioned he was repeatedly asked about his desire to play football. It was as if his dream to one day be a neurosurgeon would impact his ability to properly and effectively tackle a wide-receiver. And for Rolle, this inability for others to see how a desire to excel academically meshes with a desire to excel athletically is puzzling: "I never expected my academic pursuits," he said in an interview with *USA Today*, "to interfere with how great a football player I can be in other people's eyes" (qtd. in Wood).

Upon returning from the States after his year in England, Rolle was drafted in the 6th round by the Tennessee Titans. He spent much of the season on the practice squad, lining up against starting players during practice but never seeing a game-day situation himself. He was released after one season and in January 2012 was signed by the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Despite the temporary setback, Rolle has dreams of succeeding on an NFL field and has dreams beyond playing on Sunday. This is the guy who

> One summer . . . conducted research on metabolic regulation in stem and cancer cells; another, he took nursing classes in London. During the academic year, he developed a health-education curriculum to teach fifth- and sixth-grade students on a Seminole Indian reservation about diabetes and obesity. (Lipka)

This is a guy who has been awarded days in his honor in Tallahassee and West Palm Beach. This is a guy who has been compared to former Senator and Rhodes Scholar recipient Bill Bradley. And this is a guy who, more than many other student-athletes, understands the unique challenges of bridging athletics and academics.

Chapter 2: Play Literacy, Textual Problems: The Dangers of Multimodal Rhetoric for College Football and Basketball Players

In more radical forms of decontextualization, whole human actors are synecdochically displaced by algebraic formulae, black box cognitive graphics, and branching diagrams—Paul Prior, *Writing/Disciplinarity*

The field of rhetoric and composition has followed in the Platonic tradition of cleaving athletics and rhetoric. For Plato, this separation was couched in his aversion to the Sophists—who largely promulgated the reciprocal relationship between athletics and rhetoric—and his distrust of rhetoric, a nascent yet influential spoken and written tool. It wasn't that Plato was against athletics—as evidenced by his *Republic*—it was that Plato was against the sophistic interweaving of athletics and rhetoric. Today, the Sophists are not the reviled rhetors that they once were; instead, many in the field of rhetoric and composition have embraced them and their epistemology. As we now embrace the Sophists, we now embrace rhetoric. Yet despite the prominence we give rhetoric—a prominence that would surely cause Plato to shudder—we continue in the Platonic tradition of separating rhetoric and athletics.

One could make the case that our field has inched closer to athletics by thinking through theories and practices of embodiment—embodiment being the closest our field seems to want to get to the dreaded athletics—considering the place the body has in rhetoric and writing. Yet, embodiment has become a loose metaphor, an empty signifier that points to any dimension of the physical person's presence during the writing process and has little to do with *athletics*, one of the earliest forms of embodied rhetoric.[52]

Yet aside from this tepid metaphorical approach, rhetoric and composition has avoided the relationship between athletics and rhetoric and has done little to halt the Platonic tradition of separating the two; instead we have made matters worse through unwittingly expanding the ever-widening chasm between these two spheres of the university experience, to the detriment of teachers of writing, students of writing, and our respective colleges and universities.

To show more clearly how we have expanded this chasm, chapter 2 focuses on the recent move toward incorporating multimodality in required writing classes, classes taken by student-athletes. At the close of chapter 1, I suggested we view student-athletes as modern rhetors who combine athletics and rhetoric in American institutes of higher education. Standing in the tradition of Isocrates and others who espoused the reciprocal relationship of rhetoric and athletics, the modern student-athlete enrolled in our required writing classes attempts to bridge these two spheres in his/her writing. As I will show in this chapter, when composition courses move toward multimodal assignments and laud the benefits of multimodal pedagogy, we are placing our student-athletes at a disadvantage.

This disadvantage is experienced by a variety of student-athletes, but I focus on football and men's basketball, their constant engagement with a similar multimodal rhetorical construct outside of the composition classroom—football and basketball plays—and the archaic meaning-making processes undergirding these texts. While the issue involves more than football and men's basketball, I focus on these two specific sports and not, say, tennis or rowing, for several reasons. For one thing, unlike most sports, football and basketball rely heavily on plays, on written or spoken specific and prefigured directives driving a team's actions. These plays are textual artifacts, evidence of literate activity, and suggest a specific form of meaning-making in this particular "community of practice" (Lave and Wenger).[53]

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[52] I intentionally deploy the term "metaphor" to connect with arguments made in the first chapter. Both Hawhee and Pandel argue classical Greece did not use metaphors from athletics during their discussions and exhibitions of rhetoric; instead, they *borrowed* terms from athletics for rhetoric. Through differentiating between metaphor and borrowing, Hawhee and Padel are able to argue for the literal, not figurative, incorporation of athletics into rhetoric. Echoing their argument but shifting it to the contemporary classroom, I, too, borrow terms from athletics for rhetoric as a way of developing an avenue for incorporating more bodily experience into composing.

Additionally, football and men's basketball are generally the only two revenue-producing college sports. Certainly, some schools make money on lesser-known sports: water polo at UC Irvine, women's gymnastics at the University of Georgia, men's ice hockey at Boston University—all of which are quite successful. But for the large majority of Division I schools, men's basketball and football contribute the majority of the revenue. For example, at the University of Oklahoma the football team generates roughly 35% of the $93.6 million athletic annual budget, more than any other sport (*Annual Report 2010-2011*). Other OU sports are able to field teams and travel to games because of the large amount of money brought in by football. Connected to this is the fact that these two sports are the often the most high-profile. Again, there are exceptions as the women's basketball team at Tennessee certainly drew higher television ratings than the men's team when legendary coach Pat Summitt was at the helm. But largely football and men's basketball draw in the most eyes and dollars. When the general public considers college sports, then, football and basketball—and all the pageantry associated with these sports—is typically considered; fencing or field hockey does not jump to the fore of the general public's mind, though the NCAA holds national championships for both sports.

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[53] Pulling from Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger's text *Situated Learning*, I use the term "community of practice" to refer to "a set of relations among persons, activity, and world" (98). Lave and Wenger suggest that communities of practice are heterogeneous systems which exist "over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice" (98). Thus I read communities of practice as fluid, dynamic systems, which individuals do not master. The inability to master the conventions of a community of practice is contrasted with earlier understanding of communities, for example "discourse communities," which suggested static forms of set rules which could be mastered.

In what follows, I first examine recent treatments of multimodality and construct the language framework of linguistic structuralism as *the* way student-athletes are required to internalize and execute complex multimodal texts: college football and basketball plays. Next, calling to mind Cynthia Selfe and Pamela Takayoshi's definition of multimodality as that which "exceed[s] the alphabetic and may include still and moving images, animations, color, words, music, and sounds" (1), I read five actual college football and basketball plays as representative of college plays and instantiations of extracurricular multimodal rhetoric.[54] In a close reading of these plays, I argue that through the student-athletes' repeated engagement with a multimodal play—before and after practice, during game day, studied alone or in groups during the off-season—they are operating within a discourse that shuns dialogic meaning-making. This shunning occurs because the construction and execution of a football play demands players undertake a structuralist view of language, a view at direct odds with the meaning making processes typically espoused in the college writing classroom. As such, while student-athletes engage with multimodality outside of the classroom, they can struggle to engage with it inside the classroom. I end with a brief word regarding how Gunther Kress's theory of multimodality encompassing the material and the bodily—two important concepts in operation when examining football and basketball literate activity—informs classroom practice as it opens doors for embodied multimodal pedagogies, the central focus of chapter 4. Ultimately, I hold that through analyzing how a specific population engages with multimodality inside or outside of the classroom, scholars/practitioners of rhetoric and composition develop a stronger sense of the strengths and limitations of the current move toward multimodality and the way it expresses itself in teaching and writing in the classroom.

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[54] While I provide Selfe and Takayoshi's definition here, it is worth calling attention to Claire Lauer's recent article "Contending with Terms: 'Multimodal and 'Multimedia' in the Academic and Public Sphere" for readers interested in additional definitions. In this article, Lauer draws together a variety of definitions and uses of the two terms. After crediting the New London Group with coining "multimodal," she stresses the helpful pedagogical bent Selfe and others have placed on what was originally a heady theoretical concept. Ultimately, Lauer argues "coming to more precise definitions and use of these terms must include attention to their histories and the contexts in which they have been used" (237).

Positioning Multimodal Rhetoric

In her 2008 NCTE Presidential Address, "The Impulse to Compose and the Age of Composition," Kathleen Blake Yancey asserts "we have moved beyond a pyramid-like, sequential model of literacy development in which print literacy" precedes digital literacy and networked literacy practices (330), and now "we have multiple modes of composing operating simultaneously" (331). From these assertions, Yancey offers three sets of challenges for teachers of writing: "developing new models of composing, designing a new curriculum supporting these models, and creating new pedagogies enacting that curriculum" (333-334). In response to Yancey's challenge, various scholars have pushed for greater awareness and use of multimodal rhetorics in the college writing classroom. Grafting onto Yancey's discussion of "multiple modes of composing operating simultaneously," scholars have commonly lauded the pedagogical benefits of such an understanding of composing traditionally labeled multimodality. In

"A Multimodal Task-Based Framework for Composing," Jody Shipka describes her multimodal classroom pedagogy designed to meet curriculum objectives as well as objectives spelled out in the 2000 "WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition," and like others, such as Gunther Kress, Patricia Dunn, and Suzanne Rumsey, she side-steps the current and somewhat erroneous perception of multimodality as strictly digital.[55] Shipka stresses the "rhetorical, material, methodological, and technological choices students make while engineering these complex rhetorical events" (282), arguing that assignments which severely limit the options students may employ "perpetuate [an] arhetorical . . . one-sided view of production" (285). Illustrative of Shipka's argument are specific assignments her students completed. One of her former students "arranged to have a large blue bag containing eleven numbered gift boxes delivered to [Shipka's] office" (279) on the day portfolios were due. Attached to the bag was a card which served as the table of contents for the "text." Inside the eleven boxes was the students' work from the semester with specific directions for "receiving and recirculating that work" (279). In Shipka's classes, other students have designed web pages ("A Multimodal Task-Based" 281-283) and transcribed by hand a research-based essay onto a pair of pink ballet shoes (*Toward* 2) or an Abercrombie & Fitch shirt (*Toward* 62, 63). This brief sampling of work from Shipka's students helps us visualize how students are able to make specific choices among many material, methodological, and technological options.

Shipka's position on multimodality's benefits is echoed by Cynthia Selfe's recent work on aurality as a subset of multimodality. Like Shipka, Selfe contends espousing a print-centric focus in the writing classroom deprives "students of valuable semiotic resources for meaning making" (617)—for Selfe these semiotic resources are aural— and impinges on their rhetorical sovereignty.[56] Though she argues ardently for infusing the classroom with multiple modes of composing, she is careful not to sketch an either/or argument where print is set up against aurality. Instead, she believes "we need to pay attention to *both* writing *and* aurality, *and* other composing modalities, as well" (618; emphasis in original).

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[55] Later in *Toward a Composition Made Whole*, Shipka argues that limiting multimodality to the digital domain "could limit . . . the kinds of texts students produce in our courses" (8).

While I see these discussions to be productive lines of inquiry, scholars have often worked from the premise that multimodality is a positive development for all regardless of subject position. The advantages of multimodality—such as the focus on delivery, reception, and circulation in the writing process, three components often lost during traditional monomodal assignments—are understood as general benefits and largely fail to take into account the unique standpoint(s) of individual composers. Returning to Yancey's address, the listener/reader is not given a cursory note of caution toward this Age of Composition; instead, the listener/reader is pulled into an inescapable future where composition teachers must theoretically and pedagogically adapt to what Yancey refers to as a the tectonic shift in literacy ("Made Not Only in Words") or be left in the past.

This is not to say all have taken a generalized perspective. Working in the gap of focusing on the benefits of multimodality within a specific population's community of practice, recent scholarship explores the uses of this rhetoric among fifth grade urban students (Vasudevan, Schultz, and Bateman), burgeoning filmmakers (Gilje), and

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[56] Selfe channels Scott Lyons with the term "rhetorical sovereignty" and carefully and sensitively extends the definition from Lyons's initial use.

Amish quilters (Rumsey). For international students, Gail Hawisher and Selfe hold that a push toward understanding the "increasingly complex and extended global landscapes" (67) and the need for "digital networks and media" (67), should result in designing and implementing appropriate curricula. Multimodality is a beneficial tool, Hawisher and Selfe suggest, which imbues international students with a sense of agency and a way to navigate the complexities of meaning-making in an American college writing classroom.

However, the growing interest in multimodality and the move toward identifying multimodality as a near panacea for increasing students' literacy in a "great variety of different semiotic domains" (Gee 18) underscores the need to attend more fully to how specific populations implement multimodality and how this implementation indexes a population's meaning making. As Gunther Kress contends, "humans may have *different orientations* to modes and ensembles of modes—maybe with *specific preferences* for the temporal or the spatial, for image or speech, for the gestural or the domain of bodily movement as in dance, and so on" (15, 16; emphasis added)—a curious avenue of discussion which Kress examines with a pithy "This could bring enormous benefit" (16). He does not fully realize his own project yet invites detailed descriptions of specific populations engaging with multimodality.

Together Kress, and Hawisher and Selfe provide much needed exigency for understanding how the recent push for multimodal assignments in the college writing classroom enables and/or disables specific student populations. To state that curricular or extracurricular multimodality is either a beneficial pedagogical tool à la Shipka or the outcome of a fragmented and postmodern society à la Kress is a valid position;

however, we need to explore further how multimodality positions individual communities and composers.[57] My concern is not to discredit the work regarding pedagogical benefits of multimodal course assignments or the move toward developing a concomitant theory. Instead, I seek to hedge surrounding optimism through analyzing the meaning-making processes of multimodal rhetoric for a specific group.

Multimodal College Football Plays

Football plays are central to game preparation and execution, from youth football all the way to the professional National Football League. At the college level, many coaches' playbooks are more tome than book—massive binders of upwards of 400 pages of plays for offense, for defense, and for special teams. For other coaches, playbooks are a slim sheet of paper or even a single index card. Yet thick or thin, playbooks are concretely representative of a team's identity and preparation. Coaches, as an innately secretive community, are not apt to share their plays with outsiders, but generally after several years these playbooks find their way into the public domain, as is the case with four of the five plays I examine.[58]

As a community of practice, football has adopted its own nomenclature. Played with 11 men, a team's defense is typically divided into three subsections: 1) defensive lineman, composed of defensive ends, defensive tackles and/or a nose tackle; 2) linebackers, positioned behind the defensive linemen and composed of a middle linebacker, and a strong side and weak side linebacker; and 3) defensive backs, positioned behind the linebackers, composed of cornerbacks and a free and/or strong safety.[59] Here, I will be looking at the last two categories: linebackers and dbs. To navigate around the cumbersome names of these positions, coaches assign nicknames and abbreviations which players are responsible for knowing: commonly, strong side linebackers are called "Sam," middle linebackers are called "Mike," and weak side linebackers are called "Will." Cornerbacks and safeties are collectively grouped under the abbreviation "dbs" for defensive backs; individually, they are designated "C" for cornerback, "FS" for free safety, and "SS" for strong safety.

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[57] I borrow the term "extracurricular" from Anne Ruggles Gere's "Kitchen Tables and Rented Rooms: The Extracurricular of Composition." In it, Gere argues for classroom practices to acknowledge and connect with extracurricular writing. Defining extracurricular writing as that which occurs outside of the classroom and is marked by "desire, by aspirations and imaginations of its participants" (80), she paints a rich picture of the many examples of self-sponsored writing which inundated eighteenth and nineteenth century America. Gere's move to define and discuss extracurricular writing has inspired a strand of current scholarship devoted to answering her call for connecting extracurricular and curricular writing (see, for example Roozen; Sternglass; and Fishman, Lunsford, McGregor, and Otuteye).

[58] One play comes from the Western History Collective archive at the University of Oklahoma.

In what follows, I provide a discursive analysis of these complex multimodal texts through focusing on the symbolic and iconic signs, as well multiple modes which all coalesce into a unified text; however, for the players, the student-athletes many of us teach, a prolonged discursive analysis is not needed.[60] They have been systemically socialized to internalize and provide a near automatic embodying and enacting of these texts. The seemingly chaotic arrangement of modes, chaotic to those of us outside of this community of practice, is immediately clear to players at this high-level of competition. Interpretation and execution of such multimodal documents must be immediate and nearly flawless if the student-athlete is to retain the favor of his coaches. The reading and enacting, then, become forms of second-nature embodied rhetoric. In sum, college football players develop a unique "play literacy," which I understand to be a skill of narrowly reading, embodying, and enacting a play so meticulously and continually that it becomes a way of being and making meaning in the world. This way of being contains an overarching epistemology at odds with what we typically espouse in the college writing class.

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[59] Unfortunately, the use of the pronoun "men" is intentional. College and professional football is one of the few remaining sports that don't have a female equivalent. This is not to say women haven't historically played football. In the early 2000s, Katie Hnida made history as the first female to dress and play for a FBS football team—the highest level of collegiate football. She was a kicker for the University of Colorado before transferring to the University of New Mexico.

[60] My understanding of iconic and symbolic signs follows the lead of M. Jimmie Killingsworth and Michael K. Gilbertson who define an iconic sign as an image that constructs an analogous resemblance to an object. An exam would be an image of a file folder on a computer screen iconically representing electronic documents stored on the computer. Symbolic signs, on the other hand, "bear an arbitrary relation" to a referent "based on a law or agreement" (50). Certainly, there is no "law" that determines a circle will represent offensive players in a football community of practice. But a general "agreement" has been in place, since at least the early twentieth-century, as I will show shortly, which connects the circle symbol with offensive players.

Auburn University's "Cov. 4 play action"

During the 2003-2004 college football season, the Auburn Tigers sliced through their opponents en route to an undefeated 13-0 record, a Southeastern Conference Championship, a Sugar Bowl victory, and a final #2 ranking in the Associated Press and Coaches' Poll. Captained by four future NFL draft picks, the Tigers gave up less than 11 points per game—a startlingly low number—tallied more than 30 points on offense nine times, and compiled an average margin of victory of over 20 points per game. But these statistics are indicative of more than the pure talent on the field for the Tigers. These stats point to the preparation of the coaches, the intense practices, well-tuned plays, and a play literacy which coaches encouraged and instilled in their players.

Taken from Auburn's 2003-2004 defensive playbook, the chaotic sprinkling of squiggly and solid lines, Xs, squares, arrows, and numbers represent and communicate the reactionary play "Cov. 4 play action" (see fig. 1).[61] This play captures multimodality as understood by myself, as well as, among others, Kress, Shipka, and

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[61] When possible, I specify the years from which these plays come as plays are apt to change from year to year. This change may be a result of one coach leaving and a new coach (and a new playbook) coming in or it may be a result of an ineffective playbook being supplanted by a (hopefully) more effective one.

Selfe—multiple modes operating simultaneously and coalescing into a constellation of meaning: the mode of alphabetic text deployed to connote one thing; the mode of geometric shape used to represent another thing.[62]

In this formation, the defense works with four dbs (hence the title "Cov. 4" where "Cov." is short for "Cover"), and three linebackers. The four dbs automatically know that they are responsible for covering particular "zones" of the field—4 zones in a Cov. 4 defensive scheme—and not individual offensive players. The phrase "play action," in Cov. 4 play action, refers to the predicted offensive play "play action" that the defense believes the offense will run. Oftentimes, defensive coaches are signaling plays they believe will counter an offensive play. In this case, the defensive coach believes the offense is preparing to run "play action," thus the title of this play: "Cov. 4 play action."

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[62] My use of "mode" falls in line with how Jeff Bezemer and Gunther Kress define mode: "a socially and culturally shaped resource for making meaning" (171). I later mold this definition to suggest how student-athletes have modes of meaning making unfairly forced upon. This causes many student-athletes to view the multimodal texts they engage with for their specific sport as rigid and deterministic texts and not as a text which grants students a measure of what Selfe echoing Lyons calls "rhetorical sovereignty." Additionally, I am working with George Kamperelis and Lenora de la Luna's definition of text as "coherent constellation of signs that constitute a structure of meaning for some audience" (241). While Stephen Witte provides the definition of text as "organized set of symbols or signs" (237), what I most appreciate Kamperelis and Luna's definition is the emphasis on audience.

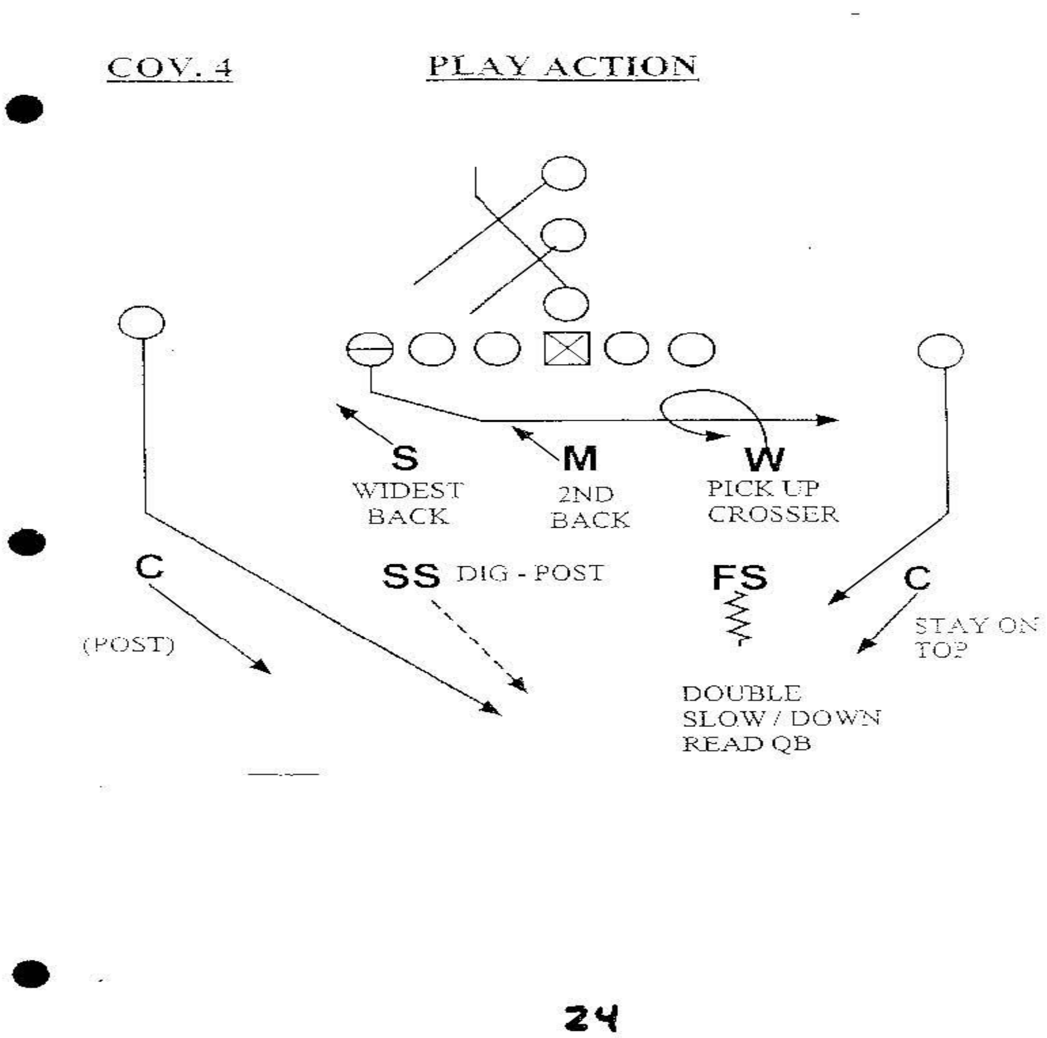
COV. 4
PLAY ACTION
S
WIDEST BACK
M
2ND BACK
W
PICK UP CROSSER
C
(POST)
SS DIG - POST
FS
DOUBLE SLOW / DOWN READ QB
C
STAY ON TOP
24

Fig. 1. Cov. 4 play action, excerpted from Auburn's 2003-2004 defensive playbook, illustrates the complex multimodal construction of a typical football play. Working left to right starting at the top, "S" is the strong side linebacker; "M" is the middle linebacker; and "W" is the weak side linebacker. On the bottom from left to right, "C" is a cornerback, "SS" is the strong safety, "FS" is the free safety, and "C" is the other cornerback.

The circles are symbolic signs which the coaches have trained the players to view as representing offensive players; the square with the X is the center responsible for snapping the ball to the quarterback (QB). The circle immediately behind the square is the QB, the next circle is the fullback, and the final circle is the tailback. During a play action, the QB receives the ball from the center and has been trained to fake a handoff to the fullback with the halfback running ahead to block the defense. Ideally, the dbs and linebackers have been tricked by the fake hand-off and is rushing forward toward the halfback, leaving the receivers open to catch the ball. The QB, still in possession of the ball, runs out to either side of the field looking to throw the ball to an open receiver. To counter the play action, the defense needs to "read" the fake handoff. Once they have successfully identified the handoff as fake, the defensive players have been systemically trained to cover the receivers.

The football student-athlete is responsible for knowing that "Sam" is directed to cover the "WIDEST BACK." Here, the widest back would be the tailback. "Mike" is responsible for covering the "2^ND^ BACK" or the fullback. "Will" is directed to "PICK UP CROSSER." In this case, the crosser is the tight end. While "Sam," "Mike" and "Will" are responsible for covering people, through the dbs' play literacy, their way of being in the world, they innately understand that they need to cover spaces. As a Cover 4, the field is divided into quarters with each db responsible for a predetermined quarter of the field.

The key to running this defensive play effectively is to not allowing the receivers to get behind the dbs. If a receiver's route leads into the middle of the field, then one of the safeties covers him (i.e., "DIG POST"). The FS plays closer to the line of scrimmage and is responsible for “reading” the play action by the QB. Once play action has been identified, the FS drops back into coverage, waiting for a receiver to move into the center of the field.

The University of West Virginia’s Zone Read

700 miles away, a different conference, and a different approach to the game; the mountains of Appalachia verses the plains of the Deep South: the differences are evident between Auburn and the University of West Virginia. Yet despite these surface differences, both schools—schools that take great pride in their football teams—are churning out the same high-level college football players and are constructing a system in which these student-athletes are responsible for developing a play literacy involving second-nature embodied rhetoric.

The story of Rich Rodriguez, the former head coach of West Virginia, is a common head college football coach story: after grinding away at little-known colleges, a man is given the chance at an elite program. After spending years at Salem International University and Glenville State, Rodriguez landed a job as offensive coordinator at Tulane. Down in New Orleans, Rodriguez refined a unique offensive style: the zone read. Believing teams could have more success running than throwing the ball, Rodriguez sought out an athletic and quick quarterback who could read opposing defenses and run the ball when needed. He was right; Tulane went 12-0. Tulane’s head coach was hired at Clemson, and Rodriguez made the move from Conference USA to the big-time Big East Conference. Again, Rodriguez succeeded, and he parlayed his success into the head coaching gig at his alma mater: the University of West Virginia. Yet he skipped town after six years when the University of Michigan came calling with a six-year, $15 million contract. Unfortunately, things went south quickly for Rodriguez. He was fired following two tumultuous seasons. After taking a year off, Rodriguez resurfaced at the University of Arizona, for less money and less prestige, but also for the chance to get away from the heavy spotlight at Michigan and get back to doing what he does best: running a zone read offense at a school where few expect much football success.

But beyond charting the rise and fall and rise again of a well-known coach, tracing Rodriguez's brief career trajectory points to the significant of plays for college football. Rodriguez was able to move from obscure Glenville State to powerful Michigan because he was able to train his players to almost automatically embody and then enact his plays on the field. Through developing effective plays play literacy in players, which invited them to shed individual agency in order to perform a rigid multimodal text, Rodriguez secured a $15 million contract. When Rodriguez was fired from Michigan, it was not because he did not win enough games or design effective plays—though those reasons were indirectly linked to his dismissal. He was fired because he could not find and develop players who could effectively embody and enact his plays. The result was losing too many games according to Michigan's lofty standards (even losing to the hated Ohio State), but the loss of games resulted from players not properly embracing the system Rodriguez designed.

The play below comes from West Virginia's 2005-2006 offensive playbook.[63] That season the team notched an 11-1 record—the lone loss coming to Virginia Tech—

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[63] Like many playbooks, this one contains a thick introductory set of inspirational material. An odd admixture of pop psychology, thinly veiled references to the Bible, John Denver song lyrics, and

and defeated the University of Georgia in the Sugar Bowl. The Mountaineers won their second Big East championship, and Rodriguez was named Big East Coach of the Year for the second time. The offense averaged over 32 points per game, exploding for over 40 points three times. And as the Auburn defense facilitated on-field success, it was the zone read offense that led to the Mountaineers' success.

The zone read works from the basic premise that it is easier for the offensive player to "read" a defender and run away from him than it is to block him. Once the quarterback receives the ball from the center, he reads the defense. In other words, if the quarterback sees the defense moving toward the ball, he does one thing; if he sees the defense remain still and wait for the play to develop, he does a different thing. The play sounds obvious enough and one cannot help but wonder why it took coaches close to a hundred years to arrive at the zone read. But football, like most sports, is steeped in tradition. Coaches run their offense the way they were taught to run it by their mentor, and the mentor learned from his mentor. Innovation comes slowly, if at all, in football. And the zone read was arrived at by accident.[64] Once Rodriguez saw the play work in practice, he put it into a game. Sixteen years later, Rodriguez earned conference championships and won a multimillion dollar contract at Michigan.

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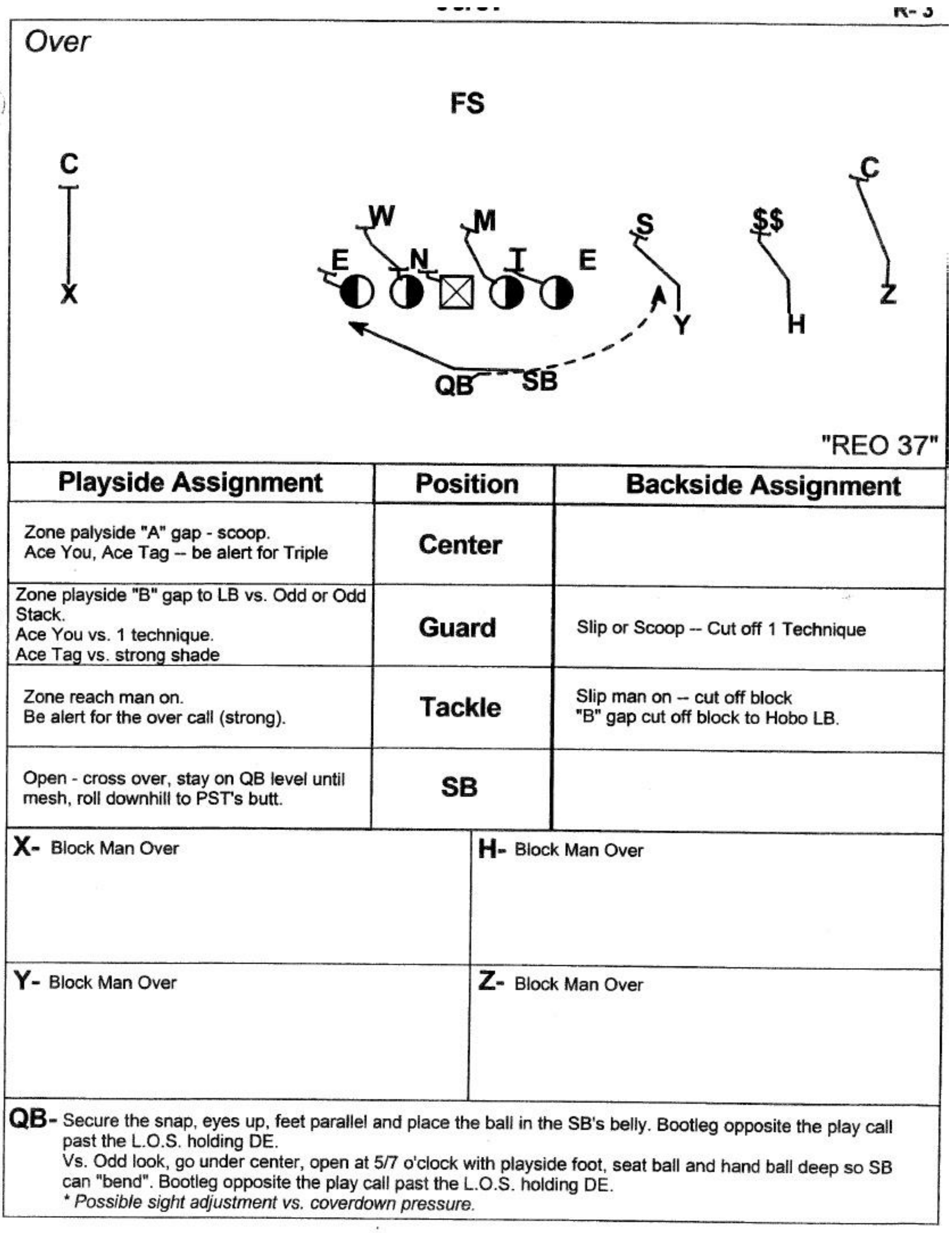
inspirational mantras, the opening section of this playbook is constructed to convey the personality of Rodriguez and the personality he would like his team to adopt.

[64] Tim Layden's *Blood, Sweat and Chalk* traces seminal innovations in football plays. In his chapter on Rodriguez, Layden provides the account of the accidental discovery of the zone read in 1990 at Glenville State College:

> One afternoon, Drenning [the quarterback] bobbled the snap on one of these zone-blocked running plays. Unable to get the handoff delivered to the running back, Drenning tucked the ball himself and saw the backside defensive end crashing down the line of scrimmage to tackle the running back—who…did not have the ball but was behaving as if he did . . . [When a play is not run properly] the quarterback customarily follows the running back into the assigned hole and tries to salvage yardage. But Drenning, seeing the end closing, instead ran wide into the area vacated by the [defensive] end. . . . This…was the birth of the modern 'zone-read.' (165)

In this specific instantiation of the zone read (see fig. 2), the positions are referenced in a similar fashion as they were in Auburn’s play. Upon snapping the ball, as the detailed alphabetic chart below the play tells us, the wide-receivers (“X,” “Z,” “Y,” and “H”) run forward trying to trick their defenders into thinking a pass is coming. On the line of scrimmage, the two “Es,” the “N” and the “T” positions have specific blocking assignments. However, the majority of the action that captures the attention of the fans in the stands and those in front of the television in this play involves the quarterback (“Q”) and the running back (curiously titled “SB” possible for “setback”). Needing a quick Q and SB to run this play, Q is directed by the textbox to “Secure the snap, eyes up, feet parallel and place the ball in the SB’s belly.” The QB has been socialized to then run the opposite direction—hoping to distract the defense—while the SB runs around the right side of the line of scrimmage.


Over
FS
C
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QB
SB

"REO 37"

Playside Assignment	Position	Backside Assignment
Zone palyside "A" gap - scoop. Ace You, Ace Tag -- be alert for Triple	Center	
Zone playside "B" gap to LB vs. Odd or Odd Stack. Ace You vs. 1 technique. Ace Tag vs. strong shade	Guard	Slip or Scoop -- Cut off 1 Technique
Zone reach man on. Be alert for the over call (strong).	Tackle	Slip man on -- cut off block "B" gap cut off block to Hobo LB.
Open - cross over, stay on QB level until mesh, roll downhill to PST's butt.	SB	

X- Block Man Over

H- Block Man Over

Y- Block Man Over

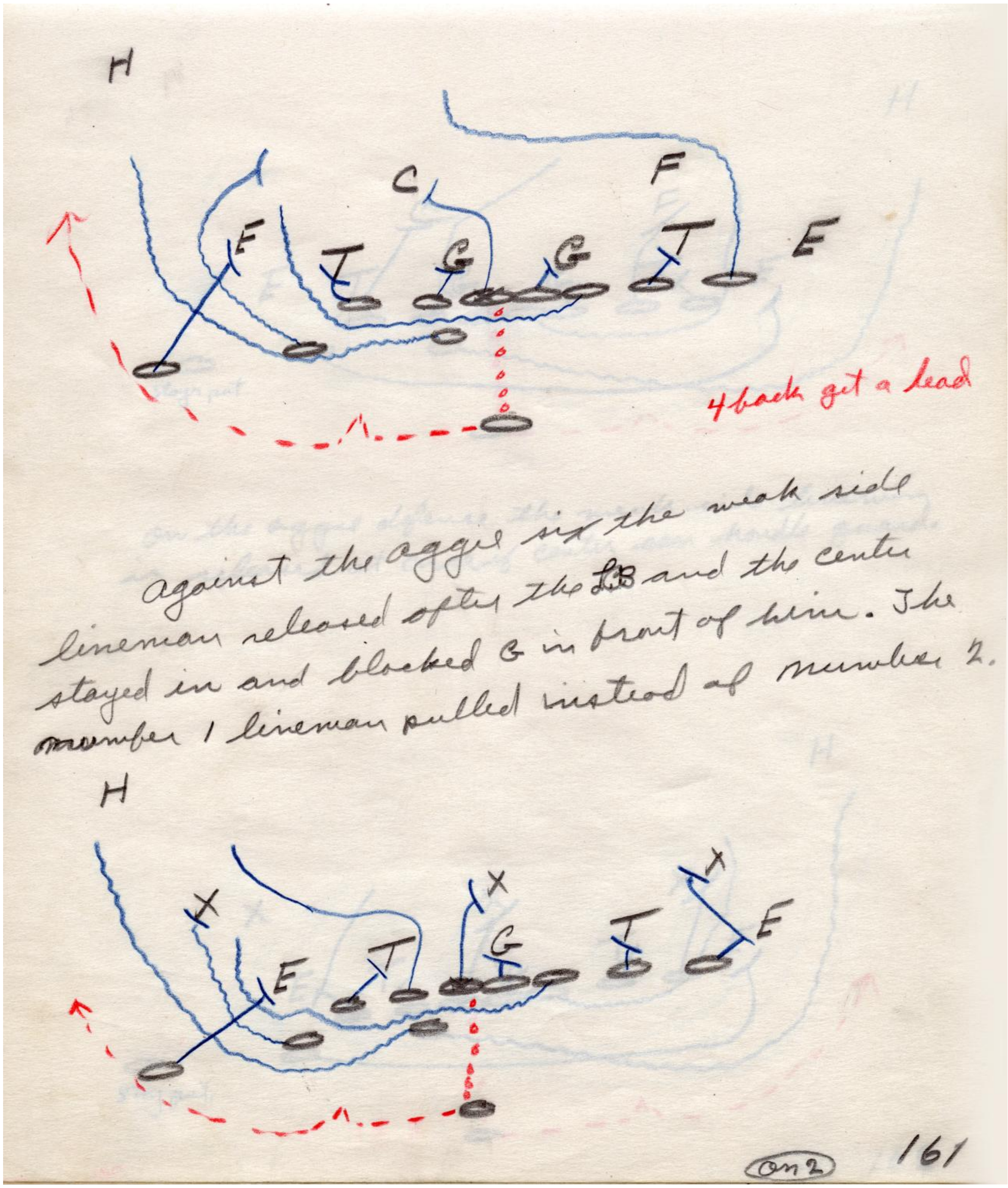
Z- Block Man Over

QB- Secure the snap, eyes up, feet parallel and place the ball in the SB's belly. Bootleg opposite the play call past the L.O.S. holding DE.
Vs. Odd look, go under center, open at 5/7 o'clock with playside foot, seat ball and hand ball deep so SB can "bend". Bootleg opposite the play call past the L.O.S. holding DE.
** Possible sight adjustment vs. coverdown pressure.*

Fig. 2. The zone-read was the foundation of West Virginia's potent offensive attack. The complicated nature of the play "Reo 37" is evidenced by the alphabetic text heavy play. While Auburn's play relied more on iconic signs, this play relies on the alphabetic chart—divided into three columns—to unpack the depth of meaning. The faded top-right corner was in the original. UWV also makes use of some curious abbreviations, for example the "$$" sign in the upper right, instead of the typical "SS" for strong safety.

The University of Oklahoma's 1942 Playbook

Both the Auburn and West Virginia plays come from the past decade; however, college football plays operate in a rich and lengthy history of incorporating multiple modes to convey meaning in a unified text. Players have long been formed as an institutionally constructed subject and socialized in play literacy. Housed in the Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries, is a 1942 football playbook used by then-head coach Dewey William "Snorter" Luster. Luster coached the Sooner football team in the mid-forties, facing challenges fielding a full team as World War II was snatching up men across college campuses. Despite the challenge, OU still had one of the stronger teams in the conference as evidenced by the fact that OU twice won the conference in the five years Luster was in charge. Guiding the team during the 1942 season is a loose collection of plays that were later collected and bound. The plays are all handwritten in either colored pencil (blue, black, and red) or blue ink. Some of the plays, such as fig. 3, have sentences scrawled across them. These sentences are constructed in past tense as if Luster is remembering what was successful against the opponent.



against the aggie six the weak side lineman released after the LB and the center stayed in and blocked G in front of him. The number 1 lineman pulled instead of number 2.

Fig. 3. The top and bottom plays are similar except for some slight variation in the blocking scheme on the far right side on both plays. The cursive text, composed in past tense, reads: "against the Aggie [the former nickname of Oklahoma State] six the weak side lineman reloaded after the LB [linebacker] and the center stayed in and blocked G [a guard] in front of him. The number 1 lineman pulled instead of number 2." The original play is in color pencil: the defensive positions in black, the blocking schemes in blue, and the dashed line shooting off to the left, in red. Courtesy of the Dewey "Snorter" Luster Collection, Box 4, Item 1, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries.

Despite the metacognitive move of ruminating in writing on the play, contemporary plays look no different; the geometric shapes, abbreviations, and lines are still modes of representation used by coaches. The circles represent the offensive players; "E," "T," and "G" represent the ends, the tackles, and the guards. Blocks are still represented by long "T" shaped lines. And the individual running the ball downfield is still represented by a dashed line with an optimistic arrow pointing toward the endzone. This play and Rodriguez's play share more commonalities than differences despite a 60 year gulf between the two.

Additionally, returning the discussion to recent composition and rhetoric discussions of multimodality, this now seventy-year-old multimodal text speaks to Jason Palmeri's recent argument in *Remixing Composition: A History of Multimodal Writing Pedagogy.* Palmeri undertakes the important work of revisiting and rewriting a history of writing instruction to show that theory and practice on writing pedagogy has been invested in multimodality before the term came into vogue. While his focus is not altogether unique, Palmeri elucidates *pedagogy's* history of attending to multimodal components and concerns prior to the actual coining of the term "multimodality."[65] Palmeri focuses on the period 1960-1980 to demonstrate how "compositionists have studied and taught alphabetic writing as a profoundly multimodal thinking process" (16). He rereads seminal studies in the field, such as Janet Emig's *Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders,* Nancy Sommers's work on revision, and Linda Flower and John Hayes's focus on cognitive approaches to writing, to highlight the "interdisciplinary study of creative composing" (28) and creative problem-solving, both of which Palmeri sees as hallmarks of contemporary understandings of multimodality.

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[65] Writing prior to Palmeri, Lester Faigley argued literacy has always been multimodal, a point Judith Wooten, in her 2006 CCCC Chair's Address, echoes. Christopher Carter brings multimodality to bear on rhetoric and contends "rhetors throughout history have combined the available means of persuasion, whether voice or page, texture or cadence, to engage the intellect and excite the senses" (118). Also focused on rhetoric, Robert Connors argues "Multimodal perspectives on rhetoric can been seen as far back as Augustine's *De Doctrina*" (60).

For example, Palmeri notes in "A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing," Flower and Hayes place a great deal of emphasis on the fact that "writers do not think in words alone" (Palmeri 33). Instead, invention often involves mental imagery which may be represented in a wide variety of symbol systems. As Palmeri explains, "If writing about a remembered place, the writer might perceive sensory (auditory, visual, olfactory) images of the place" (Palmeri 32). Invention operates in these different symbol systems—and I suggest we read the term "symbol system" as synonymous with mode—and allows writers freedom in "setting a rhetorical goal" (Palmeri 32) through modes beyond traditional alphabetic text. Thus, the benefit for the writer is on expanding the modes available prior to the construction of a text—a component of contemporary multimodal pedagogy.

While multimodality for Palmeri is largely concerned with visual, aural (extending Selfe's argument), and digital composing, his stance still translates to the largely text-based multimodality of college football. For just as Luster exhibits college football's long tradition of engaging with multimodality, so too does Palmeri shows us that multimodality has long been a part of composing and pedagogy. Before scholars in our field had begun to theorize and pedagogically deploy this specific rhetoric, those inside (scholars/practitioners of writing) and outside (college football coaches) of our field were looking to multimodality as a creative and even practical means of conveying meaning though no one was using the term to describe his/her efforts. Nor was there a language in place to conceptualize such meaning-making. Hallmarks of multimodality helped Sommers sketch a case for creative approaches to the challenging process of revision, and helped Luster reflect in several modes on what worked well against the rival Aggies.

College Basketball Plays

Like football, college basketball relies on plays. There are, however, important differences. For one, basketball coaches, unlike football coaches, are not apt to prowl the sidelines with a collection of concrete plays. In other words, while football coaches refer to a concrete text when relaying a play, basketball coaches often have internalized their plays and rapidly shout them out in a game or furiously sketch them onto white board during a timeout. Additionally, unlike football there are times during a game, such as a fast break or a dwindling shot clock, where a team works more from improv than script. Also, the proximity of the players to the coach is much closer than in football. At most, players will be 95 feet—the length of a basketball court—from their coach, and a voice or, in the loudest of arenas, hand signals, can carry information. Despite these differences, I will demonstrate that both sports utilize multimodal practices with a constrictive view of language undergirding these practices. And like football, basketball works from its own unique, though much simpler, terminology. Played with five men, basketball is divided into positions that are, easily enough, numbered 1 through 5. 1 is the point guard; 2 is the shooting guard; 3 is the small forward; 4 is the power forward; 5 is the center, usually the tallest player on the team. The players at each position are generally taller and heavier as the numbers go up.

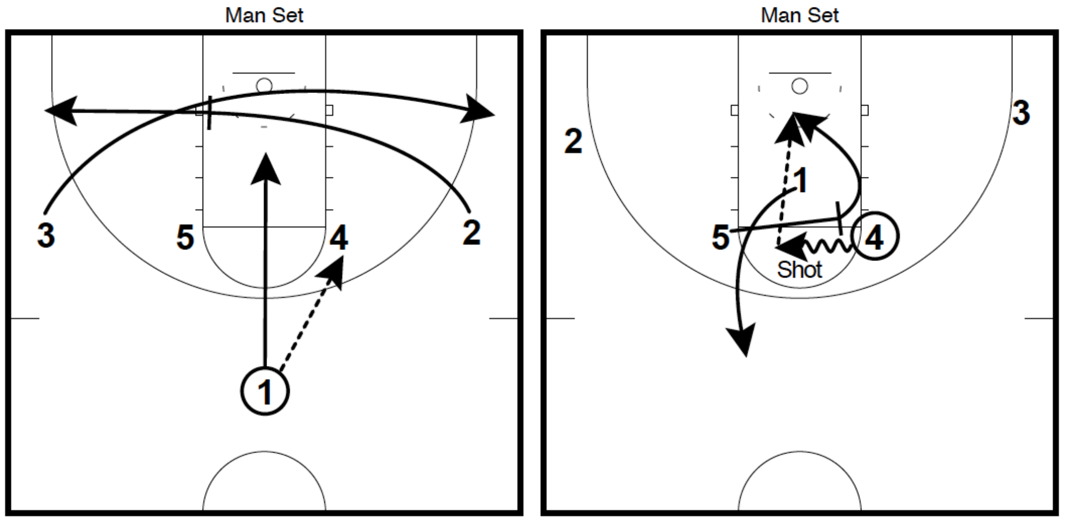
Michigan State's 2012 "54 Fist"

A perennial powerhouse in Division I men's basketball are the Michigan State Spartans. Since current head coach Tom Izzo took over in 1995, the Spartans have recorded an impressive .709 winning percentage, a national championship, six Final Four appearances, and seven Big-10 conference championships. As a further testament to his coaching, Izzo helped five of his former assistant coaches land jobs coaching at Division I schools, and 12 of his former players were selected in the NBA draft.

The play "54 Fist" (see fig. 4) comes from the 2011-2012 basketball season. Opening that season by playing the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill on the deck of the U.S.S. Carl Vinson, a 95,000 ton Nimitz-class aircraft carrier off the coast of Coronado, California, the Spartans went on to compile a 29-8 record, tying for first in the Big-10, and falling to Louisville in the Sweet Sixteen—the catchy term for the last remaining sixteen teams in the NCAA basketball tournament.

Michigan State

54 Fist



- 2 sets a baseline screen for 3
- 1 enters the ball into 4 and cuts to the middle of the lane

- Once 1 gets into the lane, 5 comes across to set a ball screen for 4
- 1 flashes back to the key immediately after 5 starts getting into ball screen position
- 4 comes off of the ball screen for a pull up jumper or can hit 5 rolling to the rim

Fig. 4. The play "54 Fist" takes its name from the 4 and 5 positions responsible for the majority of the play's action. 2 and 3 largely hang around the perimeter watching the play unfold.

Many of the modes present are also present in college football plays: the "T" shape representing screens, the basketball version of a block in football; zigzagged, dashed, or straight lines conveying movement; alphabetic text complementing the visual representation of the play. Here, however, players are represented by number instead of geometric shape, and the opposing team is missing from the play. The ball movement is broken into separate frames. The player with the ball is circled. Dribbling is conveyed with a zigzag and a pass with a dashed line; player movement without the ball is represented by a solid line.

This multimodal play has three layers of meaning for readers to sift through. The initial layer is the iconic sign of the basketball court transposed on the play. The next two layers appear to be of equal importance as they convey the same information—one in multiple modes, one in standard (i.e., grammatically and syntactically sound) alphabetic text. The symbolic signs of player, ball, ball movement, and "Shot," are laminated over the iconic sign. The alphabetic text is the final layer existing outside of the frame of the play, which provides the complementary function of alphabetically transcribing the constellation of modes inside of the frame.

Arizona State University's "Nike"[66]

Save for West Virginia, all the schools thus far have won national championships since 2000. All these schools can point to recent high-level success on the athletic field for the respective sports from which these plays came. But not so with Arizona State. A solid but not excellent athletic program, ASU has flirted with high-level success yet has never made a habit of being at the top of the Pacific-12 conference or national standings in basketball or football.

ASU's basketball had a program-high Elite Eight appearance in the NCAA tournament in 1985 but has only been to the NCAA tournament once since current coach Herb Sendek arrived in 2006. I bring this up and juxtapose ASU's struggles in basketball with MSU's successes to show that in either case—a solid or struggling program—coaches construct plays in the same manner. No matter if we are looking at Duke University, one of the top men's basketball teams in the nation, or a tiny Division III college struggling to field a team, college basketball coaches are constructing and implementing multimodal plays. However, as I demonstrate shortly, athletic programs via multimodal playbooks turn student-athletes into static visual information. By showing evidence from high-level as well as struggling programs, I aim to fend off the idea that it's not just high-level programs negatively transforming their student-athletes.

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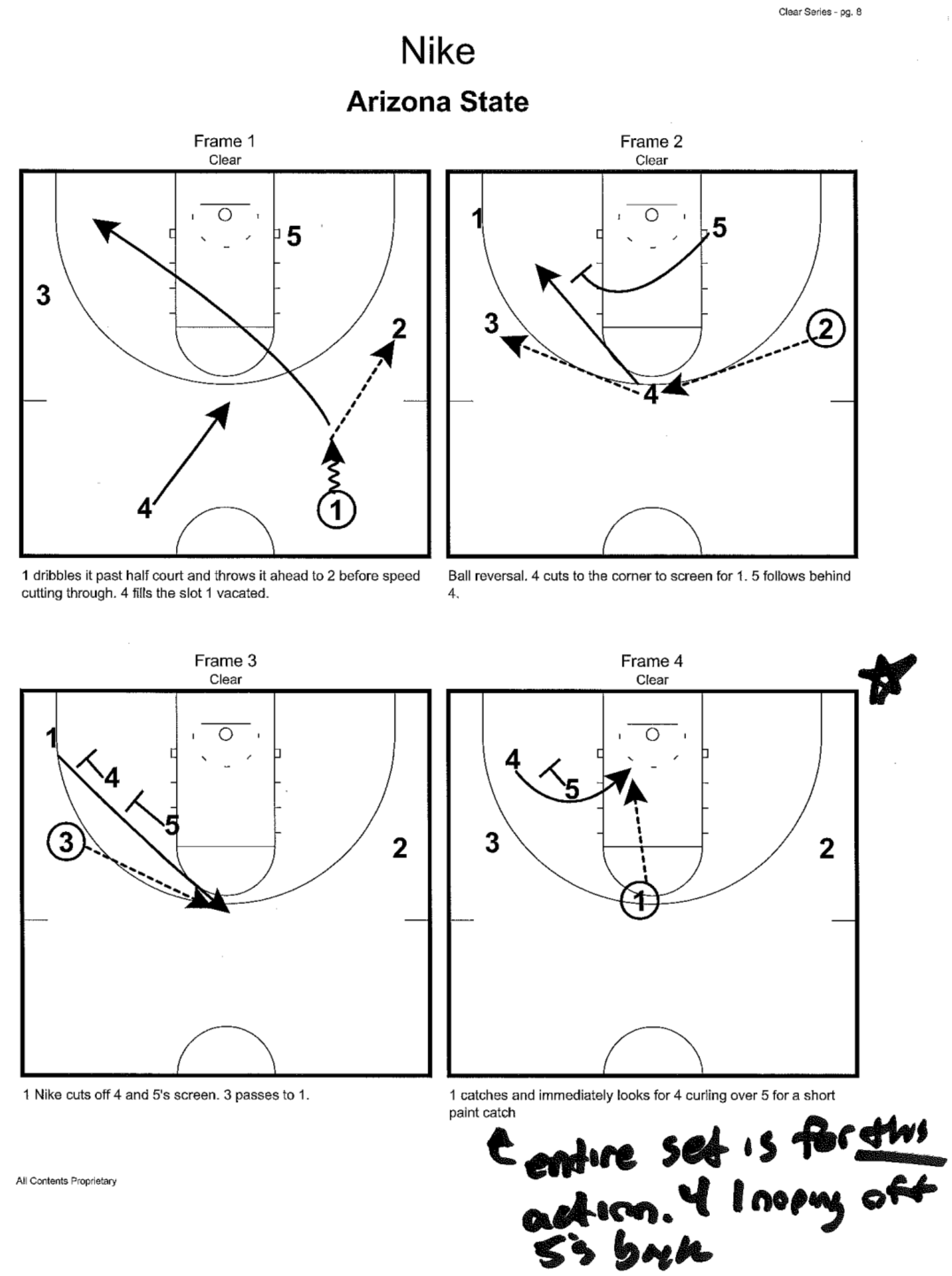
[66] Unfortunately, I was not able to locate a date for the ASU play.



Clear Series - pg. 8

Nike

Arizona State

Frame 1
Clear

1 dribbles it past half court and throws it ahead to 2 before speed cutting through. 4 fills the slot 1 vacated.

Frame 2
Clear

Ball reversal. 4 cuts to the corner to screen for 1. 5 follows behind 4.

Frame 3
Clear

1 Nike cuts off 4 and 5's screen. 3 passes to 1.

Frame 4
Clear

1 catches and immediately looks for 4 curling over 5 for a short paint catch

All Contents Proprietary

← entire set is for this action. 4 looping off 5's back

Fig. 5. Through its use of lines to represent spatial direction and morphing players into symbols, ASU's play "Nike" draws parallels to the multimodal football plays examined earlier.

The symbolic and iconic symbols, the multiple modes, the layering of meaning, and the use of framing are all seen in Fig. 5, ASU's play. Here a wrinkle arises, which was also seen in Luster's play: metacognitive writing. After the play was transcribed and printed onto sheets of paper—most assuredly by a lowly graduate assistant—either the head coach or an assistant coach, marked on top of the play, adding a fourth layer to the play. Again, why the coach did this is purely a guess: maybe his players did not understand the play; maybe he forgot to add this detail earlier before the play was transcribed. But what this addendum does reveal is that multimodal texts in this community of practice are not closed and finalized texts. Texts are always under construction, always being revised. Plays are a working dialogue between players and coaches, between coaches, and even between players. These textual maps of embodied, competitive rhetoric are fluid representations of a team's actions. But this map is only fluid for the coaches. Players must rigidly respond to changes made by the coaches. A range of choice belongs to the coaches and not the student-athletes. Play literacy and the subjectivity thrust upon players insist they adapt to quick changes making it all the more overwhelming for the players.

Constrictive Modes

While college football and basketball plays adhere to typical multimodal assignments given in college writing classes, the meaning making processes between these two spheres are different. The proper execution of a play requires the player to adhere to a constrictive view of language: linguistic structuralism. [67] Crucially formative for many literary and rhetorical theories, linguistic structuralism comes largely from work of Swiss semiotician and linguist Ferdinand de Saussure who is often seen as the progenitor of twentieth century linguistics. While Saussure doesn't specifically use the term, his *Course in General Linguistics* formed the foundation for what we now know as structuralism.[68] For Saussure, language was not a function of the speaker or a product which the speaker passively assimilated. Instead, Saussure believed that when a person spoke, the person was using something conventional, something in the public sphere, and that that language existed as an aggregate. An aggregate view of language allowed it to be systematically studied and analyzed, viewed as an object of science. This systematic approach to language, something Russian formalism later adopted, was largely a result of Saussure's frustration with the then-current field of linguistics, specifically the Neo-Grammarians' positivist and, what Saussure viewed as, sloppy approach to studying language.

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[67] For a more in-depth introduction to Saussure, see Jonathan Culler's *Ferdinand de Saussure*, Terence Hawkes's *Structuralism and Semiotics*, and Daniel Chandler's *Semiotics: The Basics*. While there is certainly no shortage of works explicating Saussurean linguistics, these works are especially helpful.

Concomitant with this understanding of language (i.e., the belief that language exists all at once as a totality), Saussure began exploring how speakers tap into this collective, deeper language structure undergirding everyday language use—"structuralism" taking its cue from this deeper structure—and began differentiating between language and speech. Speech, for Saussure, is how speakers appropriate, deploy, and make use of language, a process he terms *parole* and a term nearly synonymous with the more contemporary term "speech act." The opposite coordinate is *langue*, roughly synonymous with language. *Langue* is the deeper structure, the totality of language existing apart from but informing an individual speech act. Taken together, *langue* and *parole* occur in time. Moving back firmly to structuralism, this language theory seeks to discover this underlying system, the *langue*, which governs the speech act. Whereas earlier linguistic theories were concerned with language's evolution over time (a diachronic perspective), Saussure espoused a synchronic view of language—working from a different ontological foundation than diachronic (Jameson 6)—where a linguistic system is examined in a particular state with no time reference. This perspective approaches language as static and unchanged phenomenon, a "storehouse of sound-images" (Saussure 15) implying a complete and finite language.

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[68] *Course in General Linguistics* was not directly written by Saussure but a compendium of lecture notes gathered together by two of his disciples. Additionally, while Saussure helped give birth to structuralism, it was the Russian Roman Jakobson who first coined the term in his essay "Linguistics and Poetics."

Moreover, Saussure argued language is a system of signs. His well-known examine is imagining a picture of a tree and then the letters "A-R-B-O-R," Latin for "tree." The picture of the tree, or concept, Saussure calls the signified; the word "arbor" itself is the signifier or sound image. For Saussure, a relationship existed between that which is signified and that which signifies it. This relationship is necessary for language to operate—for what would happen if one had the picture of a tree in one's head, but uttered the word "dog"?—but the relationship is arbitrary; there is no logical reason why a picture of a tree causes an ancient Roman to utter "arbor," a Spaniard to say "el árbol," an Englishman to pronounce "tree." The concept and the sound image are the binary coordinates of a sign, and individuals speak through the unfolding of these binary signs across time.

The concept that the sound image refers to the concept is not altogether a novel idea; Saussure transferred ideas in John Locke's "Essay on Human Understanding" into linguistics. What is novel is when Saussure stresses that the relationship between the sound image and the concept, the signified and the signifier, is arbitrary and that speakers are able to know one sign from another through the sign's differential, through knowing all the things related to it which it is *not*. In other words, we gain a stronger understanding of the sound image "boat" through understanding the sound image and the concept of "plane," "car," "train," "skateboard," and other modes of transportation that are difference and not "boat." We do not gain a stronger understanding of the sound "boat" through the sound image and concept of "yacht," "skiff," "catamaran," and "ship," words nearly synonymous with "boat."

Within rhetoric and composition, scholars have been mostly mute regarding structural linguistics which is curious considering the field's lasting attention to Bahktin, who was writing in response to such a static model of linguistics. In one of the seminal anthologies in the field, Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg's *The Rhetorical Tradition,* Saussure is not given space, though one could envision Saussure positioned in the "Modern and Postmodern Rhetoric section," possibly before the semiotic theory of I.A. Richards and C.K. Ogden. In the 102 pieces in the Susan Miller edited *The Norton Book of Composition Studies,* only three make use of Saussure and one does so in an end note.[69] In the Victor Villanueva and Kristin L. Arola co-edited current third edition of *Cross-Talk in Comp Theory,* no article establishes Saussure as a theoretical foundation and a search of "Saussure" or "structuralism" in the index yields no results. [70] This exclusion makes a modicum of sense as Saussurean meaning-making—and academic descendants of Saussure such as Claude Lévi-Strauss—have been trounced largely because contemporary rhetoric scholars are drawn to more flexible models of language use and been more welcoming to poststructuralist theories of language and language use put forth by Derrida, Barthes, and others. Yet, I suggest our anthologies should account for a wide variety of perspectives, not simply those currently in fashion. It is true Saussure's static understanding of language has been debunked, but no one can argue the immense impact he had on twentieth century linguistics and by extension literary and rhetorical theory.

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[69] The three pieces are Nancy Sommer's "Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers," an excerpted chapter from James Kinneavy's *A Theory of Discourse*, and Patricia Bizzell's "Cognition, Convention, and Certainty: What We Need to Know About Writing," which makes use of Saussure in an end note.

[70] Saussure does, however, find room in the second edition of the Vincent Leitch edited *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Yet, this anthology is geared more toward literature and cultural studies over rhetoric and composition. Additionally, Leitch aims more for charting the trajectory of theory and criticism rather than locating hallmark pieces, as is the case with Villanueva's and Arola's, and Miller's edited collections.

When a Saussurean view of language is discussed in our field, however, it is often constructed as the antithesis to a dialogic view of language as is the case with Paul Prior's *Writing/Disciplinarity*. Interested in articulating the meaning of and need for a sociohistoric view of language, Prior juxtaposes the Saussurean structural and Bakhtinian dialogic view of language. After acknowledging the foundational role Saussure played in twentieth century linguistics and semiotics, Prior characterizes structuralism's bent to language as abstract, spatialized and hierarchical (5). He then contends knowledge for structuralism is "abstract, unified, [and] almost Platonic" (9) and tackles structuralism's limitations. Doing so provides space for Prior to extrapolate a sociohistoric view of language, the theoretical framework for the remainder of his text. Prior helpfully constructs structuralism as a stepping stone to a more accurate understanding of knowledge production and language use and thus indirectly illustrates how our field has moved past such a rigid model of language and language use.

While rhetoric and composition has largely moved away from Saussure and toward a dialogic view of knowledge production and meaning-making, his concepts are, strangely enough, a useful method for interpreting college football and basketball plays for proper learning and execution of a play demand a structural approach. On a parole level, individuals are condensed into, for football, either a geometrical shape for offensive players or letters for defensive players; basketball players assume a number. Individuality is jettisoned for uniformity which parallels a basic practice of structuralism: "decontextualization and abstraction" (Prior 6). This practice involves reducing the "historical particularities of persons, places and events . . . to a simpler set of *abstract typifications*" (6; emphasis added). These "abstract typifications" are seen with football plays where football positions like "C," "S," and "M," are substituted for a unique person.

While representing individuals as "abstract typifications" seems odious enough, Prior continues and the resonance with football plays and the erasure of individuality grows eerier: "In more radical forms of decontextualization, whole human actors are *synecdochically displaced* by algebraic formulae, black box cognitive graphics, and branching diagrams" (6; emphasis added). With "human actors," we can substitute "football players;" we can add "geometric shapes" to Prior's triadic list of unfortunate level of displacement. A player becomes displaced by an alphabetic character and then a geometric shape—often a straight or squiggly line—predetermines the spatial direction the human actor will take.[71] For example in Figure 1, we see "S" will move to the left; "C" will drop back right. Football players become pawns on a chessboard manipulated by the system. Their moves are predetermined, governed, and the more machine-like the players appear, the more positive feedback they receive from coaches, teammates, and even paid and amateur commentators. Football players, individuals with unique idiosyncrasies, morph into cogs in a machine.[72] Their given names are lost (save for the teams that elect to use a player's last name on his jersey), replaced instead by a number tagged on the front, side, and back of the jersey. In addition to the number, the player is given a position nickname (e.g., Mike or Rover) and further funneled away from autonomy when individual decision making, something as common as spatial location, is stripped away in honor of the underlying system. Basketball players don't make out any better. Numbers represent players and again spatial direction is dictated by a line—be it squiggly, dashed, or straight.

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[71] This act of displacement parallels what Marc Bousquet calls "informationalization"—people represented as (and thus reduced to) abstract data—during his larger discussion of critiquing the labor structure of the university. See pages 60-66 in *How the University Works* for additional material.

This underlying system is revealed through the *parole*, the speech act of running the play. Yet the system finds thrust at the deeper level: the *langue*, the aggregate composite of language which makes the speech act possible. In the deeper structure, football plays are responding to the need to decenter the subject, elide difference, and create a static language that translates to and governs all. The deeper structure is integral to effective play execution or, more simply, communication. Thus, resistance to this structure is difficult to sustain as a player who constantly flaunts the rigid structure of a play most assuredly would find himself off the team or sitting on the bench.

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[72] This mechanical metaphor causes me to think of a July 2012 *NPR* story which reported on the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth's medal prediction formula, which had a 95% accuracy rate in the 2008 Olympic Games and predicted China to win the most medals in 2012. According to Emily Williams, a researcher at Tuck, the medal prediction formula is "based on the concept that athletes are a lot like *complex machines*. And so the more people a country has, the more complex machines there are, and the more resources that that country has in terms of GDP per capita, the more *they can turn these complex machines into Olympic athletes*." Here Olympic caliber athletics are gauged and measured as one would natural resources, crops, or, quite simply, as one would measure a tangible economic product. For Williams, these athletes are not categorized as human, but are akin to, in her words, complex machines. Though Williams is focusing on professional athletes—and the NCAA does everything in its power to quell any sign of professionalism in college sports—student-athletes and Olympic athletes are on parallel tracks through being portrayed as faceless means for an economic boost.

While fans enthusiastically celebrate a play "breaking-down," causing the offense or defense to scramble wildly, and while fans cheer athletic expressions of individual agency, what is largely commanded with limited room for variation by coaches is a smooth running of a play. Predictability and execution are desirable traits in this system, not capricious decision making. Meaning at the *langue* level is always already present and does not arise in a dialectical relationship between, say, "5" and the play; dialectical relationships, those espoused by contemporary rhetorics (e.g., social-epistemic rhetoric), are nonexistent. Meaning is a container that can be cracked open at any place at any time and the knowledge inside will be understandable. For Fredric Jameson, writing in *The Prison House of Language,* "militant anti-humanism" (139), which he refers to as structuralism's "most scandalous aspect" (139) and an anti-historical approach (7) propel structuralism. The system is all encompassing, wresting away individual autonomy in favor of the self-contained cultural code of the system. College football and basketball play literacy demands a structural reading, and players are rarely invited to approach plays through a different form of meaning making.

Though it is imbued with a dangerous view of language, this is college football and basketball writing for the speech act of running the play is transcribed into a text via specifically selected modes. And this is a mode of writing which resonates with how current scholars and organizations conceptualize writing though the field has long ignored the athletic part of the university experience. When Yancey noted that "we have multiple modes of composing operating simultaneously" ("Impulse to Compose" 331), she could have, however unlikely, pointed to a college football play for evidence. Yet football plays, with their deconstruction of a hierarchical system of meaning making (i.e., alphabetic text dominant over image, sound, and other modes), adhere to Yancey's vision of the New Age of Composition. Moreover, under the NCTE's 2004 position statement "NCTE Beliefs about the Teaching of Writing," the Executive Committee provides a section titled "Composing occurs in different modalities and technologies." They assert that "as basic tools for communicating expand to include modes beyond print alone, 'writing' comes to mean more than scratching words with pen and paper." While the NCTE is largely concerned with the multitude of modes and composing choices at a writer's disposal within the increased development of technology, the emphasis on what writing means, the nod toward the unlimited possibilities of what writing is and can be, resonates when viewing football plays as writing. Additionally, the "CCCC Statement on the Multiple Uses of Writing" contends that "to restrict students' engagement with writing to only academic contexts and forms is to risk narrowing what we as a nation can remember, understand, and create." When our professional organizations increasingly push for a larger understanding of what counts as writing—what Palmeri says we've been doing since the mid-60s—and argue for an understanding and acknowledgement of extracurricular writing, room is opened for an examination of college football and basketball plays as an instantiation of writing worthy of our attention. And since, as Saussure argued, writing represents language (23), looking at the football's writing hints at football's language system.

(Re)representing Multimodality

In *Multimodality: A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication*, Gunther Kress argues, "*Modes* are the result of a social and historical shaping of materials chosen by a society for representation" (11; emphasis in original). While Kress stresses "modes," I argue the quote's most salient aspect is the verb "chosen." "To choose" denotes, of course, one having the opportunity to select, say, option A over option B, C, or D. However, a (re)representing of multimodality must take into account Kress's problematic statement. Kress is assuming homogenous individuals form a given society. He assumes a society bereft of unique individuals and then suggests a society determines the appropriate modes for the collective individuals to espouse. Kress's assumption is especially true for college football and basketball players as they are a part of a society, but they are not given the opportunity to choose their modes of representation.[73]

Kress is correct in arguing the modes for any society are shaped socially and historically, and college football and basketball modes, the geometric shapes, lines, and numbers that coalesce into a play, are no different. However, the ability for members of a society to choose these modes for representation, is incredibly limited. These modes are and were chosen by coaches, not players. While both coaches and players inhabit the same "society" discussed by Kress, more agency is given to coaches than players. What this means for us is that we are working with student-athletes who have little to no agency with multimodality in one sphere and, when they step into our classroom, we mistakenly believe they will be able to quickly embrace newly granted agency and the choice to select the modes most appropriate for the assigned classroom project. When working with student-athletes, then, we may need to do more to facilitate agency, to facilitate the rhetorically based *choosing* of specific modes, beyond traditional alphabetic print, for representation. While multimodality may be an enfranchising rhetoric in our writing classroom, we would do well to remember that multimodality may not be as enfranchising in the other spheres our students inhabit.

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[73] It is curious that in this text, Kress describes modes as being shaped socially and historically. In his earlier article co-authored with Bezemer, Kress and Bezemer spoke to how modes are *culturally* shaped. Here, however, a culture shaping force seems to have been elided in favor of a historical shaping force. Yet, my argument that student-athletes are not partaking in the shaping of the modes in which they engage and that Kress assumes a homogenous society holds.

Remembering the previous chapter where I explored how the Older Sophists coalesced the spheres of athletics and rhetoric, the current construction of many of our institutions and writing programs sharply and erroneously divides the mind and body. Embodied competitive rhetoric which, for the Sophists, embraced the mind and the body is now reserved for student-athletes on the athletic field, not in the classroom. To be fair, a slice of scholarship attends to performativity and the act of embodying writing and rhetoric, but as I argued at the fore of this chapter, embodiment and performativity are now metaphors, generally not concrete representations of classroom practice. As the current envisioning of multimodality is increasingly pushed in the college writing classroom, the mind/body split will only be deepened.

When we look at these plays, we are studying powerful examples of working extracurricular texts, textual maps of embodied competitive rhetoric. What I mean by "working" is that these plays are put in constant and practical use. With immediate exigency propelling the creation and execution of these texts, games are won and lost, coaches hired and fired, stadiums sold out or not (leading to increased or decreased revenue for other non-revenue generating sports or even the university as a whole), based on these plays' effectiveness and faceless human actors to run these plays. Thinking solely of football, football plays are *the* language of *the* dominant sport in America. Players, college and pro alike, are pressured to learn up to 400 of these plays, remember patterns and the names of the play, and be able to execute them instantaneously and perfectly. A lot is riding on this instantiation of multimodality. Yet, this dominant language of the dominant sport in America is hindering the learning processes of the student-athletes in our classroom. For many student-athletes, extracurricular multimodality is a constrictive rhetoric though we imagine it as a pseudo-liberatory rhetoric. And this idea of a constrictive rhetoric cloaked as multimodality is especially curious when read alongside assertions Kress makes in *Multimodality*. In his opening chapter, Kress is musing on Saussurean linguistics and juxtaposes these "very high degrees of abstraction" (13) suggested by Saussure with multimodality. Doing so allows Kress to argue that

> By entire contrast [to Saussure], the study of *modes* in multimodal social semiotics focuses on the *material*, the *specific*, the *making* of signs *now*, in this environment for this occasion. In its focus on the material it also focuses on the bodilyness of those who make and remake signs in constant semiotic (inter) action. It represents a move away from high abstraction to the specific, the material; from the mentalistic to the bodily. (13; emphasis in original)

I largely agree with this quote. As I have hoped to demonstrate through looking at multimodal football and basketball plays through linguistic structuralism, what Saussure proposed was indeed "very high degrees of abstraction." And it is through advances in understanding of how language operates that composition and rhetoric scholars are now able to offer their students and the field in general more accurate and helpful descriptions of composing.

However, I have problems with the last two sentences. Kress suggests that through multimodality's focus on the material, it is also focuses on the bodily. Thus this new turn in social semiotics and language use is away from Saussurean linguistics—which largely ignored the material and the bodily—and toward a theory which accounts for and acknowledges the material and the bodily. I take issue with this argument. For one, Kress inaccurately represents how I see multimodality currently manifesting itself as a classroom practice. Current multimodal pedagogies crafted by Shipka, Selfe and Hawisher and others largely do not conflate the material with the bodily as Kress suggests. He attempts to make the logical move of connecting material with bodily ("In its focus on the material it also focuses on the bodilyness"), as if a rhetoric including an emphasis on the material necessary includes an emphasis on bodilyness. But I don't buy it, and I don't see current multimodal pedagogies buying it either. Certainly, material can include bodilyness. And I even would acknowledge that material precedes bodilyness, as Kress's sentence structure suggests. However, as I have argued before, the field appears to read bodily as more of a metaphor than an actual discussion and inclusion of skin and bones, breathing and heart-beating. Yet what Kress describes—multimodality encompassing the material and the bodily—is typically not enacted in the classroom. Sure there are exceptions, two of which are the work of Barry Kroll and Daisy Levy. In his 2008 *CCC* article "Arguing with Adversaries: Aikido, Rhetoric, and the Art of Peace," Kroll implements the Japanese martial art of aikido into the college writing classroom. Kroll contends aikido provides a tangible framework for understanding argument as harmonization rather than confrontation. To show more clearly how "the movements of aikido provide a *physical,* *bodily* analogue for verbal argument" (464; emphasis added), and to involve the physical body in his claim, Kroll has his students come to the fore of the classroom and "do a few simple maneuvers, such as basic escapes and turns" (464). This (literal and figurative) exercise allows Kroll's students to tap onto an "alternative modality" (464), but this alternative modality is the physical breathing body. Through this new bodily modality, students literally feel and touch the moves and countermoves of those with whom they are verbally/physically wrangling. Similarly, in her CCCC 2012 talk titled "In Search of Our Bodies: Using Transdisciplinarity and Multiple Theories of Embodiment to Refigure Rhetoric," dancer and educator Daisy Levy starts from a premise similar to my own: the body has been often left out of embodiment. Pulling from the work of Mabel Todd, Irene Dowd, and Lulu Sweigard, Levy explores how writing studies can graft onto ideokinesis to reintroduce the body into the writing experience. Ideokinesis, connected to dance, is concerned with human posture and bodily movement through visual and tactile-kinesthetic processes. For Levy, bodies are knowing and moving agents for change largely and mistakenly left out of the writing process.

But both Kroll and Levy are exceptions to my belief that the physical body is often left out of the writing classroom, and I still largely fail to see the inclusion of the bodily *with* the material during multimodal pedagogies as Kress suggests. Certainly, Kress is not fully concerned (if at all) with the classroom in his work; instead, the classroom is used more as a space from which examples illustrative of his argument arise. In other words, the classroom, often images from science textbooks, illustrate his theoretical claim(s) instead of his theoretical claim(s) providing fodder for classroom practice. However, the term "multimodality" is a large, somewhat amorphous, term shared among disciplines, and it is not helpful to enlarge our understanding of multimodality in one sphere (let's say Kress's sphere of social semiotics) and state that this new understanding is only for social semiotics and not for composition and rhetoric. For shared terminology like "multimodality," we need general consent among the disciplines. In this case, how Kress characterizes multimodality—as that which includes both the material and the bodily—does not hold when considering multimodality as a classroom practice. And this is one of the reasons student-athletes could potentially struggle with multimodality in the classroom. Because composition and rhetoric largely doesn't consider the body.

But neither does Kress. A second quarrel I have with the last two sentences of the block quote is that Kress homogenizes the bodily experience, and thus his theory gives us little purchase for discussing particular situations such as those of student-athletes. But when considering "the making of signs *now*" and the material and the bodily, student-athletes are quite representative. Yet what is curious is that student-athletes, particularly those in high-profile sports live not only in the bodily and the material but also in these very high degrees of abstraction which Kress contrasts with the bodily and the material. Part of the issue I take with Kress's point is that it contains the idea that once we didn't know a thing and now, violà!, we have figured it all out. Once we thought in high-level abstraction, and now, fortunately, we think in the material and the bodily. But what about our student-athletes? What about those who engage with highly multimodal texts, who embody these texts, but are operating under the constrictive mode of high-level abstraction? Meaning-making has not followed the tidy linear line Kress suggests: high-level abstraction of Saussure to a social semiotic theory of Kress. Student-athletes are in both. The bodily experience of enacting and running a play during a game situation, but, at the same time, being turned into an asocial self, a cog in the machine responding to the larger totalizing system proposed by structuralism. Moreover, these student-athletes, these bodily learners, are excelling in a community of practice which contains bodily occurrences of abstraction.

While I think our field doesn't fully represent Kress's point that multimodality contains the material and the bodily, I do believe our field largely operates under the Kressian viewpoint that a social semiotic understanding of language trumps high-level abstraction. However, multimodality has been preached as a near panacea for students, a pedagogical tool which allows student to take advantage of the full range of semiotic resources at their disposal. While I do not disagree, I would like to hedge that statement. For some populations and for some uses of multimodality, this enfranchising bent may be accurate. But for others it is not. In Auburn's defensive play, we are given multimodal construction: the mode of geometric shape representing players; the mode of line standing for spatial direction. However, in this particular use of multimodality, users are not given additional agency as is the case we get from traditional proponents of multimodality. Instead users are hindered; their understanding of meaning making is one of a static representation of knowledge; ontologically they are conceived of as an asocial self. More dangerously this discarding occurs at an unconscious level with the underlying system "ordering social life" (Jameson 101). From an epistemological standpoint, play literacy knowledge is static and is best understood from a synchronic view of time. Unlike the Older Sophists—the paradigm of a conflated view of rhetoric and athletics who through verbal and physical disputation in the *agōn*, perpetually striving for *aretē*—student-athletes are trained to *be*; they don't *become*. The system in which they operate perpetuates a static representation of the self. Resistance to the system, not to mention any sort of revolution, is unheard of. Evidence for this staid ontology and epistemology are the multimodal texts created and consumed by these unique communities of practice, football and men's basketball. Thus, these multimodal texts become textual-problems which are endlessly facilitating the dangerous loop of constrictive ontology and epistemology leading to constrictive texts, constrictive texts leading to constrictive ontology and epistemology, and so on. As a field committed to analyzing the construction/production of textual documents—for what else but this is rhetoric?—it is all the more shocking that a key hindrance to a more harmonious relationship between athletics and academics is textually based, is a rhetoric.

The ones immersed in these textual-problems are the high-profile student-athletes on our campuses, the ones interviewed by ESPN, pasted on the cover of *Sports Illustrated*, known and discussed on a nation level, and the modern rhetors who balance athletics and academics. They are encouraged by an encompassing system to view language abstractly, as full of uniform, not plural, systems. They are encouraged to be specialized containers within which language can be encoded and decoded. They are encouraged to function within a particularly authoritarian society—in addition to the others they experience on a daily basis. Before we make the blanket statement that multimodality is the answer to staid monomodal understandings of language, a continued exploration of how multimodality epistemologically and ontologically positions individual users needs to be undertaken. The method by which multimodality is currently constructed and deployed as a classroom practice hinders the learning processes of many of our student-athletes and continues in the Platonic tradition of cleaving rhetoric and athletics. Here is one Platonic tradition we do not want to follow.

Interchapter #2: Prentice Gautt

The largest building on the University of Oklahoma's campus, dwarfing the adjacent ROTC armory, is Gaylord Family Oklahoma Memorial Stadium, home to OU's football team. Eight times a year, close to one hundred thousand people flock to the stadium to watch their beloved Sooners face off against an opponent. The other 350 or so days of the year, the stadium is largely used by athletic department personal, one facet being athletic academics, more properly named the Prentice Gautt Academic Center.

The center was named in honor of OU graduate and former football player Prentice Gautt on September 17, 1999. Called by current OU director of athletics Joseph Castiglione "Oklahoma's Jackie Robinson" (qtd. in Gilman), Gautt was the first African-American to play football at OU.[74] He was recruited by legendary coach Bud Wilkinson, and Gautt enrolled in the school in 1956, months after OU won their third National Championship under Wilkinson and two years following the watershed *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. Yet despite this important ruling, in *President Can't Punt* former OU president George Lynn Cross wrote, "it was said certain influential blacks arranged for him to attend OU on an experimental basis" (282). Reading Cross's language, I am not sure what is more startling: the vague "it was said" with an inability to directly provide names; a nod toward viewing Gautt as the proverbial guinea pig with the phrase “an experimental basis;” or that the *president* of a university is not sure how the first black football player matriculated at OU.

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[74] For additional readings on the intersection of race and college sports, see Charles Martin's *Benching Jim Crow*, Lane Demas's *Integrating the Gridiron,* and Dana Brooks and Ronald Althouse's co-edited *Racism in College Athletics: The African-American Athlete's Experience*. For additional material directed toward the racial obstacles faced by Gautt, see Harold Keith's *47 Straight: The Wilkinson Era at Oklahoma*, specifically chapter 13, "The Breakthrough of Prentice Gautt."

Regardless of Cross’s troublesome language, Gautt was joining a team where running back was the focus of Wilkinson’s offense, and Gautt, who was already standing out on campus because of his skin color and was already standing out for simply being a football player on one of the best college teams in the nation, was given even more recognition for playing this premier position. According to Gautt’s obituary published in the *The Oklahoman,* Wilkinson was pressured against giving Gautt a scholarship, so “a group of black doctors and pharmacists arranged to pay Gautt’s tuition” but “within a year, Gautt was given [a]…scholarship” (Hersom). And media outlets began to speak glowingly, albeit strangely, about Gautt. A March 15, 1959 article in *The Oklahoman* refers to Gautt, the 193 pound fullback from Oklahoma City’s Douglass High School, as “Oklahoma’s great Negro fullback” (“Gautt Ticketed”).[75]

During Black History Month, *SoonerSports.com*, the official website of OU athletics, published pieces detailing the lives of prominent African American student-athletes at OU, past and present. In Andrew Gilman’s article “Prentice Gautt Paved the Way,” Jakie Sandefer, Gautt’s former roommate, recalls living with the first African-American student-athlete at OU: “Looking back, I didn’t know it was that big of a deal…I talked to him some about it. I asked him about what was going on…And the funny thing is, when I asked Prentice about it, he said…he just wanted to make the team and make his grades” (qtd. in Gilman). And Gautt did just that. He excelled academically and athletically. He was a biological science major and member of

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[75] Similar language is used by Jack Bell, a writer for the *Miami Herald* who covered OU’s 21-6 Orange Bowl victory over Syracuse in 1959: “The best player on the field was Oklahoma’s Prentice Gautt, the mighty Negro fullback” (qtd. in Cross 308).

Omnicron Delta Kappa; he was a member of Company V and member of the Varsity "O" Club, which committed itself to "Foster[ing] good sportsmanship in all phases of collegiate athletics." In the 1959 yearbook, Gautt is given the award of top athlete in football. In the 1960 yearbook, his photo is displayed on the "Personality" page alongside five other OU students. Underneath the photo of Gautt and his gregarious smile, reads a lengthy list of his accomplishments on and off the athletic field.

The first three years Gautt was with the Sooners, the team went 30-2, and secured two Orange Bowl victories. He was a three-year letter winner, twice led the team in rushing, a two-time All-Big Eight Selection, and Most Valuable Player at the 1959 Orange Bowl, averaging a shocking 15.9 yards per carry. And all this on the field success, with racism rearing its ugly head off the field. As Cross details,

> For several years, [head football coach Bud] Wilkinson and his staff had taken the squad to the Skirvin Hotel in Oklahoma City to spend the night preceding each home game . . . The addition of Prentice Gautt to the OU squad . . . resulted in a change of hotels. Gautt was with the squad at the Skirvin the night before the Iowa State and Kansas game, but protests from hotel patrons led management to inform OU officials that he would not be permitted to stay there in the future . . . The squad stayed at the Biltmore during the 1958 and 1959 seasons. When Gautt's eligibility ended, they moved back to the Skirvin. (284, 285)

While Cross never provides his thoughts on this unfortunate display of intolerance, he does describe the climate of 1950s Oklahoma, a climate seen in many other states during this time. Even though football reigned supreme in Oklahoma, and even though

Gautt was one of the better players on the dearly beloved Sooners, his skin color coded him as inferior. To these complaining hotel patrons, Gautt's skin overshadowed any of his athletic or academic attributes.

When Gautt graduated from OU, earning Academic All-American honors as a senior, he went on to play eight seasons in the National Football League with the Cleveland Browns and the then-St. Louis Cardinals. Following his stint in professional football, Gautt made his way to the University of Missouri where he earned his Master's. In 1979, Gautt earned his doctorate degree in psychology, writing a dissertation titled "A Comparison of Winning and Losing Coaches Based on Their Needs and Perceptions." Now as *Dr.* Prentice Gautt, he served as assistant commissioner for the Big Eight Conference, special assistant to the commissioner of the Big 12 Conference, and secretary-treasurer of the NCAA. Awarded an honorary doctorate by OU in 2003, Gautt passed away on March 17, 2003 and was posthumously given the Outstanding Contribution to Amateur Football Award by the National Football Foundation & College Hall of Fame in 2005. Today, a Big 12 student-athlete post-graduate scholarship is named in his honor.

Chapter 3: Embodying the Sophists, Distributing the Play: Tracing Trajectories of Literate Activity in College Football

[W]riters, readers, and texts have physical bodies and consequently not only the content but the process of their interaction is dependent on, and reflective of, physical experience—Margaret Syverson

How do we distinguish between the physical and conceptual work of composing? —Kathryn Perry

As I began mentally drafting this chapter, I thought of Wallace Stevens's poem "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird." I thought of this poem, not necessarily because of the beautiful, stark language or the transfixing haiku-like cadence, but because of Wallace's simple yet profound use of multiple perspectives. Stevens gives the reader/listener thirteen different stanzas, encompassing thirteen views of the blackbird. Human figures pop up in the lines—"man," "women," "he," "thin men of Haddam," and "I"—suggesting to the reader that the different perspectives of the blackbird not only engage with nature but also humankind's place in it. Yet the last two stanzas leap away from juxtaposing human figures with the blackbird, and at the close we have the blackbird alone with nature. Through these thirteen perspectives, Stevens invites innumerable interpretations.

Like Stevens, in this chapter I offer a different perspective composition and rhetoric can bring to college football and basketball plays. While I don't offer thirteen stanzas, I do examine how composition and rhetoric has contributed to the yawning chasm between athletics and academics. While current pedagogy encourages the construction of multimodal texts—just as football and basketball community of practices encourage the construction of multimodal texts—the epistemology undergirding the interpretation of the texts in these two spaces (academics and athletics) could not be any more different. Thus the extracurricular production and use of plays, and the resultant meaning-making processes inherent in these plays, runs counter to the meaning-making processes traditionally espoused in the composition classroom. The plays are textual problems, a material and rhetorical construct representing the gap between athletics and academics. And I fear that as our field gravitates more toward multimodal pedagogies, we continue alienating student-athletes in the revenue-producing and high-profile sports at our respective colleges and universities. The current state of multimodality in the college classroom and the proliferation of textual-problems (i.e., plays) used by student-athletes in high-profile sports cannot comfortably coexist.

Yet this inability to coexist is an untenable position as neither college athletics nor multimodality is leaving our campuses anytime soon. For multimodality, as we look to the future and refine the teaching and assessment of multimodal texts, scholars like Jason Palmeri have looked to the past and argued our field has a storied tradition of espousing multimodal tenets even before the term was coined. One gets the sense that we have always already been multimodal. Multimodality is in the fiber of composition and rhetoric; it encompasses what we have learned about writing; it is our—and our students, and our communities'—way of making meaning in the world. As Gunther Kress argued in *Multimodality*, it reflects the fragmented, postmodern world we inhabit. Despite some resistance, at the individual, departmental, and institutional levels, multimodal pedagogy is gaining ground.

As multimodality is in the fiber of composition and rhetoric, college athletics are in the fiber of a university. As I detailed in the introduction and elsewhere, athletic departments grew alongside yet separate from academic departments. Historian of higher education John Thelin points to a twenty year period (1890-1910) in which "the prototypical athletic association underwent a transformation [through a] professionalization of the staff, namely the hiring of an athletic director and coaching staff" (*A History* 178). Not only do these two decades witness the codification of the athletic department—the now multimillion dollar industry sharing our campuses—but during these two decades we also see the founding of many well-known colleges and universities: Stanford, University of Chicago, Clemson, Miami (FL), Oklahoma, Georgia Tech, UCLA, Arizona.[76] Professors were busy tightening curriculum and laying the groundwork for academic departments; coaches and athletic administration were busy tightening playbooks and laying the groundwork for stadiums. We can thank athletics for school nicknames, mascots, school colors, fight songs. As Frederick Rudolph points out, during the early decades of the twentieth century, many Americans believed a university's mission was to field a football team (387). Many still do today. And central to this "mission" are the little examined college football plays, documents on which rests the success of a football team and even, as revenue from a successful football team often supports other university sports, the solvency of an athletic department.[77]

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[76] Specific founding dates are as follows: Stanford (1891), Chicago (1890), Clemson (1889), Miami (1925), Oklahoma (1890), Georgia Tech (1885), UCLA (1882), and Arizona (1885).

[77] During my Ph.D. coursework, I had the opportunity to take "Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics" taught by the University of Oklahoma's current athletic director, Joe Castiglione. During a lecture on athletic department revenue, Castiglione provided what he termed "a rough rule of thumb" for OU's 2011-2012 $93 million self-sustaining operating budget: football generates 70% of the revenue and uses 30%. In other words, OU is able to field women's tennis (and a rowing team, and a wrestling team, and so on) and send them to Morgantown, West Virginia to take on the Mountaineers because football brings in close to $70 million a year. More concretely, the 2008-2009 OU athletic strategic plan reports the following numbers: Out of the total revenue that year of $79,100,000, football brought in 40%; for the total expenses over that same span numbering $79,000,000, football tallied 19% (*Annual Report*). In both

From the genesis of football on the campus of Rutgers University in the late nineteenth century to the multibillion dollar industry it is today, textual plays have been the foundation of a team's success. From the genesis of basketball at Springfield, Massachusetts in the late nineteenth-century—just twenty-two years after the first football game—to the multimillion dollar industry it is today, textual plays have been the foundation of a team's success. The games have evolved, but the play as a text has been one constant. To deter the split between athletics and academics, I do not suggest we jettison multimodal approaches to the teaching of writing or invite coaches to position plays as dialogic, semiotic assemblages instead of static texts. But what we can do is learn to look differently at the multimodal texts produced inside and outside the classroom. The previous chapter placed extracurricular composing, multimodality, and embodiment into conversation with one another through looking at five college football and basketball plays. In hopes of not only refining the strengths and limitations of multimodality, I aimed to illustrate challenges multimodality can pose for student-athletes in that in both spaces (the classroom and the playing field) multimodal composing largely does not address the body.

In this chapter I return to these same five plays through again placing extracurricular composing, multimodality, and embodiment in conversation and arguing that viewing football and basketball plays as *multisemiotic* moves us away from troublesome Saussurean structuralist semiotics—inherent when viewing plays as examples of multimodality—and toward *social* semiotics, a field of study which draws

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cases, revenue and expenses, football was at the top. The other sport typically operating in the black for OU is women's basketball and occasionally men's basketball. OU, like most other major universities, operates in the red for all other sports. OU is unique in that it has a separate athletic budget not supported by mandatory student fees, but OU is not unique in seeing football drive and undergird the athletic program. A winning football team, literally, allows other sports to exist.

heavily on the work of Michael Halliday, particularly *Language as Social Semiotic* in which he argues "[l]anguage arises in the life of an individual through an ongoing exchange of meaning with significant others" (1), and, therefore, "the context plays a part in determining what we say; and what we say plays a part in determining what we say. As we learn how to mean, we learn how to predict each from the other" (4). Social semiotics moves beyond exclusive interest in structure and system and focus change from sign to way people use and interpret semiotic resources because sign erroneously suggests, Halliday and others argue and I agree, that meaning is pre-given. Shifting from structuralist semiotics to social semiotics, not only places us within the most recent developments in semiotics but also invites discussion of how student-athletes leverage a wide variety of semiotic resources in the meaning making processes required for football and basketball. Following in line with recent discussions within social semiotics, I adopt the term *multisemiotic* to describe the literary practices swirling within college sports. Through such a framing, I argue that multisemiotic has conceptualized and wrestled with notions of the body as a semiotic resource for composing in ways that the more common—at least for the field of rhetoric and composition—multimodal has not.

I first walk through how semiotics moved from structuralist semiotics to social semiotics. Then I offer the framework of ecologies of writing, which attends to the vast network of external and internal resources impinging upon one's writing processes and acknowledges, among other things, the embodied dimension of writing. Such an emphasis, I argue, dovetails with *multisemiotics,* and I follow the lead of Paul Prior and a small group of other scholars who have introduced multisemiotic into the composition and rhetoric lexicon. Again, reframing these literate practices as multisemiotic and not multimodal foregrounds the importance of embodiment—an important component of rhetoric since the time of the Older Sophists—for a football play.[78] Ultimately, I suggest that through pulling from an ecological view of multisemiotic composing, student-athletes can be equipped to rise above the rigid and burdensome epistemology of structuralism. If the previous chapter, in which I provided a negative appraisal of college football plays, is stanza I, then, in a nod to Stevens, let's call this chapter stanza II, as I provide a different perspective.

While I give a positive assessment of the play which formed the bulk of my diatribe in the previous chapter, I don't see this chapter and the one before it as contradictory. Instead, I offer up these two chapters and these two opposing views of the text as evidence of the troublesome relationship between athletics and academics. Imagining and then enacting a more harmonious relationship between the basketball court and the classroom is not as easy as saying "here is the problem" and "here is the solution." When the relationship between athletics and academics is approached as a rhetorical and material construct and when texts become the focus of study, we can learn how to readjust our reading of the texts. As I argued in chapter 2, the current reading and use of college football and basketball plays by student-athletes causes unnecessary scholastic harm in that student-athletes are stripped of autonomy and encouraged to adopt an unfortunate and narrow form of language use, which I term “play literacy.” While some student-athletes are able to navigate and balance the competing meaning-making processes for, say, football and the college writing classes (see the interchapter on Myron Rolle, for example), many do not. Yet by looking differently at the same textual-problems and espousing an ecological view of composition, rhetoric and composition is best positioned to reanimate the synergies between athletics and academics, synergies existing since Isocrates’s *Antidosis* and the rise of Sophistic rhetoric in fourth century BCE.

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[78] I follow the lead of Paul Prior and Kevin Roozen in my delineation between literate activity and literate practice. As members of the New Literacy Studies (e.g., Brian Street, David Barton, Mary Hamilton) have persuasively asserted, literate practice refers to specific ways, shaped by cultural, historical and social conventions literacy is used by a community. While related to literate practice, literate activity focuses attention on what Roozen refers to as the "broader spectrum of action of particular communities" (569). Channeling Prior's helpful definition of literate activity as "not located *in* acts of reading and writing, but *as* cultural forms of life saturated with textuality, that is strongly motivated and mediated by texts" (*Writing/Disciplinarity* 138; emphasis in original), Roozen argues literate practices are "situated in and mobilized across broader literate activities" (569). Thus for our purposes, I understand the literate activity of football as composed of a wide variety of literate practices, such as reading, distributing, embodying, and enacting.

From structuralist semiotics to social semiotics

In chapter 2, I utilized Saussurean structuralism to level criticism at how football and basketball plays operate as multimodal constructs. Resultant of approaching these multimodal texts through structuralism, student-athletes fail to effectively engage with similar multimodal texts in the classroom—texts which now demand a dialogic, even what Berlin would call a “social-epistemic” framework. It is this harsh tug-of-war between structuralism and dialogism that student-athlete experience when moving back and forth between curricular and extracurricular multimodality.

As I stated at the fore of this chapter, I return to these same multimodal extracurricular texts and I again approach these texts from a semiotic background; yet chapter x was grounded in structuralist semiotics, while this chapter finds footing in *social semiotics*. A brief word is in order to differentiate between the two.

While Saussure was orating his lectures in Switzerland, which would posthumously be collected into *Course in General Linguistics*, the American Charles Peirce—largely a forgotten figure outside of the linguistics and semiotics circle—was working treading on similar ground. While the race toward novel developments in linguistics does not make its way into the history books in the same alluring fashion as Isaac Newton and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz's race to develop the calculus in the eighteenth century, Peirce and Saussure were both chasing after developments in the field of language and language use, aiming to topple Neo-Grammarian staid methodological and theoretical approaches.

As mentioned, Saussure broke language into *langue* and *parole* and studied this dyad synchronically. Saussure was especially interested in *langue*, the deeper and indelible structure which undergirds language and language use. Peirce, on the other hand, sketched out a triadic theory of language: representamen; interpretant; and object.[79] According to Peirce:

> A sign, or *representamen*, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in he mine of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the *interpretant* of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its *object*. It stands for that object, not in all respects, but in reference to a sort of idea, which I have sometimes called the *ground* of the representamen. (*Collected Papers* 2.228; emphasis in original)

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[79] Such a triadic model, in one form or another, has undergirded much contemporary rhetorical and discourse theory, from I.A. Richards and C.K. Ogden to James Kinneavy.

Reading through Peirce's elucidation of his triadic dimension of language, I am struck by its cautionary, almost ambiguous, language: three uses of "something" a "sometimes," and "somebody." Yet this word choice signals an intentional and helpful move on Peirce's part. For one, it is worth remembering to whom Peirce is writing in reaction: the positivistic approach by a Neo-Grammarians. If the Neo-Grammarians posited an level of specificity and empirical methodological approach, then Peirce's hedging is understandable. Moreover, such hedging is helpful as we consider the move from structural semiotics to social semiotics, which Peirce is laying a foundation for through his use of contextual and flexible (albeit vague) word choice and subsequent theory. Not only does Peirce add a third layer to his theory, but he is also flexible with interpretation and allows for multiple reinterpretations. As Daniel Chandler explains, "[a]ny initial interpretation can be reinterpreted" (33). Connected with this concept of multiple interpretations, is Peirce's emphasis on dialogic thinking: "all thinking is dialogic in form. Your self of one instant appeals to your deeper self for his assent" (*Collected Papers* 6.338). Explicating Peirce's theory of dialogism, Chandler correctly links it to later Bakhtinian notions of dialogism, thus indirectly illustrating the contemporary relevance of Peirce's theory, a relevance largely lost when considering Saussurean structuralism as Saussure is largely constructed as antithetical to contemporary theories of language and language use.

Considering the move from structuralist semiotics to social semiotics, the work of Peirce is instrumental as he allows for multiple interpretations of a sign and provides space for, even acknowledges the need for, dialogic thinking.

A second important development that ushered in social semiotics is the emphasis Peirce placed on non-linguistic and material signs. Saussure did not place such an emphasis. As Chandler explains, Saussure saw language as a formal function rather than a material substance (49); thus a chess piece was a chess piece no matter if it is was made of wood or ivory; a train from Geneva to Paris was a train from Geneva to Paris no matter the length of the train, the passengers aboard, or the conductor watching over the train's progress. Through eliding the importance of the material, Saussure opened himself up to a barrage of criticism, the most vocal and lasting of which came from the poststructuralist camp, notably Derrida's *Of Grammatology* which extended Saussaure's elision of the material to make the case that Saussure erroneously privileges speech over writing.[80] Prior to Derrida's critique, Peirce offers the following definition of a sign:

> Sign[s] . . . include pictures, symptoms, words, sentences, books, libraries. Signals, orders of command, microscopes, legislative representatives, musical concertos, performances of these (qtd. in Brent 359; MS 634: 18)[81]

With such an amalgamation of examples, Peirce is strongly signaling toward non-linguistic, as well as the linguistic, composition of signs. Including the material in his definition, predates Derrida's work in *On Grammatology*. Following in Peirce and Derrida's path of emphasizing the material is the work of scholars already touched on in this dissertation: Gunther Kress, Theo van Leeuwen, Jay David Bolter, Richard Grusin, and Rick Iedema, all of whom are interested with how the medium of a sign influences how it is interpreted and put to use.

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[80] For a strongly supportive treatise on Saussure and an impassioned almost emotional critique of Derrida, see chapter 10 of the second edition of Roy Harris's *Saussure and his Interpreters*. In this chapter, titled "Derrida's Saussure," Harris expresses frustration toward Derrida's "remarkable anti-Saussurean polemic" (171) and accuses Derrida of not keeping up to date with developments in linguistics after Saussure, only focusing on Saussure's CGL, among other things. Harris ends with calling Derrida's dismissal and frustration with Saussure, as expressed in Grammatology, as "academically worthless" (188). A powerful claim, indeed.

[81] The following definition comes from the Charles Sanders Peirce Papers at the Houghton Library, Harvard University, which is quoted in Joseph Brent's *Charles Sanders Peirce: A Life*.

Taken together, social semiotics is a branch of semiotics which focuses on the diachronic, dialogic, and material use of signs and how signs are interpreted and used in the context of social and cultural circumstances. Meaning-making, for social semiotics, is a social practice. With an emphasis on dialogism and materiality, social semiotics has opened space for including the body as a mode or semiotic resource for meaning-making (see, for example, Susan Petrilli's "Bodies and Signs: For a Typology of Semiosic Materiality," as well as the work of Iedema). It is with such a foundation in place, that I operatize social semiotics, particularly the concept of multisemiotic, in this chapter. In the following section, I place multisemiotic within ecological theories of writing, as both as largely concerned with the role of embodiment and the body in language use. Before I launch into ecologies of writing, I provide a brief background to theories of composition which pave the way for this recent theory of writing.

Ecologies of Writing

Composition and rhetoric has a long history of borrowing terms and concepts from other disciplines.[82] This borrowing is especially noticeable in the move over the past two decades toward an ecological theory of writing, which revolted against an expressivist theory of writing. In the turbulent 1960s, expressivist practitioners brought attention to the individual writer. Those who espoused this pedagogy, termed "Neo-Platonists" by James Berlin, recognized truth to be conceived "as the result of a private vision that must be constantly consulted in writing" ("Contemporary Composition" 772). Expressivist pedagogy positioned writing as a private, personal action where language is used to reveal an individual and private truth. During the nascent years of composition and rhetoric, this idea took hold as evidenced by the popularity of books on the teaching of writing by Peter Elbow, Donald Murray, and others. Yet there were methodological challenges stemming from such a view of writing. If all writing is a private experience resulting in a "private vision," scholars wondered, then how do we teach our students to arrive at this moment, and how do we, as researchers, study it? These two queries, on top of the desire to legitimize ourselves in the eyes of more scientifically driven disciplines, resulted in the move toward methodologies in composition such as Linda Flower and John Hayes's "A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing."[83] Believing that writing is located in people's heads, in the act of touching pen to paper, and is tightly bounded in space and time, Flower and Hayes researched writers' composing processes through "protocol analysis" (277). This procedure asked writers to compose in a controlled space, for a controlled period of time, and to "verbalize everything that goes through their minds as they write" (277). The verbalization was an attempt to capture a detailed record of the cognitive processes which facilitate writing. Working with their results, Flower and Hayes sketched a structured stage model approach to composition.

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[82] Our field's incessant borrowing comes under attack by Rául Sánchez in *The Function of Theory in Composition Studies*. Sánchez argues the "enduring method" of taking a "term or concept from a more respected and respectable field such as philosophy and use[ing] it to illuminate some aspect of composition studies" (12) is largely responsible for as an unfortunate and dangerous split between composition theory and empirical research. While Sánchez sketches a convincing case, I am hesitant to offer the same level of critique as I struggle to envision a field or discipline which does not incorporate from outside of itself during its nascent and even codified stage.

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[83] It is worth noting that even though I position Flower and Hayes as an obstacle to an ecological model of the composing process, Palmeri reads Flower and Hayes as a precursor to contemporary theories and practices of multimodality. See page 93 in my second chapter and pages 32 and 33 in Palmeri's *Remixing Composition*.

Reviewing Flower and Hayes's early work on cognitive approaches to writing, I cannot help but think of Linda Brodkey's "Modernism and the Scene(s) of Writing." Her opening sentence captures beautifully the current scene of writing: "When I picture writing, I often see a solitary writer alone in a cold garret working into the small hours of the morning by the thin light of a candle" (396). While Brodkey moves against this image, her opening perspective falls in line with Flower and Hayes's tacit assumptions about writing: focusing on the individual; believing that writing abilities will remain constant regardless of the environment and other external forces; emphasizing the "text" and the "production" of said text; and thinking that any "error" which occurs in the writing—crossing the spectrum of local grammatical miscues, to larger developmental missteps—is the result of the individual writer and signals a flaw in his/her cognitive processes and cognitive development.

Flower and Hayes's work was not universally accepted. Scholars like Pat Bizzell began to identify the shortcomings of this research and the ideologies inherent in this methodology. To sketch a new model of writing which takes into account external factors on the individual level (e.g., race, gender, and ethnicity) or the societal level (e.g., political uprisings, global conflicts), scholars developed questions which attended to the swirling constellation of external factors: How do social factors affect individual composition? How do marked individual differences affect individual composition? When does writing truly begin? And, finally, if we cannot study writing in a laboratory setting, then how do we study writing?

Though he doesn't directly engage with composition theory and research, Kenneth Burke's theories of language were imported in an effort to address these queries. For Burke, the unit of analysis was human action. This emphasis on human action is especially salient to rhetoric and composition. For Flower and Hayes, writing (the act) was understood to be static regardless of the purpose, scene, agent, and agency (to use Burke's terms); human action was largely nullified. Working with Burkean concepts, compositionists questioned how writing would change once analysis moved away from the immediate context of writing and focused on a host of external factors occurring across time and space. Scholars created space for emphasizing the relationship between the writer, the text, the environment, and the audience. While it is true that Flower and Hayes illustrate how a writing teacher's breakthrough moment during a compose-aloud protocol came from his assumptions about audience (what Burke would term *purpose* and *scene*), they fail to acknowledge the role of external and inanimate objects (such as the size of computer screen, the spatial arrangement of office furniture, the tactile interaction between fingers and a keyboard) during the composing process.

This messy scene of writing—external and inanimate objects colliding with internal animate objects to form meaning—informs ecologies of writing proposed by Marilyn Cooper who, though Richard M. Coe's work on ecologies predates her by nearly a decade, is the most well-known proponent of ecologies of writing. In "The Ecology of Writing," Cooper, like Brodkey, rails against the image of a "solitary author [who] works alone, within the privacy of his own mind" (365). To correct this inaccurate image, Cooper proposes an ecological model of writing. Taking Burke's dramatistic pentad unpacked in *A Grammar of Motives* as a model for an individual acting in an immediate context, she develops an ecological model of "dynamic interlocking systems which structure the social activity of writing" (368). Through extrapolating these systems, Cooper calls for examining the systems of ideas, of purposes, of interpersonal interactions, of cultural norms, of textual forms (369) which swirls around writing. Working within these systems allows Cooper to stress that writing occurs in an environment, yet allows her to move beyond Burke's model of "individual writer and her context" (Cooper 368) through examining how "writers interact to form systems" (368). Cooper, by stressing the formation of systems during the writing process, asserts the fundamental tenet of an ecological view of writing: "writing is an activity through which a person is continually engaged with a variety of socially constituted systems" (367). It is this emphasis on "a variety of socially constituted systems" that delineates Cooper's work from Burke's, as his pentad does not illustrate how one context is causally related to another. Cooper, on the other hand, argues the context of language use can and should account for how "any individual writer or piece of writing both determine and are determined by the characteristics of all the other writers and writings in the systems" (368). Cooper captures this causal relationship through describing a metaphorical web "in which anything that affects one strand of the web vibrates throughout the whole" (370). In other words, through highlighting the causal relationships between all writers and writings in a given system, Cooper is able to expand beyond Burke's work on the context of language use and to provide us with a helpful model for understanding how the literate practice of reading a football play fits into the larger literate practice—or system—of college football.

Cooper wrote her 1986 article with a prescient pen. In 1994, David Barton follows in her footsteps with *Literacy: An Introduction to the Ecology of Written Language*; in 1999, Margaret Syverson's *The Wealth of Reality: An Ecology of Composition* picks up these ideas and captures disciplinary developments in biology, psychology, and economics to effectively move beyond Cooper's early work and toward an *extracurricular* ecological view of writing. While Cooper is concerned with positing a pedagogical model, Syverson is concerned with suggesting a theoretical model and becomes a stepping stone a decade later for Kristie Fleckenstein, Clay Spinuzzi, Rebecca J. Rickley, and Carole Clark Papper to hypothesize an ecological metaphor for writing research.

In her introduction, Syverson, who provides us with a strong model for extracurricular ecologies of writing, works through an abundance of interdisciplinary developments informing ecological theories. As Syverson contends, outside of composition and rhetoric much focus on ecologies and complexity theory have worked from the idea of complex systems, "networks of independent agents—people, atoms, neurons, or molecules, for instance—act[ing] and interact[ing] in parallel with each other, simultaneously reacting to and co-constructing their own environment" (3). These complex systems, similar to Cooper's "dynamic interlocking systems" (368), constitute an ecology and, since this is a newly developed field of knowledge and is constantly in flux, have been variously defined and understood. Mitchell Waldrop identifies complex systems as having four distinct attributes: complexity, similar to Syverson's definition above, in that a "great many independent agents are interacting with each other in a great many ways" (11); spontaneous self-organization; adaptive;

and are on the edge of chaos, meaning the components of the complex system "never quite lock into place, and yet never dissolve into turbulence, either" (12). These four characteristicsLeeuwen of complex systems, which constitute an ecology, are credited with small scale organization (helping human cells organize in a coherent and beneficial manner) and large-scale organization (a nation's economic system).

Like Cooper, Syverson captures this robust yet malleable theory for the field of composition and rhetoric. She begins with a typical example of the composing process: a writer, a text, and an audience. In this example, the writer encodes words into a text, the words are then decoded by the receiver of the text. Disrupting this linear vision of writing, Syverson poses an ecological model for understanding writing:

> In considering an ecological model of composing, we would try to take into account the complex interrelationships in which writing is embedded: the people and texts that form a larger conversation in which the writer, text, and reader participate and from which the ideas emerge to taken written shape. We would consider the writer's interaction with the environment, including technologies for writing, the memory aids, the tools and instruments that help shape and support the writing. We would consider how the text takes shape as it emerges, how the writer interacts dialogically with the text not only through acting upon it but by responding to it and to its potential readers. We would situate the composing of the text in a nexus of complex social structures, ranging from the personal . . . to the institutional . . . and even global. We would also attempt to [historically] situate the writing, not only as an unfolding process marked by events such as first drafts, revisions, and so on, but within a larger discourse that

> is historically situated, and involving historically situated technologies, social relations, cultural influences, and disciplinary practices. (6, 7)

Just as Cooper understands causal relations between all writing and writers in the system as a metaphorical web, Syverson labels writing as an ecology in which are nested a "set of interrelated and interdependent complex systems" (3). Syverson adds fruitfully to Cooper by labeling characteristics of complex systems pertinent to writing, two of which are distribution and embodiment: the characteristics forming the analysis of a football play in this chapter.

Ecologies of writing, however, are not without their detractors. Laurence Hayden Lyall criticizes Cooper's work as "yet another instance of the current model-mania attempting to transform the teaching of writing into the science it isn't" (357). Frustrated that Cooper would deign to add yet another vocabulary term, in this case "ecology," to "our present, unwieldy lexicon" (367), Lyall moves into an ad hominem attack, wondering if Cooper has read more broadly in Burke's oeuvre or if her critique is understood only through *Grammar of Motives*. At the close, he states his commitment to Burke's pentad as it is a "more encompassing model" (359).[84]

While I sympathize with Lyall's weariness with the unwieldy lexicon of composition studies (and he makes this case over two decades ago; imagine all the terms we have piled on since!), I find myself in vigorous agreement with Sidney Dobrin who, in his recent edited collection on ecologies of writing, argues

> Writing studies *requires* a complex notion of ecological methodologies in order to account for the complexity of writing as system . . . complexities that we must

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[84] Cooper's response to Lyall's near-diatribe is a worthwhile read in terms of responding to heave-handed, and public, criticism. While Lyall "blasted" Cooper, to use Sidney Dobrin's descriptive of Lyall's critique Cooper responds with a measured tone.

> admit are so diverse and divergent that we may never be able to fully account for all of the facets and functions of writing, particularly as writing endlessly fluctuates as a system . . . (7, 8; emphasis added)

Enlarging our understanding of what constitutes "writing" requires a complex theory and subsequent methodology. Thus, in sum, an ecological approach to writing focuses on a person acting within a particular community with various tools and texts. This perspective sees acts of transcription as part of a more extensive chain that stretches backward and forward in time and attends to a range of activities not immediately related to transcription. While early composition researchers viewed writing as tightly bound temporally and spatially, an ecological perspective suggests writing is dispersed across time and space and research should attend to the production, consumption, and distribution of the text. Moving away from emphasizing the written text, an ecological perspective attends to a broader range of representational media. As Prior asserts, "even in some of the richest theoretical and empirical work, there remains a tendency to freeze writing . . . to see writing as a noun rather than a verb, to specifically not study writing as an activity" ("Speech Genres" 22).[85] Below, I attempt to focus on writing as an activity. An ecological view of writing allows us to view writing as such and to locate it in a larger constellation of external representational media, which attend to embodiment and distribution.

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[85] In "Delivering the Message," John Trimbur makes a similar argument regarding the representation of writing. Describing the process movement, Trimbur argues "writing [is] an invisible process, an auditory or mental event that takes place at the point of composing, where meaning is made" (188). While Trimbur favors the invisible metaphor over Prior's freeze metaphor, both arguments point to the myopic view commonly adopted with representing writing and the subsequent theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical work.

Tracing Trajectories of College Football Literate Activity

While I focus solely on a football play, these inferences can be applied to college basketball which I critiqued in the previous chapter. In response to Shipka's work on sociocultural theory, mediated action, and multimodal composing—most clearly articulated in *Toward a Composition Made Whole*—I suggest how focusing on the distributed and embodied nature of composing can help many of our student-athletes struggling with multimodal assignments in FYC. I shift my focus away from multimodal and toward *multisemiotic* as a descriptive term for theorizing the kinds of extracurricular texts in which college football players are asked to engage with in their sport. As "multisemiotic" and "multimodal" are often used interchangeably, it is worth pointing out important differences between the two.

As previously explored, modes have been understood as a "socially and culturally shaped resource for making meaning" (Bezemer and Kress 171) and have traditionally referred to different avenues for delivery, such as the verbal, written, and aural. Remembering Selfe and Takayoshi's definition of multimodality explored in the previous chapter as that which "exceed[s] the alphabetic and may include still and moving images, animations, color, words, music, and sounds" (1), draws attention to various digital and nondigital modes which coalesce in the construction of a text. Linking this definition with Bezemer and Kress illustrates how the choosing of modes by the composer is socially and culturally charged. But what multimodality fails to account for is how a whole range of representational media are embodied and how embodiment itself is an avenue for textual construction. In other words, multimodal theorists have traditionally focused on the construction of a text, assuming a here-and-now perspective which attends to the act of transcription or composing.

In an effort to shine light on embodiment and how a text is distributed across a variety of channels, I adopt the term "semiotics" for defining the resources used to make meaning. For Kay O'Halloran, who works largely in the Halliday school of a social-semiotic theory of language known as Systematic Functional Linguistics, semiotics is more concerned with resources than modes: "semiotic resources . . . include language, paintings and other forms of visual images, music, *embodied* systems of meaning such as gesture, action, and stance, and three-dimensional man-made items and objects such as clothes, sculptures and buildings" (6; emphasis added). While adherents to multimodality such as Shipka have provided helpful examples of students composing in multiple modes like clothes (think of the student who composed an essay on a pair of ballet shoes or the student who composed on an Abercrombie & Fitch shirt), what Shipka and other multimodality practitioners do not emphasize is what O'Halloran refers to as "embodied systems of meaning." Thus the stance one adopts when orally delivering a text and gesticulations used by a coach to relay a play are units of analysis for multisemiotics which are ignored with a multimodal view of language use. While it is true that in Kress's work with van Leeuwen, modes are projected as "semiotic resources" (21), Kress and van Leeuwen focus on text-based instantiations of multimodality, a myopic view of language which does not allow embodied action to be seen by the researcher. As such, Kress and van Leeuwen's definition of modes, while helpful in focusing attention to the myriad roles language is playing in a text, restrict language to either "spoken or written" (21) and ignore examples of languages which surpass this bifurcation, as my illustrations of the speaker's stance or the football coach's gestures show.

Focusing, then, on the term multisemiotic, O'Halloran provides the following definition, which I deploy in this chapter: "multisemiotic is used for texts which are constructed from one or more than one mode of semiosis" (20). Similar to O'Halloran, Van Leeuwen focuses on semiotics and provides the following fruitful definition of semiotic resources: "semiotic resources [are] the actions and artefacts [sic] we use to communicate, where they are produced physiologically—with our vocal apparatus; with the muscles we use to create facial expressions and gestures, etc—or by means of technology . . ." (3). Through constructing such a careful definition which includes somatic and exosomatic resources for meaning making, Van Leeuwan is able to turn his attention to the walking, a mundane and seemingly benign embodied activity. Van Leeuwen argues that if one adopts a social semiotic perspective and acknowledges semiotic resources as somatic and exosomatic then walking becomes of prime interest. Social institutions, the military, marching band, and gang members, adopt a certain recognizable way of walking, way of holding their body when moving. Thus, Van Leeuwen suggests, "Through the way we walk, we express who we are, what we are doing, how we want others to relate to us, and so on" (4). I agree with Van Leeuwen that a social semiotic perspective, one that has jettisoned the rigid understanding of language espoused by structural semiotics of Saussure, emphasizes *semiotic resource* and *multisemiotic.* Moreover, such a perspective allows scholars/practitioners of writing to attend more directly with the body. *Multisemiotic* as a descriptive term for college football plays, allows us to examine how these unique texts are taken up—

embodied—by participants but also how information is distributed across a vast range of representational media.

An understanding of literate activity as multisemiotic has found itself packaged inside a wide range of theoretical developments, such as actor network theory, mediated activity, distributed cognition, and ecologies. Yet, as Shipka points out, regardless of the term preferred, all the above theories are "invested in exploring the relationship between individuals and sociocultural settings" (*Toward* 41). Thus reading college football plays as multisemiotic responds to and allows us to address the embodied and distributed nature of literate activity in this specific community of practice.

I break my tracing of this trajectory into two sections: distribution and embodiment. This demarcation is, of course, artificially imposed as when a football play is put into practice, the coach does not blow his whistle and invite the distribution of the text, then blow his whistle a second time and call for the embodiment of the text. For one, these terms—embodiment and distribution—are not a part of the lexicon of this community of practice. But more importantly, these two bleed into each other, making the researcher's work of parsing out the two all the more challenging. For the sake of clarity and organization, I have attempted to talk separately of the two; however, there are times where these discussions are intertwined. Finally, taken together, these two traits of college football and basketball plays hints at its multisemiotic nature.

Writing as Distributed, College Football Plays as Distributed

Going as far back as Descartes's singular *cogito,* thinkers have often located cognition squarely in the individual mind. The poets of the Romantic and Victorian periods, for example, believed creativity flowed from a head of a single mind working in isolation and held firm to ontological and epistemological notions of the individual possessing supreme agency, for good or for ill as Dr. Frankenstein's and Dr. Jekyll's careless experiments taught us. Recently scholars have explored the environment's role in cognitive activity leading theories of cognition to ascribe agency to external factors during cognitive activity. This exploration has created a picture of *distributed* cognition, where meaning making is offloaded onto external objects or environments.[86] To put it differently, Mike Rose contends distributed cognition attends to the way "individuals [act] in *concert* with each other and with tools, symbols, and conventions delivered by the culture" (*Mind* 218; emphasis added). Especially important to Rose's argument is the adverbial phrase "in concert." The meshing of individual and external objects—in Rose's case these external objects are termed "tools, symbols, and convention" lending an important abstract understanding to the phrase "external objects"—results in a symbiotic relationship. Again, this understanding of cognition moves sharply against the power of the individual mind rampant, for example, in the poetry of Whitman and the prose of Emerson.

Illustrative of this understanding, philosophers Andy Clark and David Chalmers provide the example of Otto, an Alzheimer's sufferer who, in an attempt to remember street locations, writes in a notepad. When Otto wants to visit the Museum of Modern Art on 53rd Street, he consults his notepad to find the location of the museum. Conversely, Inga does not suffer from memory loss and is able to store the location of the museum in her memory. When she wants to attend the exhibit, she simply recalls the location. Clark and Chalmers argue that Otto's consulting the notepad, in other words, distributing cognitive activity to an external object, is no different from Inga consulting her internal memory: "For Otto," Clark and Chalmers argue, "his notebook plays the role usually played by a biological memory" (12).

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[86] Distributed cognition has been also termed "extended cognition." Both terms, however, place emphasis on offloading cognitive processes to external objects.

A more common example used by Prior, Shipka, Syverson and others interested in distributed view of writing is taken from cognitive anthropologist Edwin Hutchins's work. In *Cognition in the Wild*, Hutchins provides a rich cognitive description of the common task of charting the computational implementations of the fix cycle (in layman's terms, docking a ship). During this complex cognitive process, Hutchins traces the importance of a variety of persons and tools onto which cognitive activity is offloaded. He then makes a startling claim, which forces us to reconsider when to bound the act of cognition:

> The computation of the present fix [i.e., location] relies on the most recent setting of the hoey, which was done a few seconds ago. The present computation also involves the projection of the dead-reckoning position, a piece of work that was done just a few tens of seconds ago; on the tide graphs that were constructed a few hours ago; on the changes to the chart that were plotted a few days ago; on the projected track and the turning bearing, which were laid down when this chart was 'dressed' a few weeks ago; on the placement of the symbols on this chart, which was done upon the publication of the new chart issue a few years ago; on the nature of the plotting tools, which were designed a few decades ago; on the mathematics of the projection of the chart, which was

> worked out a few centuries ago; and on the organization of the sexagesimal number system, which was developed a few millennia ago. (168)

In this lengthy but helpful passage, Hutchins is asking us to rethink our traditional boundaries of cognition. An erroneous here-and-now perspective, and a perspective that attributes agency to the individual mind, would focus solely on the captain at the helm and her/his hands on the steering wheel. Instead, Hutchins reminds us that the captain is cognitively relying on centuries of accumulated mathematics, decades of tools, years of mapping and many tools. Concerned with "the propagation of representational state across representational media" (118), Hutchins illumines for readers how the internal processes behind docking a ship are distributed across external representational media, marshaled together, and embedded within a long and complex history that doesn't announce itself as such.[87]

Despite the prevalence of novel theories of cognition in fields such as psychology, philosophy, and artificial intelligence, composition and rhetoric has been slower to trace the offloading of cognitive processes during the composing process. One exception is the work of Prior who thinks through distributed cognition to trace the trajectories of various forms of academic writing for a graduate level sociology class. Prior argues for the need to trace the entire trajectory of a text, thus foregrounding the myriad tools and individuals that facilitate in the construction of a text as well as showing how the text's construction crosses spatial, temporal, and even disciplinary boundaries. These tracings allow him to argue for viewing writing as situated, mediated, but also as dispersed, or what others have called "distributed." For Prior, a dispersed view of writing holds that texts are not autonomous entities but are connecting and responding to myriad previous texts—in a sense, a textual and Bakhtinian chain of utterances. These traits (situated, mediated and dispersed) collectively constitute writing as literate activity: "Literate activity . . . is not located *in* acts of reading and writing, but *as* cultural forms of life saturated with textuality, that is strongly motivated and mediated by texts" (138; emphasis in original). Prior's emphasis on mediation allows him to look toward theories language use which attend to how literate practices are "situated . . . within intersecting trajectories of discourse and action" (Dressman, McCarthey, Prior 5) and how the interaction and intersection of persons and tools facilitate the construction of a text.

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[87] While not as often cited as Hutchins, David Levy provides a similar argument with documents and writing, objects closer to the field of composition and rhetoric than the docking of a ship. In *Scrolling Forward*, Levy is largely concerned with the role of hardcopy documents in the digital age. Early on, he muses on a typical receipt which logs the purchase of a tuna fish sandwich, a bottle of water, and a bag chips from deli in California. Like Hutchins, Levy invites us to drop the here-and-now perspective and consider the historical trajectory of the receipt, the historical developments which are imbedded in such a mundane object. Levy walks the reader through the history of paper, the alphabet, numbers, punctuation marks, and early trading economies which all collide onto this tiny piece of paper which is "telling a story of sorts" (16). Toward the end of his reflection on the receipt, Levy offers a thought, which strikes to the core of Hutchins's argument: "But how is our little receipt able to accomplish this rather remarkable feat? The answer can't be found *in* the receipt itself—or in the receipt *alone*. To find it, you have to broaden your gaze and look at the way the receipt is situated, or embedded, in a huge web of human practices and knowledge distributed through space and time" (18). The emphasis Levy places on "situated" "embedded" "web" and "distributed" call to mind similar claims made by humans and nod toward ecologies of writing, a theory of writing which undergirds my third chapter.

Viewing writing as distributed asks us to examine writing as not bounded by spatial, temporal, or disciplinary boundaries. Instead writing shoots across these boundaries, which an ecological view of writing allows us to see. Cognition is distributed across time and space, thus the cognitive process of writing is as well. Instead of taking an atomistic view of writing (i.e., the isolated writer, the isolated reader, the isolated text), Syverson suggests expanding our views of when writing begins and, subsequently, when it ends. Instead of approaching the study of writing through a here-and-now perspective—in other words, limiting our view of textual construction to what is immediately seen and not paying attention to "social [and] environmental structures that both powerfully constrain and also enable what writers are able to think, feel, and write" (9)—a distributed view of writing encourages the messy process of tracing the trajectory of a text. An ecological view allows us to do just that and highlights the multisemiotic nature of a football play.

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Throughout a four quarter, 60 minute football game, the defense will typically run 50 or so defensive plays. These plays follow a similar cycle: within a tight 35 second time frame, plays are constructed from a basic formation, implemented, audibled as needed, and then executed.

Let's revisit Auburn's play "4-3 Cov. 4 play action." Within less than 1 second, the defense needs to read the play action, and within 3 seconds the defensive linemen need to reach the QB or the QB passes the ball. The proper execution of 4-3 Cov. 4 play action lasts less than 3 seconds. Yet the trajectory of the play occurs across a much larger time frame and includes many agents, not just the 11 men on the field. Embodied and distributed writing for college football is a complex web to which football student-athletes are continually exposed.

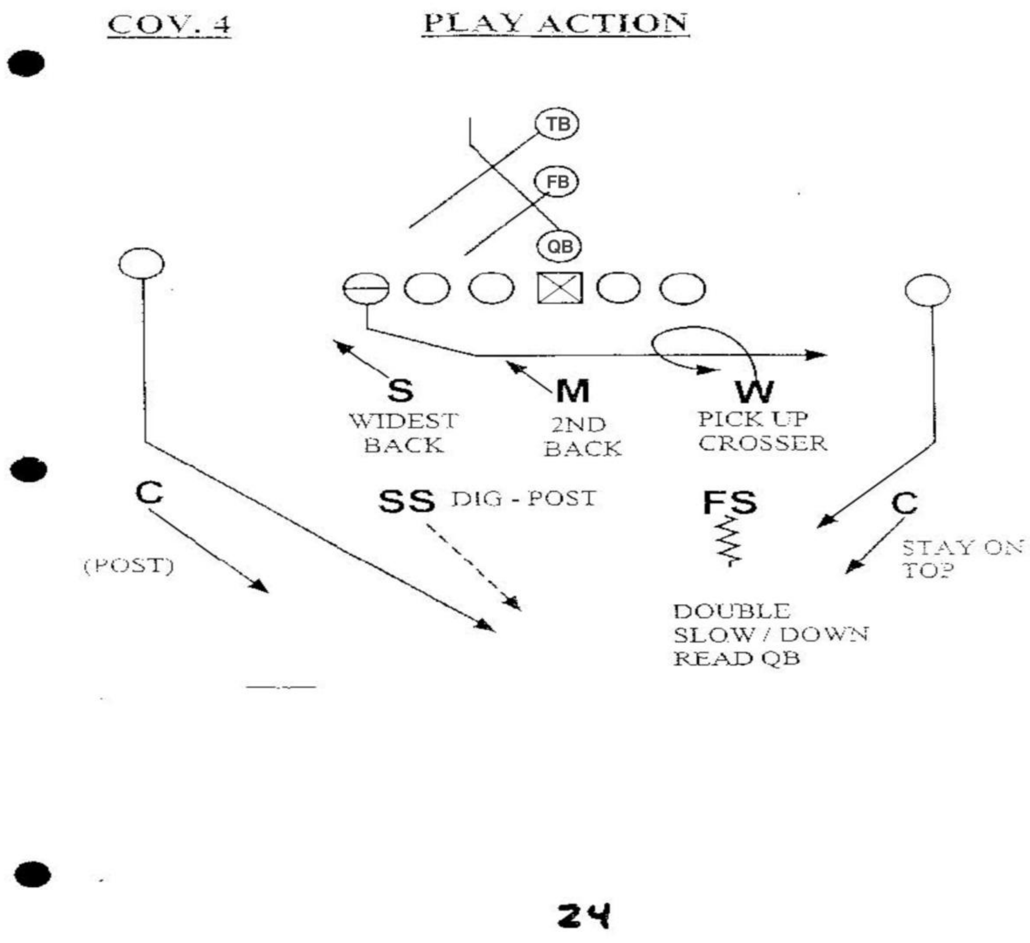
COV. 4
PLAY ACTION
TB
FB
QB
S
WIDEST BACK
M
2ND BACK
W
PICK UP CROSSER
C
(POST)
SS DIG - POST
FS
DOUBLE SLOW / DOWN READ QB
C
STAY ON TOP
24

Figure 6: “Play Action,” excerpted from Auburn’s 2004 defensive playbook, illustrates the complex geometrical construction of a typical football play. Working left to right starting at the top, “S” is Sam, “M” is Mike, and “W” is Will. On the bottom from left to right, “C” is a cornerback, “SS” is the strong safety, “FS” is the free safety, and “C” is the other cornerback. I have added the pertinent offensive positions: QB, FB, and TB.

I start tracing the distribution of 4-3 Cov. 4 play action during summer practice as coaches gauge their rosters and spend countless hours watching film, staring at a screen and breaking down the most menial nuances of a game.[88] Once film has been watched and players' abilities have been gauged, the play is put down on paper relying on a set of geometrical shapes and configurations first set down thousands of years ago by the mathematician Euclid, the progenitor of geometry, and the first to conceptualize lines, angles. These plays are then run and embodied endlessly in practice. The defense works on reading the fake hand-off which signals a play action. Plays are given succinct names which are then translated into a series of numbers. These numbers are painted onto large yellow cardboard squares (see fig. 7), as well as translated into hand signals. In a game situation, three coaches will flash signs to the defense before a play. Two coaches will use hand signals and one coach will hold up a yellow card. Two of the coaches will be sending "dummy" signals. Figure 7 comes from a November 2008 match-up between Auburn and Georgia. The picture is not able to pick up the quick gesticulations made by the two other coaches; however, the yellow card is clearly seen in the middle of the photo.[89]

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[88] One could argue the distribution of these play goes back to Pop Warner football, when elementary school students are taught the basic formations or even further back when American style football poached organizational strategies from rugby, a sport from which American football finds its genesis.

Additionally, Auburn, like many college football programs, employs a video coordinator whose job is to film an entire game and then edit the film down into meaningful chunks of film (for instance, a film of the defensive line, a film of the wide receivers, a film of kick off formations). After the coaches have watched the film, teams then congregate and walk through the entire film. More so than critiquing individual players, the film becomes a collaborative tool for the increased production of the entire team.

[89] See Appendix A for the offensive signs used by the University of Oklahoma. Striking similarities exist between the signs used by Auburn and those used by OU.

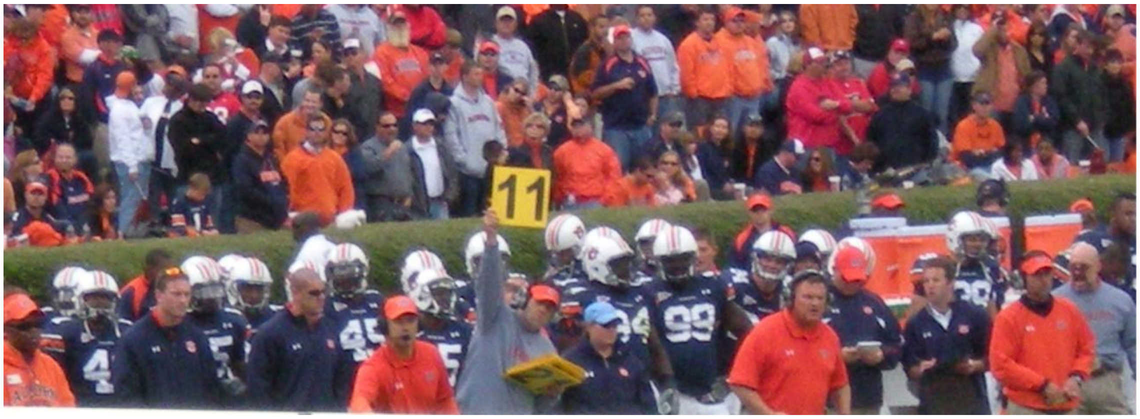

Fig. 7. Signaling the defensive play, a coach holds up a yellow sign inscribed with a black number. Notice the thick stack of cards in his left hand. Unfortunately, the picture is not able to capture the quick gesticulations of the two coaches on either side. (Photograph taken by the author).

Only when utilizing a distributed view of literate activity can the construction of the play be seen. Dropping the here-and-now perspective of writing, the perspective adopted by Flower and Hayes, allows us to examine the distribution of a written play during spring practices, film studies, and roster assessments. Once the film has been watched, the rosters gauged, the play written down, plays are given a succinct and easy to remember and pronounce name, re-appropriated into hand signals and numerical packages and placed on placards.

It is these names, hand signals, numerical packages, and placards that players need to memorize. And players memorize these plays in fascinating and creative ways. While I was collecting data for my Master's thesis at Auburn University, I had a chance to sit down and chat with a freshman defensive back. I was curious about how he was learning Auburn's play book, which was upwards of 400 plays. Learning the play book is one of the more mentally taxing exercises for a freshman, as college play books are markedly different and more complex than high school play books. He shrugged his shoulders, possibly struggling to give words to the innate process of internalizing information (I know I would struggle verbalizing how I learned something seemingly innate). After a few seconds, he looked up and told me a story. He was hanging out in the locker room with his teammates when discussion turned to the playbook. Shortly into the conversation, a senior defensive nose tackle took the cushions off the sofa and arranged them on the floor. The cushions represented offensive lineman, the senior said. He then slowly walked the freshman through the play. It is moments like these, when the text is offloaded onto a variety of representational media—be it hand signals or sofa cushions—that highlight the need to examine the trajectory of a text to understand fully how meaning-making jumps across time, space, and medium.

Moreover, it is moments like these which show the continued relevance of the claim I made in the first chapter, that athletics was instrumental in the rise and codification of rhetoric in the 5th century Greece and illustrates my claim that our student-athletes are modern day Sophists who balance athletics and rhetoric. Nascent rhetoric was codified into the now familiar five functions or canons: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. While the first three are still central teaching elements in first-year composition and other writing-intensive courses, delivery has largely been relegated to the communication department and memory is all but erased from a writing curriculum. Yet there memory sits, mysteriously wedged between style—which has no shortage of texts devoted to it—and delivery. And memory pops up again thousands of years later in the Auburn University locker room when a text was off-loaded onto sofa cushions, a mnemonic technique wherein the student-athlete's future understanding and embodiment of the play may be triggered through thinking of this specific memory. We know Plato placed great weight on memory as his *Phaedrus* attests; Plato even went so far as to argue that writing and rhetoric would eventually corrode the necessity of memory, one reason early in his work that he adamantly positioned himself against rhetoric. Like Plato, the Sophists placed great importance on rhetoric. Remembering Sophistic pedagogy detailed in the first chapter, Marrou suggests that a central activity involved pupils listening to the Sophists deliver a speech and then imitating and *memorizing* a speech to deliver to the Sophists (30; emphasis added). A central element of memorization was imbedding mnemonic devices into text which trigger memory. The literary figure we call Homer wove these devices into the *Odyssey* and *Iliad*, (a favorite was the Greek word "καί" [and]), which aided in his and other's ability to memorize the saga. While memory for the young student-athlete at Auburn was not oral but visual, this emphasis on memory as central to meaning-making not only connects with Kathleen Welch's argument that "memory…[does] not wither with the growing dominance of writing; rather [it changes] form" ("Reconfiguring 19), but it also provides weight to my assertion that the modern student-athlete continues in the Classical tradition though his use of memory and execution of a text.

Once learned, be it through sofa cushions or a more traditional route, plays follow a rapid linear, predetermined path during a game or practice as teams only have, at most, 35 seconds to receive and prepare to run a new play. Immediately after the previous play is whistled to a stop, the head coach will speak through his headset to an assistant coach either on the sideline or in a booth high above the stadium. The head coach will verbally relay the play he believes will be most effective. The assistant coach will then remediate the verbal play into either hand signals or textual inscriptions on a large placard. Several key players on the field will see the hand signals or placard and will remediate the visual representation of the play back into a verbal representation. Mike and the strong safety are in charge of changing the play and/or ensuring their particular section of the defense received the correct play. At this point, as in spring practice, the text of a football play ceases to be an empty document, but again becomes embodied and enacted on the field. If the offense does not change their formation once they have broken the huddle, then the defense runs the play as scripted. If there is any variety of formation it is up to Mike and the strong safety to properly react and adapt the play. A defensive alignment, however, is not solely a reaction to the offensive formation. Down count, distance to the goal line, and time left on the game clock all work into the decision to embody a particular play and how the play is constructed. Once the ball is snapped, a play lasts an average of 3-5 seconds, unless, of course, the offense takes the ball the length of the field for a touchdown. When these few seconds have elapsed, a new play is relayed to the defense and the cycle begins anew. A verbal representation is shouted to teammates; the ball is snapped; the play lasts 5 or so seconds, and the cycle continues.[90]

While Bruno Latour is correct in arguing that "[v]ery few of the participants in a given course of action are simultaneously visible at any given point" (201), this partial tracing begins to reveal the depth and complexity of this particular text. While at first glance football plays appear as homogenous, static repositories of information, tracing their trajectory reveals their heterogeneity. The here-and-now perspective for "4-3 Cov. 4 play action" would look at the eleven men on the field, the down marker, the score and the distance to the goal to make sense of the text. This perspective would ignore the historical factors which gave shape to the text ranging from Euclidean theories of geometry, summer roster slots, and film studies, to the restrictive practice of condensing elaborate plays into easily recognizable hand signals and black numbers on yellow cardboard. These historical factors have agency in the construction of this particular defensive play call.

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[90] Certainly each team may have a slightly different method for relaying a multisemiotic text. However no matter the unique wrinkles, the emphasis is on quickness, linearity, directness, and remediation of textual forms.

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Effective understanding of a football play involves the effective distribution of the multisemiotic text. The text will be spoken by the coach to an assistant coach then repurposed onto a cardboard sign flashed to the defense. The play is then embodied on the field. Distribution in this community of practice is critical. And distribution is also a hallmark of curricular multimodality. As Shipka reminds us, multimodality is more than simply allowing composers access to unlimited modes during composing.[91] She describes how her pedagogy invites students to consider delivery and circulation of their texts. In traditional monomodal assignments, the delivery and circulation are a given: students will type their essays on an 8 ½ by 11 sheet of white paper, standard margins and font; students will turn their papers in during class, stapled in the upper left hand corner above their names, if following MLA format. This ritual has become so familiar we forget to challenge it. Shipka does. She invites her students to make rhetorical choices, not only in the construction of their arguments, but in how their arguments are delivered—returning the fifth canon of classical rhetoric to the fore of the writing classroom—as well as circulated. She asks her students to see how the "systems of delivery, reception and circulation shape (and take shape from) the means and modes of production" ("A Multimodal Task-Based" 278). This emphasis on delivery and circulation is largely lost in the traditional writing classroom, certainly in mine at least; however, these components are still critical to football and basketball plays which are delivered, circulated, and even remediated, in several unique and important ways.[92]

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[91] Through her emphasis on mediated activity, Shipka is able to link multimodal to distribution. However, what Shipka's focus on multimodality as mediated activity will not allow her to do is talk about the embodied aspect of multimodal texts. To do so, she would need to read multimodal texts as multisemiotic texts, as I have done.

Here I read Shipka's use of delivery, reception, and circulation—and even my insertion of Bolter and Grusin's term "remediation"—as synonymous with Syverson's understanding of distributed cognition. Regardless of the term, all emphasize the movement of a text beyond the immediate context in which it was created. Sometimes the emphasis may be on audience, as is the case with "reception," and sometimes the emphasis may be on how the original text (though I am struggling to conceptualize an authentically *original* text) repurposes existing modes and media as is the case with remediation. Despite these subtle differences, all attend to how texts move beyond a myopic here-and-now perspective. But beyond simply tracing how this text is distributed across spatial and temporal boundaries, the end goal of a football play is to either score points or stop a team from scoring points. For that to happen, the text needs to be embodied by the 11 men on the field.

Writing as Embodied, College Football Plays as Embodied

During practice or a game, a student-athlete's understanding of a multisemiotic play is reflected by how clearly he embodies the play. In public, a college football player will properly or poorly embody this extracurricular multisemiotic text, and the vast majority of the people in the stands and on television will bear witness to this attempt. Effective understanding of a football play is effective embodiment.

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[92] With the term "remediation" I am thinking of Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin's text *Remediation,* as well as Bolter's earlier *Writing Space* from which the term "remediation" finds genesis. In both cases, the term concerns itself with how "one medium is seen by our culture as reforming or improving upon another" (Bolter and Grusin 59). While remediation is largely concerned with digital media, scholars in rhetoric and composition have adopted this term to theorize how texts move across mediums, as I have done here. Additionally, to be fair to Bolter and Grusin, though they focus on media studies, they acknowledge the presence and usefulness of remediation prior to and apart from digital media. I engage with this term more directly on pages 189-191.

*

Our field is poised to tackle more accurately understandings of the role of the body in the composing process than we have in the past. Largely dissatisfied with current understanding of embodiment in our field, I look promisingly to the work of Syverson, Barry Kroll, Daisy Levy, Kathryn Perry, and Julie Cheville—composition and rhetoric scholars informed by a diverse array of fields—to capture how the body and the mind are inextricably linked during the composing process, how our skin and bones impact our writing, how our breathing and heart beat impact how and what we write, and how we can design pedagogies that invite students to analyze and consider these impacts (DeLazzero). Additionally, as I detailed in the first chapter, when conceiving of a body/mind unity one cannot help but visualize the early Sophists, those fourth century BCE rhetors who combined bodily and oratorical performance, who ardently espoused the need to refine the mind and the body, who are now represented by the modern day student-athlete.

For Syverson, writing is real people working in a real world. While this point may seem moot, it is important to heed the physical action of holding a book, flipping pages, typing words on a keyboard. As she suggests, "writers, readers, and texts have physical bodies and consequently not only the content but the process of their interaction is dependent on, and reflective of, physical experience" (12). What I find curious about Syverson's argument is her inclusion of "texts" in her listing of things which have a physical body. Typically when embodiment is constructed, not as a metaphor but as a concrete practice and pedagogy deriving from a theoretical foundation, *humans* are configured. But Syverson moves past this myopic view and suggests exploring how the physical existence and attributes of the text before us—be it a book, a scrap of paper, a PDF—facilitates or stymies its attempt to convey or contain meaning. While this point may be clear enough, Syverson holds that "One of the salient features of academic life is the massive suppression of awareness of this physical relationship" (12), namely our tactile interaction with a text.

I agree and following in the wake of work by people such as Kristie S. Fleckenstein, Debra Hawhee, Sharon Crowley, and Jack Selzer, an awareness of how the body figures into ways of knowing is making its way into our scholarship, allowing people like Kathryn Perry in her recent *Kairos* multimodal article "The Movement of Composition: Dance and Writing" to ask "How do we distinguish between the physical and conceptual work of composing?" Perry leaves her audience to ponder this question, and I am left feeling as if the line between the physical and conceptual work of composing is increasingly blurred. This blurring is especially evident with how student-athletes approach extracurricular multisemiotics.

Yet, a move toward a more embodied understanding of composing is crucial as, according to Mark Johnson, "Our embodiment is essential to who we are, to what meaning is, and to our ability to draw rational inferences and be creative" (13). What is worth noting here is that Johnson attributes creativity and rationality to an embodied sense of our self. Additionally, through the phrase "what meaning is," Johnson tiptoes close to discussions linking embodiment with epistemology all the more intriguing to our field as epistemology, according to James Berlin, undergirds theories of rhetoric ("Rhetoric and Ideology.")

In her work with student-athletes and the issue of transfer, Julie Cheville takes up Johnson to stage her argument that "cognition might be conceptualized in a way that recognizes both language *and* the human body as mediational tools" ("Conceptual" 332). The emphasis Cheville places on mediational tools dovetails with Shipka's work and underscores the need to place an understanding of embodiment during the composing process alongside developments in multisemiotic literate activity. Though she never directly engages with issues of embodiment, Cynthia Selfe underscores the central place of the body in her recent argument for incorporating aurality as a mode of composing. So too does Kress when he argues the recent move toward multimodality "represents a move away from high abstraction to the specific, the material; from the mentalistic to the *bodily* (13; emphasis added). Kress carves space for a rich discussion of embodiment with the use of "bodily." However, he fails to follow through and largely restricts his theory on multimodality to texts and is guilty of freezing writing, freezing texts, as Prior puts it. While there is space for the body to be a larger and more acknowledged component of multimodality, scholars have yet to explore this component fully.

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Back to an ecological view of Auburn's play.

For a team to effectively run a 4-3 defense, a strong "Mike" is needed. A 4-3 highlights a team's linebacking core, especially "Mike," instead of having to rely on the combined strength of 4 linebackers which a 3-4 defense contains. Auburn has traditionally organized their defense in this 4-3 formation, and typically a head coach works from a consistent defensive formation. As seen in Figure 8, four defensive linemen (DTs and DEs) are lined up on the line of scrimmage, while three linebackers (W, M, and S) are stacked roughly 3-5 yards behind the line of scrimmage.

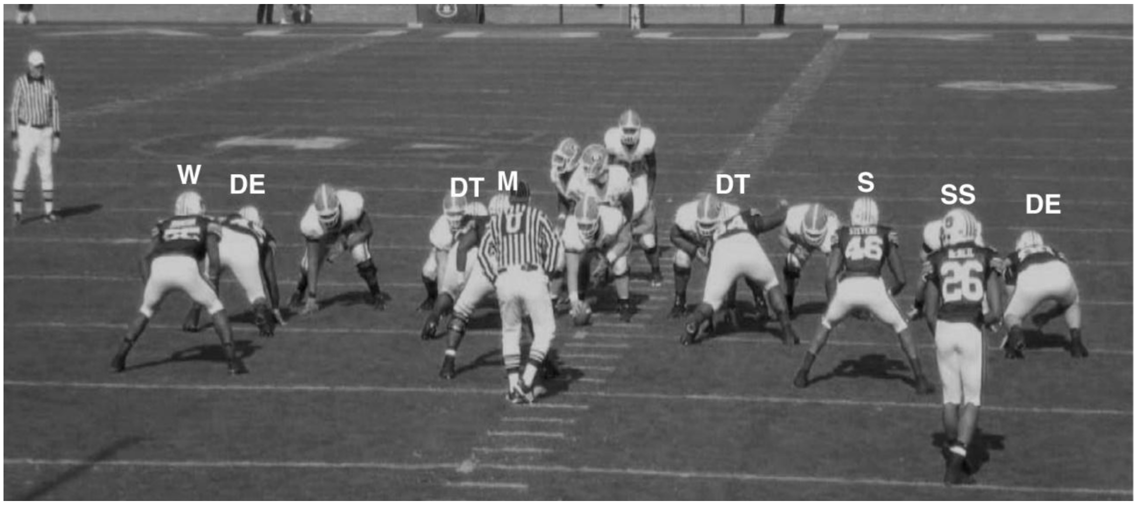

Fig. 8. Taken during Auburn's 2008 match-up against the University of Georgia, Auburn lines up in their traditional 4-3 defensive formation: four linemen (DE, short for defensive end, and DT, short for defensive tackle) and three linebackers (W, M, and S). The SS, creeping close to the line of scrimmage, is not counted in a 4-3 formation. (photograph taken by author).

A Cover 4 also highlights Auburn's roster strengths and attempts to mask some roster shortcomings. With a young group of corners, bolstered by a strong free safety, Auburn worked from a Cover 4 alignment. A Cover 4 is helpful in stopping the run and play action. Also, as mentioned, it divides the field into quarters, thus not placing a young and weak cornerback alone against an oftentimes larger receiver.

While focusing on the distribution of this play highlights how coaches use plays to offload cognitive processes across a vast network of representational media, the play remains an empty vessel until it is embodied on the field. When the play is visually flashed to the captains, and when the captains verbally relay the play to their teammates, the play ceases to be a floating and empty text—how ever complex it may be—and becomes visually embodied and then publically enacted. Prior to this public enactment, these intricate plays are clandestine documents hidden from the public and performed in the privacy of a team's practice or written in the safety of a locker room. Prior to the embodiment, these texts are guarded carefully, yet, paradoxically, have no real value. In other words, a team does not win a game simply by sketching a creative and innovative play that circulates solely in their narrow community of practice. Accolades are not awarded for plays. A team wins a game, accolades are showered on players, coaches, and programs, based on the effective *embodiment* of these plays. During a game, these plays instantaneously move from being empty yet complex texts to effective and public performances of the text. Embodiment not only moves these texts from the private to public sphere, but embodiment is how the effectiveness of these texts is gauged. Again, it does not matter if a play looks good on paper or on a placard; it matters only if the play can be properly embodied.

Allow me to return to one of Syverson's arguments in hopes of adding an additional wrinkle to embodiment. Syverson holds "writers, readers, and texts have physical bodies and consequently not only the content but the process of their interaction is dependent on, and reflective of, physical experience" (12). What I would like to focus on here is the notion of inanimate texts having a physical body. I agree with Syverson as I can think of how words look on a page, which gives me a certain physical reaction, how a certain color ink, a font—Calibri has always made me a little nauseous—the weight of a book, impact my physical relationship to the text. If this follows, then we need to consider how a football play itself has an embodied presence. If this holds, then we need to consider how a football play itself has an embodied presence. The question that follows then is how a play's embodiment interacts with a football player's embodiment: more specifically, how embodiment is transferred from text to player and back again. Using the term "transfer," I am aware of the various understandings that may arise in the reader's mind. While I acknowledge the work of, for example, David Perkins and Gavriel Salomon, Anne Beaufort, and Elizabeth Wardle, I am thinking of transfer a little differently. For composition and rhetoric, transfer has largely focused on how students—more often than not those in first-year composition courses—are able to *transfer* the rhetorical and cognitive moves asked of them in their first-year composition courses to their upper-level and discipline specific courses. [93] The emphasis in this line of research (while productive in that it asks tough questions and poses even tougher suggestions), is largely on the student and what she or he is able or not able to transfer.

Instead, here I am thinking of a text-focused understanding of transfer and am curious how a single play—which Syverson argues is embodied—transfers meaning across various representational media: a sheet of white paper, a placard, a hand signal, a verbal command, and then an embodied presence on the football field. As issues surrounding transfer continue to animate our field, it is worth examining how football has constructed an extracurricular community of practice in which embodiment is effectively transferred from a text to people in less than 35 seconds and where this transfer rarely breaks down? I acknowledge there are differences between examining transfer in the context of college writing and examining transfer on a football field;

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[93] For interested readers, the pieces on transfer from the composition and rhetoric tradition which I am thinking of are Beaufort's *College Writing and Beyond: A New Framework for University Writing Instruction*, specifically chapter 6, and Wardle's 2009 *CCC* article "'Mutt Genres" and the Goal of FYC: Can We Help Students Write the Genres of the University?"

however, additional research on successful transfer—regardless of the area in which it occurs—can deliver insights into writing transfer and is worthy of further investigation. It is this transfer of embodiment that I find most curious and which I return to in chapter 4 by considering this transfer a form of what Rick Iedema refers to as "resemiotization."

During a course of a game, teams run upwards of 100 total offensive and defensive plays and in all these plays, embodiment is transferred. Again, while we can conceptualize via Syverson how a text is embodied, the embodiment of such a text is not assessed until the text is embodied by a football player. It is this important moment of transfer, happening publically and quickly, that positions football as a complex arena of literate activity.

Locating New Sites of Research

Explicating these plays allows scholars in composition and rhetoric to continue the important work of examining working texts. These are not texts designed to fulfill the demands of a teacher, but texts designed to fulfill a real-world function. I understand the frustration often associated with the phrase "real-world function" as it suggests school is not the real world and begs the question: where and when does the real world begin? I sympathize with these arguments. However, there is something innately different between a text constructed inside the four-walls of the classroom for the rhetorical purpose of a grade, an (often) imagined audience, and only seen by peers (if peer-review is performed), the writing-center (if the student is studious enough), and the teacher as opposed to a football or basketball text fulfilling the rhetorical purpose of performing on a public and national (maybe even international) stage, for a specific and concrete audience, and enacted and seen by the 80,000 people in the stands as well as the larger TV audience.[94] So I qualify the phrase "real world" but hold to my original claim that student-athletes are actively constructing and embodying extracurricular texts which charts a different understanding of what writing is than what we typically ask our students to do.

The idealistic goal of any writing teacher at any grade level is to prepare her or his students for the next step. This next step might be second-grade, middle school, high school, the student's major discipline, or, yikes!, life after college and the job market. Thus the goal is to teach writing skills which the student can transfer into the next (often new) context wherein the student will be asked to write again. As a college writing teacher, my goal is to either prepare students for their major (if they happen to be freshmen or sophomores) or for their future and impending job (if they happen to be juniors or seniors). To best prepare my students for these next steps, it behooves me, or any teacher of writing, to understand what is required of students at this next step. It seems odd for me to grill my students on MLA format when they will be asked to use APA in their major; it seems unhelpful to ask students to compose lengthy research papers, if, in a little more than a semester, they may be in a job demanding pithy memos. While I certainly cannot imagine all the rhetorical contexts in which they will be asked to write, like Shipka I believe I am obliged to craft a curriculum which revolves around writing my students may be asked to do in the future. Tying this back to multisemiotics, football, and the whole "real-world" conundrum: I suggest the extracurricular practice of writing for football and basketball and traditional curricular writing practices have marked differences, and our classroom practices should account for and maybe even embrace and espouse these differences. While I certainly cringe over the meaning-making process unpacked in the previous chapter for their emphasis on ahistorical approaches to disembodied meaning-making espoused in football and basketball writing, I embrace the public aspect of writing in these two communities of practice; I embrace the prominence of embodiment, delivery, circulation, and remediation which comes to the surface through an ecological view of writing but is often lost in the traditional college writing class. Studying multisemiotic composing for football and basketball shines light on new and important components of writing. If we hold that a purpose of classroom writing is to mirror writing that occurs outside of the classroom as well as preparing students for writing outside of the classroom (here I have dropped the phrase "real world"), then it only holds that our pedagogies should incorporate these components.

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[94] A qualifier is needed here as there is important work done by scholars which attempts to link classroom writing with what is variously called "activism," "public rhetoric," or "civic engagement." Service learning, for example, is one method by which writing teachers attempt to show how writing can impact more than the people in the class. Despite the promise, emphasis on the public sphere in the classroom appears to have an ebb and flow feeling, where it gains in popularity in articles and conference presentations, then fades away again. Currently, we are in the "ebb" part of the cycle as the June 2012 issue of *CCC* has a review by Nancy Welch on four recent book-length studies of public rhetoric.

Additionally, focusing on writing outside of the classroom helps our field expand understandings of literacy. I follow the lead of, to name a few, Suzanne Rumsey, Ralph Cintron, Diana George and Mariolina Rizzi Salvatori who look toward extracurricular instantiations of multimodality, not solely in an attempt to better understand what occurs in the classroom, but to hold up these instantiations as just as worthy of our careful attention.[95] I am sympathetic to Bronwyn Williams's claim that "It is valuable to explore literacy practices outside of the classroom as important activities by themselves without necessarily squeezing them into our curriculum" (188). While on the surface Williams's claim may seem to fly in the face of what I argued in the previous paragraph (that we should look to football and basketball writing for classroom teaching practices), I do not see this as an either/or argument: either we incorporate extracurricular literacy practices into our pedagogy or we don't. For those who move against Williams and firmly embrace the need to filter theory and research through pedagogy, then football and basketball writing provide important paradigms of a reconceptualized writing process. For those like Gwendolyn Pough, who, in her 2011 CCCC Chair's Address, passionately confesses that she is "a little weary of our own profession…digging our heels and demanding that everything have something to do with writing or the first-year writing course as if that is the only thing we do" (305-306), football and basketball writing speaks to theory and research existing apart from the classroom. The plays, embodied by our student-athletes in a highly public arena, expand and even complicates the theoretical view of writing as an ecology. Cooper and Syverson, to name two, find elements in biology and chaos theory that help us more accurately re-envision the writing process. This theoretical lens has been recently used up by Fleckenstein and others to examine a new model of writing research. While some scholars have deployed an ecological view of writing into the classroom, many embrace this view as one that speaks in novel ways to theory and research and have not seen the need to force it into the classroom. Either way, charting how meaning is made and how writing occurs in a very public and high-profile space such as college football and basketball yields illuminating results for our current understanding of multimodality, as either a classroom practice, a theory, or both.

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[95] Respectively, Rumsey, Cintron, and George and Rizzi Salvatori examine Amish quilting, Latino/a gang graffiti, and Catholic holy cards.

Finally, looking at these plays as multisemiotic allows us to focus on nondigital semiotic resources. As current positioned, whether one adopts the term "multimodal" or "multisemiotic," great emphasis and attention is placed on digital resources. And mistakenly so. In regards to multimodality, it's true that the most prominent spokespeople for this new rhetoric are coming from a digital background (e.g., Hawisher and Selfe). Yet as others have pointed out, limiting students to the digital realm ignores other critical modes. As Shipka has shown, when students are given a full range of resources to construct an argument, digital and non-digital resources both gain prominence in the final assemblage. Certainly, we live in an age imbued with a heightened awareness of and drive toward technology, yet it would be odd for us to espouse a rhetoric like multimodality or multisemiotics—which opens up the realm of meaning making for composers—but then limit the use of these enfranchising rhetorics to the digital domain.

As I write these sentences, I am acutely aware that illustrating how the literate activity of intercollegiate athletics speaks to current composition and rhetoric theory and research is almost laughingly disconnected from the problems currently plaguing the place of athletics in American higher education. Positioning college football plays as multisemiotic literate activity, enlarging our research focus to include extracurricular textual production: how do these moves place any level of salve on the wounds (sometimes metaphorical, sometimes literal) caused by, say, the Penn State scandal, the proliferation of head injuries in football, the cheating scandals at UNC, Harvard, and Florida State, a student-athlete another student-athlete at Virginia and Baylor, student-athletes selling dope at TCU?

It doesn't; I would be kidding myself if I wrote otherwise.

We don't reach out to athletics and form these much needed interdepartmental relations with athletic departments through enlarging and refining our theories of writing and our methodologies for writing research. We reach out to athletics—and reaching out to athletics is the first step in the productive direction of reigning in college sports, curbing scandals of all sorts, and incorporating student-athletes more fully into undergraduate student life—through the classroom. Those of us in composition and rhetoric can talk all we want about novel theories of writing and attending to the non-school literacies students bring with them into our classrooms. But these conversations gain true traction when they are reflected in our pedagogy—to which I turn in the next chapter.

Interchapter #3: Woodrow Wilson

Thirty-three years following the first football game between Rutgers and Princeton in 1869, Woodrow Wilson assumed the presidency of the prestigious Ivy League university, returning to a school where he had contributed to the 1878 national championship football team. Despite losing 6-4 to Rutgers on that historical day in 1869, Princeton went on a tear in the second half of the nineteenth century.[96] When Wilson came Princeton in 1890 as Professor of Jurisprudence and Political Economy for an annual salary of $3,000, he came to a school with a proud and storied football tradition: a staggering 237-22-12 record and 20 national championships.[97] During Wilson's eight years at the helm of Princeton, he sent a representative to a 1905 meeting requested by President Theodore Roosevelt, which eventually resulted in the formation of the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (later renamed the NCAA) in 1906, saw his Tigers win two more national championships, contributed to the Graduate Committee on Athletics. He even "found time to attend [football] practice two or three times a week and discuss the game intelligently with players and coaches" (Bragdon 40).[98] His love of football was so deep that, according to a popular anecdote at the time, "Once on the train from New York to Princeton, Wilson become so interested in telling [Philip Rollins, a Princeton alum] about variations of mass plays and Rollins was so absorbed that they missed Princeton Junction and had to go on to Trenton" (Bragdon 463 n.29).

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[96] While the first football game "made very little impression on the College at large . . . and there are almost no records" (Presbery and Moffatt 27), the Rutgers *Targum* provides a detailed first-person account of the contest. See page 271 in James Presbery and James Hugh Moffatt's *Athletics at Princeton: A History* to read this account by the Rutgers student newspaper.

[97] To date, Princeton had recorded 28 national championships in football. Their last came in 1950.

[98] In regards to his contribution to the Intercollegiate Athletic Association, Wilson wrote the following note to Henry Mitchell MacCracken a few days prior to the meeting called for by President Roosevelt: "I need not assure you of our very deep interest in the whole question of the reform of the game of foot ball [sic]. We have of course been giving it very careful and very extended consideration. We have, indeed, come to conclusions so definite and comprehensive that we could go into such a conference that proposed for the 28th of December only to urge our own conclusions" (*The Papers* Vol. 16 272). The meeting was held on the 29th of December, and the progenitor of the NCAA was founded in 1906.

Prior to being president of Princeton, Wilson coached football at Wesleyan; after Princeton, before and after assuming the presidency of the United States, Wilson wove athletic metaphors throughout his speeches and writings on government and education. He was the first president to attend a World Series game, and the first president to throw out the first pitch at a World Series game. Like the Sophists of fourth century Greece and like Myron Rolle and Prentice Gautt, Wilson illustrates the productive cohesion of athletics and academics.

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Following a short stint as an undergraduate at Davidson College, the young Woodrow Wilson, who at the time was going by his first name "Thomas," left Davidson for Princeton where wrote for and edited *The Princetonian*, joined the debating club Whig, and pledged membership into the eating club the Alligators.[99] But what really excited Wilson was the rising interest in American style football, and he was known to shout "himself hoarse watching the manly combat that was Princeton football" (Maynard 10). During his sophomore year, Princeton began playing its first schedule of games against other colleges.[100] A year later, a young Wilson was elected Secretary for the Football Association at Princeton, a position that required him to raise money for the sport and exposed him to the financial side of athletics which would aid him later in his career as a faculty member of the Faculty Committee on Outdoor Sports and the Graduate Advisory Council.

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[99] In 1877 during a Whig debate regarding the virtues of a liberal education, Wilson commanded the floor and declared "that a liberal education is to be preferred to an exclusively practical one" (qtd. in Maynard 14). The positive treatment Wilson provides a liberal education is worth noting as the progenitor of this form of education, Isocrates, ardently believed gymnastics and *philosophia*, were instrumental elements to one's education. Through espousing a liberal education, Wilson indirectly yokes himself to the need for athletics *and* academics in education. As evidenced by where Wilson placed his attention as an undergraduate, faculty member, and university president, it appears he would agree with this Isocrates's preposition.

During the 1878 football season, Wilson "not only took care of the practical business of finances and arranging games but had a part in coaching" (Bragdon 39). Friend and fellow member of the Alligator Club remembers Wilson with football captain Earl Dodge working out plays on a tablecloth. To cover the ever-rising costs associated with football, Wilson, as the Secretary of the Football Association, raised the "admission fee . . . to an unprecedented sum of fifty cents" (Bragdon 40). He used the extra revenue accrued over the season to cover baseball expenses, leading Henry Wilkinson Bragdon to comment that this financial move may have been the "first recorded example of the now universal practice of using football gate receipts to support other sports" (40).[101] Princeton won their eighth championship in 1878 and Wilson "surely contributed" (Bragdon 39).

After graduating from Princeton, a bastion of athletics and academic excellence, Wilson wandered somewhat aimlessly around the south, inwardly debating, as many college graduates do, the next move. He briefly attended law school at the University of Virginia and practiced in Atlanta. Yet, he yearned to devote himself back to scholarship and received a Ph.D. in history and political science from Johns Hopkins in

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[100] While Princeton first played Rutgers in 1869, Princeton did not play more than two games in a season until 1876 when they took on Yale, Columbia, and Pennsylvania. Playing Penn twice that season, Princeton ended with an undefeated 4-0 record.

[101] See footnote 75 for how the University of Oklahoma had adopted this financial practice into their athletic program.

1886 where he wrote a dissertation titled "Congressional Government: A Study in American Politics." As a newly minted Ph.D., Wilson was a visiting lecturer at Cornell, taught for three years at Bryn Mawr, and then settled at Wesleyan where he renewed his love for football. A former player remembers Wilson giving a pep talk to the team before the Princeton-Wesleyan game in which he "put emphasis on speed in running plays" (Bragdon 172). Seward V. Coffin, the director of the football association at Wesleyan, provides the following narrative of Wilson's influence on the Wesleyan football team: "Then we held meetings of the TEAM [sic] in Prof. Wilson's recitation room and made the plans on the blackboard. We planned, every time, a series of 5 or 6 plays to be used, without signal, at the beginning of which ever half we had the kick-off" (qtd. in Bragdon 172).

Largely based on the success of his work *Congressional Government* published by Houghton Mifflin in 1885—which many thought was the "feat of a prodigy" (Cooper, Jr. 48)—Wilson landed himself at Princeton. While lecturing four times a week, as well as writing heavily, Wilson led a spirited defense of football which had recently come under attack for being violent and distracting students from academic pursuits.[102] Speaking in front of an alumni group, Wilson argued "Foot-ball is a manly game [and] [a]thletics are a safety valve for animal spirits" (qtd. in Cooper Jr, 66).

Wilson's dedication to athletics was even reflected in his more planned addresses. On October 21, 1896, the 150th anniversary of the charter of the College of New Jersey (later named Princeton), Wilson delivered the major address titled

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[102] One of Wilson's more intriguing articles to come from this period as a professor of jurisprudence and political economy at Princeton dealt with pedagogy: "University Training and Citizenship." During his time as a faculty member and president at Princeton, Wilson pushed hard for tenure and promotion based more on teaching.

"Princeton in the Nation's Service," in front of 15,000 attendees including then-President Grover Cleveland, which was later described as an "oratorical triumph" (Cooper, Jr. 72). Heeding his wife's advice to "aim for something lofty, like John Milton's *Aeropagitica*" (Maynard 44), Wilson moved through the history of Princeton before dwelling on pedagogy. Like the great Sophists Gorgias and Protagoras before him, Wilson used the occasion to weave athletics and pedagogy into the oratorical performance. Captivating the audience, he stressed that "A cultured mind is a mind quit of its awkwardness, eased of all impediment and illusion, made quick and athletic in the acceptable exercise of power" (*The Papers* Vol. 10 27). When Wilson assumed the presidency of Princeton in 1903, he returned to this a metaphor in an address titled "The Meaning of a Liberal Education" given to the New York City High School Teacher's Association in 1909:

> Take the gymnasium. I think the gymnasium is intensely practical, and that everybody ought to make more or less use of the gymnastic apparatus. [People using the gymnasium] are doing simply this: they are getting their nerves and muscles in such shape, they are getting the red corpuscles in the blood so encouraged and heartened, that afterwards they can stand the strains of business . . . and come out of the greatest trials in possession of their full resiliency and return again to health and efficiency. That is what makes the gymnasium intensely practical; it is meant that those who use it shall be in fighting trim and conquer the world so far as their bodies are concerned.
>
> Let that serve as a figure for a liberal education. A liberal education consists in putting the mind in such shape that all its powers, like the muscles of the body,

> will have been called into exercise, will have been given a certain degree of development . . . so that the mind will not find itself daunted in the midst of the tasks of the world any more than the body itself, and will be able to turn itself in the right direction, even as the athlete, quickly and gracefully, not overwhelmed by the strain, and able to accommodate the several faculties so that they will unite in carrying the strain. The thing is a mere figure of speech, but it is a figure of speech which in some degree illuminates the matter which I want to elucidate for you. (*The Papers* Vol. 18 599)[103]

Following Wilson's powerful addresses, he turned down an offer to assume the presidency at the University of Virginia and soon found himself president of his alma mater. From his lofty position at Princeton, he moved in to the Governor's mansion of New Jersey, and then in to the White House. It wouldn't be a stretch to say that Wilson's oratorical performances, given in front of the leading politicians and academics of the time and intertwining education and gymnastics, were the impetus for his meteoric rise.

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[103] In its reliance on gymnastics as a metaphor for education, Wilson's address draws many parallels to Isocrates' *Antidosis* detailed in the first chapter.

Chapter 4: Speaking Concretely: What Composition and Rhetoric and Athletics Have to Teach Each Other; Or, What Do I Do With the Large and Indifferent Football Players in the Back Row?

Let's consider an incredibly fundamental riddle: How does education happen? I see it as an extremely active, even athletic process—Salman Khan

What I have attempted to unpack here is odd and novel territory for our field. Traditionally, the classroom has been our home, and the locus of our research and pedagogy. When we have bravely and productively strode out of the classroom and turned our eyes and ears to our larger community, we have largely focused away from athletics. Throughout this dissertation, I am interested in sketching a picture of the mercurial relationship between school and sport. I believe that our field has exacerbated this mercurial relationship, but we are positioned to be one of the more effective agents for placing athletics more squarely into the academic missions of our respective colleges and universities. Doing so invites pedagogical discussions, discussions aimed at enlarging our teaching to reach *all* students in our class, discussions aimed at attending to the unique meaning-making process imbedded in *all* our students. Enlarging our pedagogical focus to meet our student-athletes paves the way for reintegrating athletics in the academic mission of our respective schools.

When I talk to my colleagues about student-athletes, I often receive sighs of exasperation. And I sympathize with their frustration. Student-athletes can be a challenging population with which to work. The ones playing high-profile and high-revenue sports are often found lounging in the back corners of the classroom. Their massive bodies draped in school athletic wear, head phones dangling around their necks, looks of indifference painted on their faces. While I generalize here this is the common picture of the high-profile student-athletes at our schools. They can be a tough population to reach, largely indifferent to the content of the class, yet at the same time a student population with which the school is highly concerned; if the star quarterback fails the class, ESPN scrolls “suspension due to academic misconduct” on their newsfeed. But beyond being a tough population, they are a unique population with a lot to teach us, scholars/practitioners of writing.

Building off the analysis in chapter 2 and 3 of embodied competitive rhetoric of college sports and the constellation of literate practices swirling therein, chapter 4 suggests two pedagogical practices teachers of college-level writing instruction could implement in their classes to best reach this unique population: resemiotization and socially situated participation. While these practices are best suited to student-athletes, all students can benefit from a more attuned focus on these practices. What makes this section so critical, beyond constructing an appropriate pedagogy for high-profile and oftentimes academically struggling students (and here I intentionally drop the *athlete* suffix), is that it suggests academic benefits athletics bring to schools. Typically when presidents, administrators, alumni, boosters or various other stakeholders point to benefits of—and by extension, the need *for*—athletes, these individuals point to brand recognition, marketing, finances, and creating a collegiate climate of pageantry and school pride. While these are all strong benefits, growing ever stronger as budget belts are tightened and schools look to athletics to keep struggling academic departments in the black, what is not considered is how athletics speak to academics in theoretical and even pedagogical ways. In other words, how a college football play can help an instructor teach first-year composition or help a writing consultant work with a writer in the on-campus writing center. Believing that athletic literacy and the myriad literate practices therein help us, scholars/practitioners of writing, engage more effectively with student-athletes, and even all students, in our composition classes, I shortly turn to resemiotization and situated social participation.

The second section of this chapter turns to, as the title suggests, what writing centers have to teach athletics, particularly what is typically referred to as athletic academic services. Currently, the academic tutoring of students is legislated according to the most recent NCAA manual, an annually released spiral bound 400 plus page text, detailing all aspects of college sports—from when rifle season can officially start (no joke) to Principles for Conduct of Intercollegiate Athletics. The intention of these principles is to ensure student-athletes are not receiving inappropriate academic support or any level of support beyond what the general student body receives. The unintended consequences of these principles is that at many schools, the academic support provided to student-athletes is staid and provided from an position of fear of breaking NCAA's guidelines more than a position of desire to academically (and appropriately) support a student-athlete. Moreover, at many schools, the individuals overseeing a student-athlete's academic path are trained in law, a background in interpreting vague legalese edicts, and not trained in education, in creating curriculum to meet the unique academic needs of student-athletes. The second section of this chapter positions writing centers as positive advocates for improving student-athlete writing tutoring occurring in athletic academic departments. As writing center theory and pedagogy sees novel developments devoted to creativity and chaos, our close-cousins in athletic academic services, who offer writing support for student-athletes, are handcuffed to what I believe to be staid and even troublesome models of tutoring, which I detail shortly. So my large question, the one that needs to be asked and needs to be addressed by those of us in writing center work, is how can student-athlete writing centers adopt novel advances in writing center theory and practice and still adhere to strict NCAA academic compliance mandates, which could cripple an institution if broken purposefully or ignorantly? In an effort to provide concrete examples and subsequent best practices, I focus attention on the relationship between the University of Oklahoma's Writing Center and Athletic Academic Services, two spaces where I currently work.

Instead of separating these two sections into separate chapters, I have decided to mold them into one for I see these sections as two sides of the same coin. Believing that athletics should not be abolished from campuses—an argument long and repeatedly made but which rarely bears fruit—and believing that athletics provide schools and stakeholders with more than simply something to cheer for on a Saturday, with lucrative TV contracts, with financial benefits, this chapter looks at the reciprocal relationship between school and sport. The field of composition and rhetoric is well-positioned to illumine for all stakeholders this reciprocal relationship, a relationship refined during fourth and fifth century Greece, but a relationship which had waned over the centuries. Yet despite this waning and despite the incendiary rhetoric hurled at athletics over what seems to be an increase in shocking scandals, athletics has much to teach those of us who work with student writers. The first is situated social participation.

Situated Social Participation

Through studying a variety of professions such as butchers, tailors, and midwives, Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger contend individuals learn the literate activity of a given community of practice through what they term "legitimate peripheral participation" (LPP). This focus on active situated social participation is positioned in opposition to detached and abstract lessons and reflects an apprenticeship model of learning which has gained traction in writing center scholarship (Geller et al.), as well as genre theory (Soliday).

A brief sketch of the context in which their work arose and some of the underlying assumptions gives a clearer view of Lave and Wenger's radical rethinking of learning. In mid 80s and early 90s, cognitive research analyzed how social factors influenced cognition. Naturalistic research, studying individuals performing tasks in a situated environment, became the norm. Researchers theorized a conception of learning that placed the individual on the same pedestal as the social; agent, activity, and context were given agency alongside the individual. Learning became understood as a situated activity where the location of learning had just as much influence as the individual.

Accompanying these notions were theories of communities of practice. If the social is vital to cognition, the line of reasoning went, we need to better understand the social in which cognition is occurring. To meet this need, the idea of communities (alternatively called "discourse communities" or "communities of practice") arose. Communities became understood as static forms with a set of strict rules governing the literate activity therein. An individual's learning was gauged by how well she learned and adhered to the rules of a given community. Pulling strongly from a structuralist position of abstraction, decontextualization, and conformity, an individual's task was to "make a cognitive journey to the center of a [community of practice], to internalize the [community of practice's] language, rules, and knowledge" (Prior 19). While still employing the idea of a community, Lave and Wenger react strongly to notions of communities existing as static and strictly defined entities. Learning, they contend, occurs in harmony with a constellation of tools and across a variety of situational contexts. While learning can be described as occurring in a definite community of practice, they reject the idea that communities are static homogenous areas, as the previous structuralist position would argue. Instead,

> Given the complex, differentiated nature of communities, it seems important not to reduce the end point of centripetal participation in a community of practice to a uniform or univocal 'center,' or to a linear notion of skill acquisition. There is no place in a community of practice designated 'the periphery,' and, most emphatically, it has no single core or center. (Lave and Wenger 36)

While Lave and Wenger's concept of communities of practice pulls from a previous tradition of understanding cognition as largely facilitated by external factors, they have moved more toward recent sociohistoric notions of learning which place equal agency among the social, the individual and the material in the construction of cognition. For Lave and Wenger, a community of practice "is a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice" (98). Communities of practice are fluid, dynamic systems, which individuals cannot master (like with earlier notions of communities), hetergenous systems, and concretely situated phenomena. Learning the everyday practices of a community entails a process Lave and Wenger call "legitimate peripheral participation" (LPP).

Continuing in Lave and Wenger's tradition, Barbara Rogoff, Ruth Paradise, Rebeca Mejía Arauz, Maricela Correa-Chávez, and Cathy Angelillo trace the importance of what they term "intent participation" in a child's learning. For Rogoff et al., intent participation involves "keenly observing and listening in anticipation of or in the process of engaging in an endeavor" (178) and is a more informal pedagogy found in extracurricular literate activity and non-Western cultures for example with Senegalese children, Mayan toddlers, and a tribal community in India. This theory of learning, at odds with more common Western pedagogy predicated on the "transmission of knowledge from experts, *outside the context of productive, purposive activity*" (Rogoff et al. 176; emphasis added), does not exist in isolation from (pre)existing environmental factors. Unlike assembly-line instruction which often asks students to work through lessons and complete pertinent exercises in an attempt to mimic a literate activity, intent participation emphasizes "doing" the literate activity. Assessment with intent participation is located in the act of doing. Rogoff et al. elaborate:

> In the intent participation tradition, experienced people play a guiding role, facilitating learners' involvement and often participating alongside learners—indeed, often learning themselves. New learners in turn take initiative in learning and contributing to shared endeavors, sometimes offering leadership in the process. (187)

The emphasis Rogoff et al. place on "productive, purposive activity" along with evidence derived from non-Western and non-school literate activity draws parallels to theories of learning espoused by Lave and Wenger and elucidates the learning processes salient to a football community of practice.

While Lave and Wenger stress that LPP is "not itself an educational form, much less a pedagogical strategy or a teaching technique" (40), they do point to LPP as an "analytical viewpoint on learning, a way of understanding learning" (40), which I suggest captures the learning processes of student-athletes. Remembering the narrative of an upperclassmen using sofa cushions to diagram a play for a freshman detailed in chapter 3, student-athletes enact a LPP model of learning. Players new to the team participate in the same practice schedule as more seasoned players, they use the same weight-room, the same medical facility. Though they may find themselves standing on the sideline—the "peripheral" portion of LPP—players new to the community of practice are full-fledged members, participating in the surrounding activities.

This was also the model of learning used by the Older Sophists. H.I. Marrou describes how the Sophists would focus on the teaching of speech in a linear fashion. The master would supply his pupils with a speech to copy and study, and "later, pupils would be told to use them as models in compositions of their own" (Marrou 54). Additionally, George A. Kennedy, Susan Jarratt, and Marrou all agree that a central activity invited pupils to listen to the Sophists deliver a speech and then deliver a speech before the Sophists (30). Certainly, this model of learning adheres closely to the pedagogical technique of scaffolding—a stair step approach to learning—but the focus on having their students engage with and construct speeches, a central task for the sophistic rhetor, aligns with LPP. The speech itself, for the Sophists and for the students, was the end goal, was *the* activity of a sophistic rhetorician.

In sum, a football team and our ancient sophistic rhetors implemented a model of learning that emphasized doing the real work of the community of practice and being viewed as a member of this community of practice from the onset. Returning to student-athletes in our classroom, this is not the model of learning often implemented. All too often assignments invite students to write about an abstract or unlikely scenario (i.e., the prompt: *imagine* writing a letter to the president of the university asking for the creation of new parking spaces). Students are frequently asked to imagine and frequently asked to write in a genre in which they are unfamiliar, or worse, unlikely to utilize. While I am not critiquing imagination—a vital component to invention—I am critiquing assignments detached from the everyday practices of a community our students are trying to enter. This is detrimental for the general student-body but even more so for the student-athletes. The distributed aspect of football literate activity illustrates that everything is done with the end goal of bettering performance on the field. No time exists for imagining a scenario; everything has a practical and tangible purpose. So too should our classroom assignments. Responding to the writing needs of our students, more so than imagining these needs, is a crucial first step: What do these students need to know to be able to write for the university? What specific skills will they be called upon to make meaning in the immediate future? There needs to be exigency to our assignments; we need to find a kairotic moment in which our students can respond and only then can we encompass the aspects of a football community of practice inside the four walls of the classroom.

Resemiotization

A self-described "socio-semiotic ethnographer," Rick Iedema builds on the work of Roman Jakobson, Bruno Latour, Pierre Bourdieu and others to construct and explicate the term "resemiotization." Iedema explains resemiotization is "about how meaning making shifts from context to context, from practice to practice, or from one stage of a practice to the next" ("Multimodality, Resemiotization" 41). As a concrete example, Iedema points to a case study: the first meeting of a mental hospital planning project. Present at the meeting, which Iedema observed, were health officials, architects, engineers, and future users of the building. Following five meetings, hours of recorded talk, numerous drafts of a report, and several two-dimensional drawings, all in attendance signed off on the building plan and construction began. In this example, meaning is shifted linearly across semiotic resources—talk, alphabetic text, drawing. An additional example provided by Bruno Latour and explored by Iedema: a person reminds another person to "please close the door"; a sign stating such is taped to the door; a hydraulic door-closing device is installed. Like Iedema's example of the planning project moving from one semiotic resource to another, Latour illustrates how common and mundane practices follow similar steps. But what holds Iedema's attention and what makes resemiotization such a curious phenomenon worthy of our attention is "how this [planning] project moves from temporal kinds of meaning making, such as talk and gesture, towards increasingly durable kinds of meaning-making, such as printed reports, designs, and, ultimately, buildings" ("Resemiotization" 23, 24). In other words, a resemiotization trajectory focuses attention on how meaning is leveraged across semiotic resources of increasingly "durable manifestations." For Latour, this move to durable manifestations is seen as meaning moves from talk to the door-closing device.

Tracing such a trajectory is crucial work for two reasons. One, Iedema argues meaning shifts across semiotic resources, what he refers to as "transposition" ("Resemiotization" 33), because of the constraints and, channeling Gregory Bateson, the affordances of these resources ("Resemiotization" 33). Thus a shift from, say, talk to a placard as in football, signals a shift in the needs of the audience or the composer of the text. This concept is linked to the second important result of tracing trajectories of resemiotization. Iedema suggests that the entire planning project "weave[s] people and their meaning into increasingly reified, complex, and obdurate semiotics" ("Resemiotization" 35). This second point is further explored when Iedema takes on the challenge of delineating between multimodality and resemiotization, for both concepts casually appear to be concerned with meaning stretched across multiple representational states and coalescing into cohesive text. A large difference between multimodality and resemiotization for Iedema is that the latter stresses "*social construction"* ("Multimodality, Resemiotization" 50; emphasis in original) over textual representation, emphasizing the "dynamics which resulted in socially recognizable and practically meaningful artifacts" (50). Returning to the planning project, an emphasis on social construction allows one to focus on how and why meaning shifted from talk, to reports, to specs and then, ultimately, a mental hospital. Attention to social construction, to how "materiality . . . serves to realize the social, cultural and historical structures, investments and circumstances of our time" (50), invites not only an analysis of the modes utilized in the construction of a text (i.e., multimodality's drive toward "textual representation" [50]), but why specific semiotic resources were leveraged and what these rhetorical decisions say about the audience and the composer.

I propose resemiotization as a useful tool for focusing attention on how college football plays are circulated in a specific community of practice, and, more importantly, for implementing in a composition classroom. I hold up this descriptive term understanding that the field of composition of rhetoric is awash with similar descriptors: "recontextualization," "remediation," and "transduction." Before exploring resemiotization's relevance to college football and tailoring writing pedagogies to student-athletes in high-profile sports, I address these three other descriptors in turn, centering attention on what resemiotization allows us to see that these other terms do not.

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In *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity,* Basil Bernstein describes recontextualization, the process by which discourses move across different social sites.[104] As a sociologist of education, Bernstein was particularly interested in what he calls "pedagogic discourse" or how knowledge is relayed to learners. Bernstein argues pedagogic discourse is undergirded by three terms, the most important for our focus is recontextualization which considers how out of school discourses inform school discourses—a helpful example being how the skills, knowledge, and everyday literate activity involved in carpentry are recontextualized into the curriculum of a high school shop class. As Jeff Bezemer and Gunther Kress point out, "recontextualization is, literally, moving *meaning material* from one context with its social organization and its modal ensembles to another, with its different social organization and modal ensembles" (184; emphasis in original). Yet more importantly, recontextualizing rules "regulate how pedagogic discourse is shaped" (Marsh 270) and is caught up in ideological conflict:

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[104] Throughout, I adopt the American spelling of "recontextualization," using the "z" instead of Bernstein's British "s."

> In the creation of pedagogic discourses, different groups of people will focus on and prioritize different areas because of their ideological frameworks and there is, therefore, a distinct difference between the pedagogic discourses developed by official, dominant groups and those who interpret this discourse for and with teachers. (Marsh 270)

Labeling these two different groups an Official Recontextualizing Field and a Pedagogic Recontextualizing Field, Bernstein illustrates that though recontextualization relies on understanding how discourse is moved from one social site to another, this process is laden with Althusserian attention to how dominant social systems and institutions subtly mold human subjects through ideology.

With much less focus on ideology and pedagogy and specific focus on digital and new media is "remediation," a term introduced by Jay David Bolter in *Writing Space* and further explicated in the eponymous text by Bolter and Richard Grusin. Like Iedema's resemiotization, remediation, through use of its Latin loanword prefix "re," signifies a backward motion, a return. And just as resemiotization signifies an again approach to semiotics, remediation signifies an again approach to media. Defined as a shift where a "newer medium takes the place of an older one, borrowing and reorganizing the characteristics of writing in the older medium and reforming its cultural space" (Bolter 23), Bolter takes his reader through a brief history of writing, full of moments of remediation: the eighth century Greeks shifting from orality to writing onto papyrus rolls; the shift in Western Europe from "handwritten codex to printed book" (23). While these historical moments allow Bolter to argue that remediation has a long and established history, his larger focus is on how digital and new media remediate older media. Writing amid the early years of the Internet (which he quaintly refers to as the "World Wide Web"), Bolter peppers his text with screen shots of Lynx browsers and the first graphical browser, Mosaic. Driving his argument, as his subtitle *Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print* suggests, is how hypertext remediates traditional print and walks a delicate balance between homage and rivalry: "the new medium imitates some features of the older medium, but also makes an implicit or explicit claim to improve the older one" (23); thus, Bolter continues, "[r]emediation is a process of cultural competition between or among technologies" (23). This nod toward cultural competition links with Bolter's initial definition of remediation as the newer medium "reforming its cultural space." Returning to the shift from print literacy to hypertext, Bolter brings to the surface the sometimes heated debates that animated the shift: one camp adamantly in favor of the benefits of hypertext; the other camp, fearing the loss of a text's linearity and praising the "simplicity of print and the printed book" (Bolter 43). Recall, too, the more current debate swirling around text messages and the 140 character Tweets as a new medium of communication: one camp praising the fluidity and rapidity of language; the other fearing the loss of reflective writing, the erosion of conventional spelling, grammar.

Bolter suggests that during these moments of remediation the focus should not just be on how a newer medium improves upon and pays homage to the former, but how larger conversations regarding the utility of language, the purpose of writing and communication, rise to the surface. The debate regarding text message and twitter-speak seeping into modern parlance really isn't about writing decorum and the proper way to speak—it's really about the perpetual descriptive versus prescriptive grammar debate, about who really owns writing. These larger debates, these "cultural competitions," are at the heart of remediation.

In *Remediation*, Bolter and Grusin stress that "electronic remediations seem to want to emphasize the difference rather than erase it" (46). Through emphasizing difference, "the new medium remains dependent on the older one in acknowledged or unacknowledged ways" (47). In other words, returning to text messages or tweeting: both these new mediums gain traction with users because of close similarities with previous mediums of communication (think an email or an instant message, a close corollary to texting and tweeting) as well as introducing users to features not provided by previous mediums. This curious homage/rivalry continuum stands as a hallmark of remediation.

Returning attention back to semiotics, Bezemer and Kress introduce transduction as "the move of semiotic material from one mode to another" (175). Like Bolter and Grusin's move to illustrate how remediation has long been a part of the human communicative experience, Bezemer and Kress suggest "[t]ransduction is a part of human semiosis and has been as far back as there are records such as sculptures, paintings, carvings in caves . . . (176). Additionally, as Bernstein's recontextualization stresses pedagogy and Bolter and Grusin's remediation emphasizes social and cultural norms, Bezemer and Kress place transduction as a bridge between pedagogy and social and cultural norms. In other words, when a composer "transducts," say, a written description into a visual mode, this transduction can be driven by pedagogical needs (like recontextualization) or social and cultural needs (such as in remediation). Yet while Bezemer and Kress, and later Kress in *Mulitmodality*, draw attention to this dual work of transduction, the examples throughout are derived from learning resources used in British secondary science, math, and English classes.

The first example Bezemer and Kress provide focuses on a common mathematical tool, the protractor, and on what is gained and lost when the protractor is moved from "artefact" to image and then to writing. (When discussing the gains and losses, Bezemer and Kress, like Bernstein, channel Gregory Bateson's terms "affordances" and "constraints"). During the process of transduction, the process of "moving meaning-material from one mode to another" (Kress 125), specificity is lost when moving from the protractor itself to an image of the protractor: "[c]ertain dimensional and tactile aspects . . . cannot be expressed in image . . . [t]he material substance, its three-dimensional shape and . . . the actual size of the protractor cannot feature in the image" (178). Yet countering this constraint is the affordance of generality, in that the image of the protractor depicts "an 'ideal' protractor . . . not one that is scratchy, used, or odd in some way" (178). Bezemer and Kress continue in this fashion, pointing to what is gained and lost when meaning-material is moved across different modes in pedagogical texts. In *Multimodality*, Kress expands the conversation, looking into more everyday objects such as a child's art work, a collage of drawings and alphabetic text.

Taken together, recontextualization, remediation, and transduction are invested in how semiotic resources shift in response to pedagogical, social, cultural, and epistemological factors. Yet none are as helpful as resemiotization in better understanding how meaning is transferred across various representational states in football and basketball, and, more importantly, how we can implement this transfer into the writing classroom. Recontextualization, for one, has as its chief concern the transfer of meaning from one social context to another. For Bernstein, these two social contexts were, essentially, vocational and school communities of practice. Thus, returning to the example Bezemer and Kress relay regarding recontextualization, the materials and discourses involved in carpentry are recontextualized into the materials and discourses involved in a school class of carpentry, traditionally titled woodworking or shop class. The materials (such as wood, nails, hammer, and circular saw) and the discourses (such as facial, verbal, gestural) remain constant between vocation and school, but the materials and discourses now serve different functions (a door header is now constructed for a course grade). That such transfer occurs solely for pedagogical (and here I use "pedagogy," as does Bernstein, to think only of official in-school learning) benefit and that the focus is on meaning moving *between* social contexts distances recontextualization from the shifts of meaning making seen in football and basketball. These two sports are, of course, extracurricular activities by nature. While they are affiliated with school, they are apart from school and do not resonate with the pedagogic discourse which drives Bernstein's interests. Moreover, meaning is not shifted between social contexts in these two sports, at least not how Bernstein figures social contexts as vocation and school. While it could be, and probably should be, argued that football, basketball, and any sport for that matter, are composed of myriad interdependent communities of practice (for example, coaches, players, upperclassmen, rookies, starters, the bench), members of a sport project themselves as a team, not as composed of multiple social contexts. "Team unity" is a ubiquitous phrase.

While recontextualization stresses a dependency between the two social contexts in which meaning is shifted, remediation stresses a dependency and a rivalry. Moreover, the remediated technology invites larger conversations regarding "cultural competition" (Bolter 23) between the old and the new. No such debates are swirling around football implicitly or explicitly. Coaches, largely the creators and disseminators of the textual messages, move between multiple modes of meaning for practical benefits: when the stadium is loud, hand signals work better than verbal cues; during the early learning of plays, textual representations of the play work more effectively than hand signals. Additionally, the old/new technologies dichotomy erected by Bolter and Grusin fails to hold up with these big-time sports. The "hot new thing" is not how the play is relayed to players, what Bezemer and Kress would call the "artefact." When there is advances in this community of practice it is in the ideas behind the plays, not how the plays are conveyed.[105] Moreover, remediation seems to suggest a linear process: a clay tablet, moving to papyrus, moving to vellum, moving to pulp paper, and then to a computer screen. While users may interact with antiquated technologies (enrolling in a calligraphy class that asks participants to compose on vellum), technology and remediation is largely a unidirectional process. Not so with football and basketball. Coaches move between different modes to convey meaning, and this movement is chaotic and rapid but always rhetorical in that the affordances and constraints of the mode are being taken into account. Unfortunately, however, remediation only takes into account what Iedema refers to as "exo-somatic realms" (32), artifacts and modes of meaning occurring outside of a person. In other words, while Bolter and Grusin briefly touch on the history of remediation to include the shift in eighth century Greece from orality to alphabetic text, the large focus in on disembodied semiotic resources such as hypertext. And since remediation focuses on these exo-somatic semiotic resources attention is not paid to talk or gestures as a semiotic resource, two heavily used modes of meaning making for both football and basketball.

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[105] For example, some college and professional teams are piloting the use of iPads. Instead of asking players to haul around a 400 plus page spiral bound notebook, teams are uploading plays on iPads. How these iPads are being used during a game situation and how their use is different than a coach holding a sheet of paper is still being puzzled through. See Kate Linendoll's "NFL Playbooks: There's an App For That."

It is this chaotic movement in and among different modes that also disallows transduction from being an apt concept for understanding how texts are used for football and basketball. Again, think about prefixes, like we did with *re*mediation and *re*contextualization, *trans*duction. While the prefix "re" signals a return, "trans," of course, signals movement across. Thus recontextualization, remediation, and even resemiotization attend to how the meaning inherent in semiotic resources shifts across representational states while still adhering to the meaning held in previous semiotic resources. To speak more concretely, the vocation of carpentry still looks familiar in a woodworking class; the technology of writing on a piece of paper still looks familiar to those pounding away on a keyboard. But with the term transduction, Bezemer and Kress seem to suggest that meaning does not pay credence to what came before. "Trans" suggests a movement forward without acknowledging, implicitly or explicitly, that which came before. Of course this logic falls apart. Consider the protractor example and the movement from the artifact of the protractor to an image of it to someone describing it in writing. The image and the writing could not exist without the protractor itself, the artifact. So, the movement forward does, to some extend rely on that which came before. But again, the prefix "trans" suggests otherwise. As if the dependency that school has on vocation with recontextualization and the homage/rivalry between old and new technologies with remediation does not undergird transduction. Moreover, discussions of transduction, like discusses of remediation largely fail to acknowledge the role of the user in the creation and dissemination of meaning across representational states. While Bezemer and Kress nod toward speech as a mode, the focus is again on exosomtic realms: artifacts, drawing, writing. While in football and basketball the user is at the fore of the creation and dissemination of a text and speech and gesture, somatic or embodied realms, are utilized prominently. As I find the prefix "trans" misleading and somewhat troublesome, as the term seems to suggest a unilateral approach to meaning shifting across representational states, like remediation and recontextualization, and as embodied forms of meaning making are largely elided, I do not operatize the term when thinking of how coaches in both football and basketball rapidly shift mode when conveying meaning to their players and each other.

Resemiotization as a descriptive term allows researchers of writing the ability to uncover how different literate activities are leveraged in football and basketball, but more importantly how these activities help us "locate practices of writing and composing in situ over time in longer chains of distributed activity" (Gilje 497). With this phrase "distributed activity" Øystein Gilje is calling to mind the work of Paul Prior and other key figures such as Jody Shipka and Edwin Hutchins who are interested in cognitive tasks like writing and how writing, the act of composing words on a page, is just one activity in a long chain of meaning making activities used by a community that share a “single historical trajectory” (Gilje 497). Such an understanding of literate activity is clear when turning to football and basketball, but it is even more helpful when considering how the literate activity used in these two sports can be leveraged in the composition classroom, as I do in the next section.

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As shown in chapter 3, a typical football play is resemiotized across various modes and states of representational media: alphabetic text, placards, hand signals, verbal cues, embodiment (see fig 9 below). While Iedema considers how resemiotization moves from “temporal kinds of meaning-making . . . towards increasingly durable kinds” (23, 24), football and basketball takes a less linear approach. The end result for resemiotization, as Iedema and others such as Latour suggest, is “more durable materialities” (26). Football and basketball plays expand this drive toward durable materialities through allowing users to shift back and forth between temporal and durable semiotic resources depending on the rhetorical context and invites questions regarding the constraints and affordances of the mode utilized by the players and coaches as well as discussions regarding the interdependency created between embodied and exosomatic realms. In other words, a football and basketball play needs an exosomatic text *and* an embodied presence to work collectively for effective running of the play.

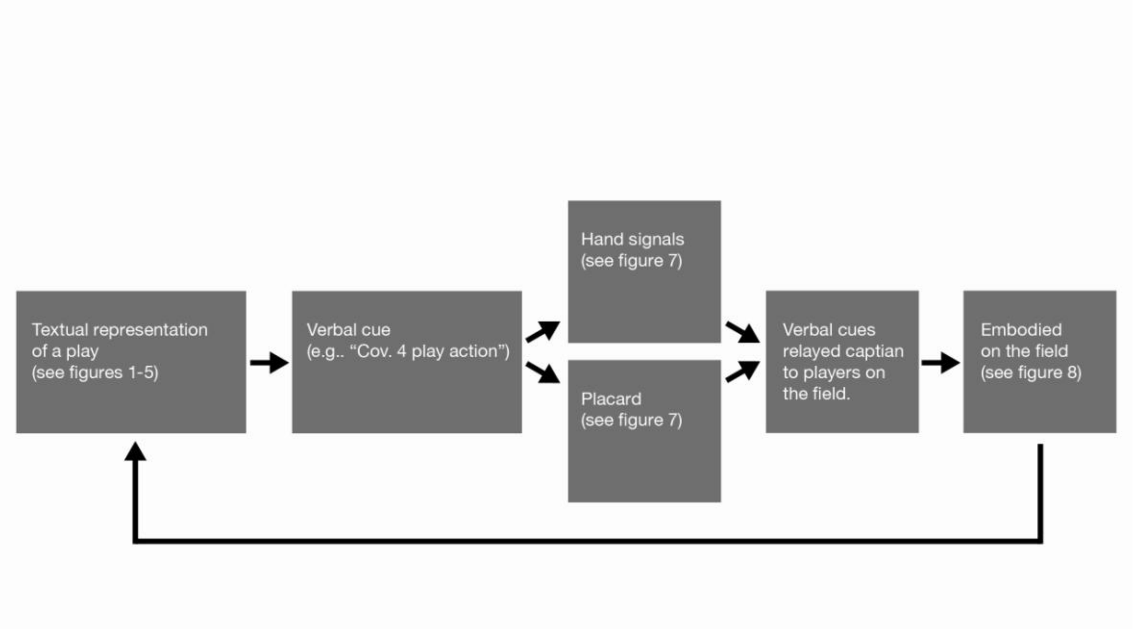
Textual representation of a play (see figures 1-5)
Verbal cue (e.g.. "Cov. 4 play action")
Hand signals (see figure 7)
Placard (see figure 7)
Verbal cues relayed captian to players on the field.
Embodied on the field (see figure 8)

Figure 9: The resemiotization trajectory for football and basketball illustrates how meaning moves across various semiotic resources, exosomatic as well as embodied.

Such a complex resemiotization trajectory is all but absent in curricular writing assignments. The current paper assignment narrative for college level writing assignments is all too familiar to us: the assignment given to the class, students composing onto a white document in standard alphabetic text, the possibility of sharing writing with classmates or with consultants at the campus writing center, and, ultimately, turning the paper in to the teacher for the grade. The work of teachers/practitioners of writing, such as Cynthia Selfe and Jody Shipka, have disrupted this narrative through introducing aural methods of composing or multimodal projects and, while productively problematizing and troubling this narrative, still fail to introduce student-athletes, and students of all stripes, to a greater awareness of how meaning shifts between and among various communicative modes. For example, while Shipka holds up the student who composed an essay about consumerism onto an

Abercrombie t-shirt and then justified the rhetorical decisions undergirding such a project through a more traditional essay, what Shipka doesn't invite her students to do is to channel such an argument through various other modes. As stands, the student has adopted a common semiotic resource (alphabetic text) albeit the medium (the t-shirt) is not a typical medium of communication in first-year composition. But what if Shipka invited this student to shift the argument regarding consumerism through various *other* exosomatic and embodied modes: a speech, podcast, an image, a dance? In other words, what if Shipka, and other teachers of composition, embraced resemiotization? Teachers of composition have inched closer to embracing exosomatic and embodied modes in writing classes, and Kathryn Perry, who provides the epigraph for chapter 3, even asks the following important and provoking query: How do we distinguish between the physical and conceptual work of composing? In response, I don't think we can and the blurring between these two types of work is increased when considering what the resemiotization trajectory of football and basketball plays teach us.

Returning to the concept of incorporating resemiotization into the first-year writing class, the central argument of Shipka's student's essay on consumerism wouldn't change, just as the central argument of a football play doesn't change as it moves from text, to verbal cues, to embodiment. Instead the student would be faced with the additional rhetorical challenge of adopting a central message in different communicative modes, modes that carry their own unique constraints and affordances. Currently, students leave first-year writing courses (ideally) with a strong understanding of the constraints and affordances of an alphabetic text-based argument typed onto an

8.5 x 11 sheet of white paper, as if this is the only semiotic resource capable of carrying meaning in the academy.

How misleading such a belief is.

*

In hopes of incorporating situated social participation and resemiotization into the first-year composition classroom, I provide a truncated policy statement, syllabus, and paper assignment for a course I designed, part one of a required two-semester sequence in English Composition titled "Expanded Understanding of Writing."[106] The syllabus covers a 16-week course which meets twice a week for 75 minutes; the complete documents can be found in Appendix C.

English 1113: Principles of Composition I

Course Theme: Expanded Understandings of Writing
Required Materials

- Wardle and Downs's *Writing about Writing* (*WAW*), 2nd edition
- Graff and Birkenstein's *They Say/I Say*, 2nd edition
- Additional readings provided by the instructor

General Information:

Background

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[106] The idea behind this course, beyond incorporating importance concepts from the literate activity of college sports into the first-year composition classroom, owes a great deal of debt to a course I took at Auburn University taught by Kevin Roozen. Titled "Reconfiguring Writing as Literate Activity," this course was the first time I engaged with terms such as "literate activity," "distributed cognition," "semiotic assemblages," and "heterochronicity," especially in relation to writing. Through reading Edwin Hutchins, Paul Prior, Margaret Syverson and Judith Irvine, my understanding of what writing is and what is accomplished was fundamentally altered. It is worth noting that Roozen studied under Prior and was a classmate of Jody Shipka. Both Shipka and Roozen are heavily influenced by the work of Prior; Shipka transfers discusses of distributed cognition and mediated activity to multimodality, while Roozen focuses on using these terms to establish stronger connections between school and non-school literate activity.

This composition class, the second in a required two-semester sequence, calls for students to approach writing more expansively, by including forms of composition and communication such as podcasts, blogs, multimedia projects, dance.

Using Wardle and Downs's text, we will begin by focusing on the sorts of writing that saturate your life as a student and the various other social roles you fill: sibling, child, friend, sorority sister, teammate, etc. Next, we will shift focus to a community (such as a football team, a community drama troupe, a Greek organization) and analyze the writing which animates the work they do. Finally, we will consider how the writing practices adopted by your chosen community can be incorporated into the writing that is asked of you in higher education. In other words, we will push at the relatively rigid understanding of Academic Writing.

Two important concepts undergird the work and writing we will do this semester: kiarotic and resemiotic. While you may not be familiar with these words, you most certainly are familiar with the concept. For the first, the work we do will be timely and response to pressing issues driving our campus and larger community. For the second, and in concert with the course theme, you will be asked to construct your argument(s) in various ways beyond traditional alphabetic print. While we will still rely on the traditional typed essay, you will be asked to transfer your typed argument into various others types of delivery, such as a t-shirt slogan, a speech, or other modes that fit your argument.

We will, of course, talk in much more detail as the semester progresses.

Additionally, the completion of a journal will service as a method of invention and will receive an effort grade. Students will leave this course with a strong understanding of the rhetorical foundation that undergirds contemporary composition.

Additional Modal Projects (AMPs)

In an effort to expand your thinking of writing beyond traditional alphabetic text papers, you will be asked to turn in an Additional Modal Project (AMP) alongside your traditional essay. This AMP can take many forms, some described above, but will display the same central argument as your traditional essay, just in a different mode. To aid in the construction of an AMP, the Literacy Task assignment sheet I provide will specify an audience for your traditional essay and a *different audience* for your AMP.

Finally, when I use the term "Literacy Task," as I do below, I am thinking of a traditional essay plus an AMP.

Syllabus

Paper due dates

All papers due electronically by 11:59pm that day.

- Literacy Task 1: Literacy Narrative
- Literacy Task 2: Community of Practice Ethnography
- Literacy Task 3: Connecting non-school and school writing

Week by week plan

Week 1

Introduction to course
Journal goals for class; writing strengths and weaknesses
Assignment sheet Literacy Task 1, Literacy Narrative, chapter 3 *WAW*
Journal tentative thoughts regarding assignment

Week 2

Malcolm X "Learning to Read" *WAW* pp. 353-362
They Say/I Say

Week 3

Journal: detailing your educational background
Sherman Alexie "The Joy of Reading and Writing" *WAW* pp. 362-367

Week 4

Journal: connecting Malcolm X and Alexie
Unpacking "literacy"
Deb Brandt "Sponsors of Literacy" *WAW* pp. 331-353
Start thinking about AMP

Week 5

Writing time dedicated toward Literacy Task 1
Dennis Baron "From Pencils to Pixels" *WAW* pp. 422-442
Journal: connecting your literate development to one of the four readings.
They Say/I Say
Set-up conference to discuss Literacy Task 1 (traditional essay and AMP)

Week 6

Connecting "they say" to "I say"
Rough draft Literacy Task 1 due

Peer review groups

Literacy Task 2: Community of Practice Ethnography[107]

Overview

For this project you will improve as a reader of complex, research-based texts. In addition, you will learn to design and conduct field research of your own and synthesize your findings for an audience. Finally, you will consider reading and writing as literacy practices that shape and are shaped by intersecting communities of practice, a term nearly synonymous with Swales's "discourse communities."

More specifically, you will study an academic community and write a 5-8 page ethnographic report in which you answer the research question: *What are the goals and characteristics of this community?*

This traditional essay will be written for your academic advisor; imagine convincing this person that you understand and are capable of working in this major.

The AMP will take the central argument of your traditional essay and gear it toward a different audience: the curator of a modern art museum interested in exhibiting student-centered work.

Process

1. Choose an academic community you wish to study

2. Research your community
    - History: Find out the history of your community at OU. How long has it been here? How many majors? What are strengths and weaknesses of the program?
    - Public representation: How does the community represent itself publically? You might conduct a rhetorical analysis of the department or unit website.
    - What have others said: What have other researchers learned by studying your community or communities like it? You might check out the following journals or databases to find existing research:
        - Across the Disciplines: http://wac.colostate.edu/atd/
        - The WAC Journal: http://wac.colostate.edu/journal/

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[107] Adapted from Sandra Tarabochia's English 1113: Composition I course at the University of Oklahoma who adopted the assignment from chapter 3 of Wardle and Downs's *Writing About Writing*.

    - Jstor (from OU library homepage)
    - Premier journals for your academic unit—ask around, if needed

3. Collect data
    - *Observe members of the discourse community while they are engaged in a shared activity*. Use the following questions to focus your observation and note-taking: What are community members doing? What kinds of things do they say? What do they write? What do they read?
    - *Collect several texts that represent what people in your community read or write* (their genres). You might collect a scholarly journal article, class notes, syllabi, professor's PowerPoint (with permission), etc.
    - *Interview at least one member of the discourse community*. Record and transcribe the interview (so you have a text-based script to analyze). You might ask things like: How long have you been in this community? Who is involved?

4. Analyze data: Begin by analyzing your data using the six characteristics of Swales discourse community:
    - What are the shared goals of the community; why does this group exist and what does it do?
    - What mechanisms do members use to communicate with each other (face to face meetings, email, texts, reports, journal articles, websites, etc.)?
    - What kinds of specialized language (lexis) do group members use in their conversations and in their genres? Name some examples—restaurant workers say "86 burger buns" instead of "we are out of burger buns."

    Then use Johns to analyze your data further:

    - Are there conflicts within the community? If so, why?
    - Do some participants in the community have difficulty? Why?
    - Who has authority here, and where does that authority come from?

5. Research your community (again)
    - As questions and/or points of interest emerge from your data analysis, conduct library research to find out what others have written about those questions/topics. For example, in the student example, Branick's data made him curious about connections between literacy and reading. He uses an article from *Reading Teacher* in order to help analyze and situate his findings.

6. Planning and Drafting: As you develop your analysis, start setting some priorities. Given all you have learned about your community, what do you want to focus on in your report? Write a more specific research question and think about how you will use your data to answer that question.

   Your draft should have the following parts or make the following moves (unless there is a rhetorical reason not to):
   - Begin with a brief review of the existing published research on the community (We know X about discourse communities in general [cite Swales and Johns as appropriate]; We know Y about my community more specifically [draw on research you conducted in the library].
   - Name a niche (But we don't know Z about this community or No one has looked at A.)
   - Explain how your research fills that niche.
   - Describe your research methods.
   - Discuss your findings in detail—quote from your notes, your interview, the texts you collected from the community, etc.

Additional Modal Project

> Audience: the curator of a modern art museum interested in exhibiting student-centered work

The most immediate impetus behind crafting and enacting such a course is to establish a strong connection between the literate activity utilized in college football and basketball and the literate activity needed to write effectively at the college level. Believing that the cognitive moves needed in football and in writing are strikingly similar (assessing and responding to an audience, implementing prior knowledge, attending to details) but that certain pedagogies enacting in the writing classroom are hindering the learning processes of student-athletes in high-profile sports, the course objectives and syllabus are designed to capture and harness the strengths student-athletes bring with them into the writing classroom.

But beyond reaching the needs of academically struggling student-athletes, such a course attends to the sorts of non-school writing in which our students are already inundated. Cynthia Selfe begins her recent *College Composition and Communication* article on aurality by painting the scene of a common college campus:

> [a]nyone who has spent time on a college or university campus . . . knows how fundamentally important students consider their sonic environments—the songs, music, and podcasts they produce and listen to; the cell phone conversations . . .; the headphones . . . ; the thumper cars they use to turn the streets into concert stages . . . (617)

To Selfe's accurate image, I would like to add texting, Tweeting, or any other technological version of succinct and instant non-verbal communication which the prevalence of smart phones among college students allows. Standing outside of a building on campus as student filter in and out, I am struck by how many are looking at their phones, focused on sending messages. While Selfe is right in mentioning the mass number who are sonically wired in, even more are textually wired in. Our students are always writing. An example: a student, amused by the fellow-student who is moving down the heart of campus on a unicycle, whips out her iPhone and snaps a quick picture. To give the image an antiquated feel, she runs it through the sepia option on Instagram, an internet application which edits images. She posts the image to her Facebook page, with a humorous caption. Several minutes later, her image has received responses from friends and the Facebook conversation, which was ignited by a man on a unicycle, has diverged into talk of where to eat that evening. Or another: bored by the lecture his genetics professor is giving, a student pulls out his Galaxy S III and pounds out a quick Tweet with the hashtag #wannagetaway. Not aware that his hashtag is also a slogan of Southwest Airlines, he quickly receives word that Southwest is now following him on Twitter. He spends the remainder of the lecture scrolling through flight options for his upcoming spring break trip and sending links on deals to his fraternity brothers who will be joining him.

In both cases, these students are, strangely enough, immersed in writing and immersed in similar rhetorical situations which animate academic writing. For the student who photographed the unicyclist: she is capturing something intriguing to her, something that grabs her attention. Believing the handiest method for sharing this interest with others is visually, she photographs the unicyclist and, adding her own contribution, she filters the photo through Instagram, adding a sepia tone. But now she needs to be even more specific and select a location to display her interest and her work. She doesn't choose email or Twitter or Myspace. Nor does she print the image and mail it to her friends or tack it to the cork board in her dorm room. She adds it to Facebook and places a clever message below. Her contribution starts a conversation which, after the photo has been directly discussed, moves into a more pragmatic conversation: where should we eat?

So too with the bored genetics student. The decision to complain via Twitter, like the decision to post to Facebook, is rhetorically based. In both cases, the students considered their immediate audience, the context in which they were composing, their desired results from their message. Because he selected Twitter, the genetics student could utilize a hashtag; he was able to place his conversation in a larger conversation and quickly learned that #wannagetaway has relevance beyond someone just being bored in class. He stumbled on a different conversation and followed it, learning something new and handing his new knowledge onto his fraternity brothers.

I hold these up as important examples of the sort of writing work in which our students are engaged. And it strikes me how similar these examples, and the countless others I am sure you can imagine and have witnessed, are to the WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition. Amended in April 2008, these outcomes are broken into five sections: rhetorical knowledge; critical thinking, reading, and writing; processes; knowledge of conventions; composing in electronic environments. These five sections are given additional depth through focusing on how "faculty in all programs and departments" can aid in these outcomes. In their non-school writing, our students are performing WPA outcomes.[108]

Thus in my course design I aim to connect with the sorts of writing in which students already find themselves and find ways to leverage their experience with writing into the composition classroom. Though my focus in this chapter and the previous one was on traits of literate activity for football and basketball (more pertinently, situated social participation and resemiotization) a brief glance at the non-school writing which immersed many non student-athlete college students displays commonalities. In an effort to tap into larger understandings of writing and to illustrate to my students that they are already composers of words, I begin, like many composition classes, with a literacy narrative. I attempt to trouble common understandings of literacy narratives by pushing at the relatively rigid and myopic understanding of writing as equivalent to academic discourse and invite my students to expand their understanding of the infinitive "to write." Such a move allow discusses of not only college football plays as textual inscription which convey meaning (by definition, "writing") but also allow students to consider texting, tweeting, mash-up videos posted to YouTube, and the like. It is from this important foundation, that I introduce a key term undergirding a pedagogy adopted for student-athletes: kairotic, a term of familiarity to teachers/practitioners of writing and a term I unpack for my students (see my sample course syllabus above).

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[108] While the Outcomes Statement (OS) is an official document of the Council of Writing Program Administrators, it is not without its detractors. Cynthia Self and Patricia Freitag Ericsson, for example, express frustration that the OS "focuses largely on traditional writing outcomes, with only the briefest nod to emerging technologies and their impact on literacies" (32). Calling this line of thinking "dangerous" (32), Selfe and Ericsson call WPAs to reconsider their work as *composition* program administrators (CPAs) as a way of beginning to include these neglected literacies.

In the community of practice ethnography assignment, readings and writings place emphasis on the writing used by the community *now*; how the community selected by the student is leveraging a specific form of writing to meet and adopt to current and pressing challenges. In other words, it is a form of socially situated participation. The move from this literacy task to considering how to incorporate non-school writing practices understanding by a chosen community of practice into the writing classroom again focuses on kairos. Students are asked to consider current writing pedagogies and how to design a pedagogy that meets the diverse needs of today's college student. All the while, students engage with additional modal projects and through these AMPs think through the constraints and affordances of the vast array of media and modes at their disposal for making meaning. They are given, in the words of Selfe who channels Scott Lyons, rhetorical sovereignty. One way we can give students this necessary level of rhetorical sovereignty is by adhering to a malleable understanding of writing and to allow the diverse methods by which people make meaning outside of our classes inform our pedagogies. One of these spaces is athletics—a constellation of literate activity that has much to teach composition and rhetoric.

If we will only listen.

The Writing Center as Advocate

But listening is a two-way street. Not only do we learn new ways of working with writers through focusing on college football and basketball, but composition and rhetoric has much to teach athletics. In this final section, through sketching a programmatic picture of how the OU Writing Center and Athletic Academic Services—an umbrella organization under which is the athletic writing center—interact at the University of Oklahoma, I illustrate how writing centers catering to the general student body are most effectively poised to lead the much-needed overthrow of outdated and staid models of working with writers that is common in many athletic academic services, services whose large goal is adhering to vague yet powerful academic compliance mandates and maintaining the eligibility of student-athletes—not, necessarily, adopting novel pedagogical techniques for working with learners.[109] I first detail these troublesome models of working with writers adopted by OU's athletic writing center, with specific attention to how these models clash with more novel models utilized in the OU Writing Center. At the close, I reflect on how the on-campus writing center can advocate on behalf of these student-athlete exposed to models.

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[109] Like many other schools, the University of Oklahoma has an on-campus writing center serving student, faculty, staff and community members and a writing center housed under Athletic Academic Services, serving only student-athletes, titled the OU Athletics Program's Thompson Writing Center. As a shorthand, I will be referring to the "OU Writing Center" and the "athletic writing center."

Again, throughout this section I specifically reflect on my experience as working both in the OU Writing Center and the athletic writing center at the University of Oklahoma.

Inspired by *Facing the Center: Toward an Identity Politics of One-to-One Mentoring* in which Harry Denny makes strong use of student-voice in his explication of how identities impact the everyday practices of a writing center, I provide brief vignettes written by individuals engaged with athletic and general student body writing center work at the University of Oklahoma. I believe these vignettes provide an additional perspective and helps keep my narrative from being construed as foundational, as *the* narrative lording over both spaces.[110]

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150 yards or so from the OU Writing Center is the Oklahoma Memorial Stadium—the largest building on campus, filled to capacity less than eight times a year. Housed in the stadium is the athletic department. Coaches' offices, marketing, administration, and the Prentice Gautt—the same Prentice Gautt detailed in the second interchapter—Academic Center, a part of which is the OU Athletics Program's Thompson Writing and Study Skills Center, a level II College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) certified writing center. Like other universities, such the University of Georgia and Villanova, OU provides separate services for student-athletes: a career center, a psychological resource center, and a writing center. Though

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[110] To ensure the accuracy of the voices which compose these vignettes, I performed email interviews as described in my approved IRB study design. I emailed these individuals and included three thought-prodding questions: how would describe the atmosphere of the writing center in which you work; what do you see as your primary responsibilities as a writing tutor; how does the atmosphere of the writing center contribute (or not) to you fulfilling your primary responsibilities. While I did provide these three questions, I invited the individuals to answer all or none of these questions. My large goal, I relayed to the individuals, was to get a sense of how others who work in these two writing centers perceive the space. As you will shortly see, some individuals stuck closely to my questions and others did not.

student-athletes are welcome to visit the OU Writing Center, most prefer just walking a couple of steps down the hall to visit the athletic writing center.

Governing over the writing tutoring sessions occurring in this space is not a tenure-track or even staff director with a background in the teaching of writing, but a group of lawyers. Housed in the third floor of the stadium, OU's compliance department has the unenviable task of regulating the daily business of the athletic department and all the student-athletes, from women's rowing to men's football, that matriculate at OU. Largely coming from a law background, the individuals in compliance regulate, among other things, the recruiting of potential OU student-athletes and the academic services offered to enrolled student-athletes. While still a part of OU, the compliance department takes their marching orders from the NCAA and is responsible for ensuring no student-athletes are given extra academic or personal benefits, and, as such watches over all aspects of what is called Athletic Student Life, a component of which is the athletic writing center. The following mission drives the ASL program:

> The mission of the University of Oklahoma Athletics Department is to inspire champions of today and prepare leaders of tomorrow by providing opportunities and support for student-athletes to develop an appreciation for community service, skills for life and reach their highest academic potential. The academic, resident life, and student life units of the Athletics Department support student-athletes through assessment, counseling and skills development so they may balance their academic and athletic responsibilities and maximize their potential.

Fearful of committing a compliance violation, the writing tutoring for the student-athletes when I arrived in the spring of 2010 looked like this: A student-athlete would e-mail her or his paper to our writing center. A tutor would upload the paper and submit the paper to Turnitin.com, an anti-plagiarism detection website. Once the paper was marked as not plagiarized, the paper would be printed out and handed to one of our writing tutors. Then, in green pen and the student-athlete not present, the tutor would read through the paper and make marks. The marks the tutor made adhered to a universal coding system used by all the tutors: "awk" for awkward phrasing, a slash when needing to delete a word; "sub/verb" when the subject and the verb did not agree, and so on.[111] These marking dealt only with surface level changes and did not allow for a discussion of, say, the thesis or organization of the essay. When the student-athlete came into the athletic writing center to receive her or his paper, the student-athlete would sit down with a writing tutor, often not the same one that marked up the paper, and the tutor would explain the markings. A copy of the paper would be kept by the writing center for documentation purposes. While it was widely acknowledged that this process of tutoring might have been doing more harm than good, the fear of academic malfeasance over the fear of pedagogical malfeasance won over and the process became standard procedure. Compliance believed that the best way to monitor the writing support the student-athletes received was through a copy of the paper with all the marks. A student-athlete could not receive a suggestion on how to improve a thesis statement or organization, the line of thought went, if all the tutor could comment on was misplaced commas. Documentation was and is central for an athletic department to follow academic compliance mandates, and the green mark system provided that level of documentation. While it was understood, at least by the writing tutors but probably not by compliance, that a dialogue between writer and tutor is the most effective way to provide advice and support, dialogue and nondirective talk is challenging to document. Again, documentation is vital. The athletic writing center firmly embraced order, firmly embraced a rote procedural form of tutoring. A hierarchical relationship between tutor and tutee was established, and there was clearly an asymmetrical power relationship.

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[111] See Appendix B for the proofreading sheet.

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Brooke Clevenger: Tutorial Coordinator, Athletic Academic Services, University of Oklahoma

First and foremost, a tutor needs to keep in mind the primary duties surrounding his or her role. Tutors have been hired to supplement what the student has already learned in class. Oftentimes in collegiate athletics, due to multiple competitions during in-season play which interfere with students attending class regularly, tutors will be asked to reteach missed material and must be cautious in offering "too much" help in order to aid the student-athlete in catching up with the material and assignments. Also, tutors are not allowed to work with student-athletes on any material that will be submitted for a grade. Tutors must be able to develop ideas, create countless example problems or entertain discussions without working on any final product in an effective and productive way.

Truthfully, I believe that the boundaries we have set for our tutors are necessary in promoting academic integrity and avoiding violations of NCAA policies. Perhaps opening lines of communication by allowing the tutors to coordinate and discuss academic strategies and study skills with our Academic Assistants for the betterment of the students would be a considerable improvement.

Although I believe the intentions are to keep the best academic interests of the student-athletes in mind, I feel that both the NCAA and Compliance have to protect the institution and its athletic department first. Yes, it is a great practice to have compliance monitoring all areas involving our student-athletes; however, abiding by lengthy manuals of procedures and rules leaves no room for error for either the student-athletes or the faculty and staff members.

Brooke's forthcoming response is laden with the institutional restraints in which she works. Looking at the first paragraph, I am struck by her language: "duties," "hired to supplement," "reteach," "cautious in offering 'too much' help," "not allowed," "Tutors must be able to." Glossing over this language, one gets the sense, an accurate sense indeed, that tutoring support for Division I athletics is a business. The language reads like a HR contract, detailing the "duties" of the employee. While such documents are helpful, necessary, in fact, such language has imbued the athletic writing center and dictates the everyday practices. Again, while such contractual language is a necessity in any organizational structure, the language appears overly prescriptive wherein the atmosphere of the athletic writing center is derived from the policies governing the center.

Brooke's second paragraph hints at ways to improve the center, but Brooke's position as a staff member precludes her from making more forceful statements, as if her voice is relatively muted. At the close, Brooke places the "institution and its athletic department" before the student-athletes, but the picture she paints is the unfortunate reality for many Division I schools: the education of student-athletes takes a backseat to the reputation of a school.

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Through the help of the OU Writing Center, specifically its Executive Director who also fills the role of Associate Provost of Academic Engagement, two recent changes have occurred in the athletic writing center. In the summer of 2010, the athletic writing center underwent the first change. Overthrowing the near decade-long adherence to the green pens and the coded sheet, our center moved toward the more traditional writing center mode. Trying to align ourselves more closely with what the OU Writing Center was doing and believing that we were not offering extra academic benefits to student-athletes if our model of writing tutoring mimicked the model of writing tutoring seen at the campus writing center, our tutors learned to speak to larger concerns in student-athlete writing. No longer were student-athletes coming into the center *after* their paper was read and commented on, now the student-athletes were sitting alongside the tutor and the two were collaboratively setting the agenda. Carefully not to step too far into collaboration with the student-athlete, for the word and ideas have to be solely provided by the student-athlete, our tutors were able to offer suggestions on how to improve more global issues in writing and move beyond remarking on usage, punctuation, and the vague "awkward" sentence construction. All the while, tutors watch out for the "too much" help danger zone about which Brooke writes and which Andrew Russo, a student-athlete writing tutor, also touches on.

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Andrew Russo, Ph.D. candidate, Department of Philosophy; first year writing tutor, OU Athletics Program's Thompson Writing Center

For the most part, my experience has been that the [OU athletic] *writing center is a fairly relaxed environment. Relaxed in the sense that student athletes come and go as they please and have a good report* [repoire] *with the tutors that work here. The various sorts of academic misconduct the writing tutors come across in papers are not used as a means to separate "the guilty" from "the innocent", the bad SA's from the good SA's. Of course, there are consequences for academic misconduct, but often these violations are taken to be an opportunity to fix misconceptions about plagiarism and remedy bad habits to produce better, more responsible college writers.*

In my mind, our primary responsibility as writing tutors here is preventive. Stop academic misconduct before it makes it's [sic] *way to campus where the consequences are more dire. Stop bad writing habits before the SA's get too far along in their college careers. The regulations and rules that dictate what are and are not appropriate ways to work with a student athlete do not leave much room to* cultivate *good writing techniques. Rather our jobs, as I see it, is to block the "bad" rather than foster the "good". To my mind, the fine line between assisting with the paper and doing the paper makes preventive responsibilities a safer and more reasonable form of tutoring.*

The good report [repoire] *tutors have with the SA's oftentimes makes the entirely preventive character of our responsibilities difficult. Many times I have wished I could offer more assistance to a student than I was permitted to. It is natural to want to help a friendly face and see them do well. The recent implementation of "online sessions" has, on the other hand, made these preventive duties easier to complete. There is no person behind the writing, no face, nothing familiar; just a computer screen and a text document. It is easier to point out errors and prevent academic misconduct* and be satisfied with only doing this *under these impersonal conditions. Perhaps this makes "online sessions" a better option than face-to-face sessions, as it tends to discourage any compliance violations. I disagree. What little room we have to cultivate better writers is entirely absent under these impersonal conditions. I think this cultivation is a more noble goal than prevention.*

Reading through Andrew's written response I am struck by his honesty, struck by how he speaks to the bind he finds himself in: helping a "friendly face" and assuming a "preventative" posture toward academic misconduct and "bad writing habits." Andrew teaches introductory philosophy classes and for the past two years worked as an English composition tutor in the Athletic Academic Services. As an English tutor, Andrew would work with the same batch of student-athletes and implement a lesson plan designed to supplement what the student-athletes were learning in their English 0113, 1113, or 1213 classes.[112] I briefly mention Andrew's background to say that he has experience with teaching and has actively sought out these experiences. He seems genuinely interested in helping students of all stripes and when an opportunity arose for Andrew to transition from an English tutor to writing tutor, he jumped at it.

It is this excitement and commitment to teaching that, unfortunately, places Andrew in this bind, a bind that comes to the surface quite quickly in his response and appears reluctantly reconciled in this final sentence. In his third sentence, he is already reflecting on "academic misconduct," separating the "'the guilty' from 'the innocent'", the "bad SA's from the good SA's, focused on "consequences "and "violations," thinking about "fix[ing] misconceptions about plagiarism and remedy[ing] bad habits." While he does end this paragraph with the nodding toward the goal of "produc[ing] better, more responsible college writers" I am struck by the negative language of his opening paragraph. Andrew's response was collected via email where I relayed a couple of questions to be used to generate thought. I stressed that he should not feel inclined to answer all or any of my questions, but I wanted to give some support for him to structure a written response about the writing center in which he works. The first question I posed, and the one that resulted in this opening paragraph, was to describe the atmosphere of the athletic writing center. When Andrew thinks "atmosphere," he thinks putative, almost judicial thoughts.

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[112] For the sake of transparency, for the past four years I have written the lesson plans used by the English tutors. 0113 is non-credit hour basic writing course offered through the English department; 1113 and 1213 are the traditional two-step first-year composition sequence, again offered through the English department.

In the second paragraph, where I invited Andrew to reflect on his primary responsibilities, he moves toward this stop-gap approach wherein the responsibility to quell "bad writing" habits of student-athletes resides with the student-athlete writing tutors. While he does acknowledge that "the regulations and rules that dictate what are and are not appropriate ways to work with a student athlete do not leave much room to cultivate good writing techniques," I am taken aback by how acutely this preventative approach plays into how he works with a writer. But here again is that bind: Andrew appears to want to "cultivate good writing techniques" but the incessant monitoring, the vague NCAA compliance mandates, and the atmosphere of stressing preventing misconduct over aiding learning forces Andrew into a defensive posture. It is an unfortunate tone Andrew strikes and one that seeps through at the close of Brooke's response.

At the close Andrew looks toward the recent implementation of online consulting as a way to escape the bind. While much writing center research and practice thinks through ways to effectively leverage online writing feedback to aid student learning, Andrew looks to online writing feedback as a way to almost mask his identity and even more effectively "remedy bad habits:" "The recent implementation of "online sessions" has, on the other hand, made these preventive duties easier to complete. There is no person behind the writing, no face, nothing familiar; just a computer screen and a text document." It is this move in the writing center toward online tutoring, the second of two important shifts occurring recently in the athletic writing center, which I focus on in the next section

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The second shift at the OU athletic writing center is currently underway: the move toward allowing online writing tutoring as touched on by Andrew. Following a 2011 meeting with the head of compliance, the Faculty Athletic Representative and the Executive Director of the OU Writing Center, our athletic writing center was given permission to implement asynchronous online writing consultations. Such an adaptation was possible through a survey designed and implemented by the campus writing center. The survey, run through the popular online survey generating website surveymonkey.com, was given to 57 peer institutions (i.e., Division I schools) regarding their athletics programs and online writing consultations. 30 of the 57 schools responded to the survey, and the results of the survey were compiled into a report given to the director of compliance the faculty athletic representative. Persuaded by the results of the survey, the accompanying memo, and the practicality and pedagogical effectiveness of online writing tutoring, the faculty athletic representative drafted a memo which called for the OU athletic writing center to adopt asynchronous online consultations through the track changes function. Still in the construction phase, our hope is to offer this service to all of our student-athletes and through Microsoft Word's Comments and Track Changes function, offer helpful and NCAA appropriate writing feedback. This development will be especially helpful for those student-athletes who are traveling with their sport or unable to visit the athletic writing center due to a sports related injury.

Despite these welcoming changes in athletic writing tutoring, the athletic writing center is still struggling to adapt to innovative tutoring methods under the auspices of NCAA compliance, mandates necessary for, in Brooke's words, "promoting academic integrity." For example, I am thinking of Elizabeth Boquet and Michele Eodice's "Creativity in the Writing Center" as an example of novel approaches for working with writers. In the text, Boquet and Eodice consider seven principles of jazz that are "transferable to a learning organization like a WC" (8). One in particular jumps out to me: "embracing errors as a source of learning" (8). For jazz, this idea of embracing errors as a source of learning makes a whole lot of sense. Jazz is free-flowing; jazz is spontaneous. While, for example, John Coltrane's opening track "Acknowledgement" from his album *A Love Supreme* plays with a central bass melody that ebbs and flows during the seven-minute song, there are places where Coltrane's tenor sax seems more exploratory; it moves among the musical notes, not fully sure where it is going. When Coltrane was composing "Acknowledgement" in New Jersey in the mid-60s, one gets the sense that a missed note, a missed rest, might have furthered the song, not hindered it. The exploratory nature, the improv nature, of jazz allows one to embrace an error. I'm not saying jazz is not planned out with as much detail and concern for coherent form as a Bach candata. But its improv nature allows, maybe encourages, error. Such a view is far removed from the atmosphere espoused by the athletic writing center, an atmosphere illustrated by Brooke's reflection: "abiding by lengthy manuals of procedures and rules *leaves no room for error* for either the student-athletes or the faculty and staff members" (emphasis added).

Boquet and Eodice have a similar view of the writing center. Both, in this article and in others, envision the writing center as a jammin' place, a place of collaboration and free flowing ideas. Of trying new methods and resisting rigid models of "Here is How to Work with a Writer" rampant in the early foundational writing center texts, such as Muriel Harris's *Teaching One-on-One: The Writing Conference* or Irene Clark's *Writing in the Center: Teaching in a Writing Center Setting*. Boquet and Eodice aren't simply imagining writer error (a misplaced comma or a dangling participle) leading to a source of learning—though that certainly applies. They are suggesting that errors committed by a tutor during a session or by a director running a writing center are to be embraced, used as a conduit of learning. In their words, "judgment [is] suspended in order to explore the consequences of [the tutors and director's] decisions" (11).

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Michael Mohon: second year M.A. candidate in Composition/Rhetoric/Literacy, Department of English; third year writing consultant, University of Oklahoma Writing Center

The most important function of a writing consultant is twofold: First, we need to help people with whatever they are currently working on. This is a material concern that can be frustrating, but that's primarily why people come in the first place. The second is helping our visitors find their best writing voices. When working with our guests, we need to keep both points simultaneously in mind. We don't just check grammar or just ask questions; we do both, with our eyes on both goals. In the OU Writing Center, we are more trained and encouraged in helping students with thinking about their writing, but we don't neglect mechanical issues. We learn quite a bit of theory to that end, from the prerequisite course we take to be eligible for the job, to practicums, conferences and conversations. The Writing Center is a good place to grow as an intellectual and as a professional; the environment is welcoming and the staff are wonderful. It's probably my favorite job among the many that I've had. Some people might find the lack of structure off-putting, but I feel that the best combination of creativity and hard work is found when there are high standards with flexible guidelines.

Mike's response resonates with Boquet and Eodice's ideal atmosphere for a writing center. He writes of the "creativity and hard work" as an outcome of the "lack of structure." Reading his response my mind moves back to jazz. While Coltrane, Miles Davis, and Sun Ra may have a guiding melody undergirding their songs, at times the music slips off the tracks when a musician allows an instrument to move into unexpected directions before returning solidly back. It is through such a loose emphasis on structure that Thelonius Monk and the OU writing center are able to infuse their space with productive levels of creativity. Moreover, while Mike never directly mentions it, his response signals the collaborative atmos[here of the OU writing center. Returning briefly to Brooke's and Andrew's response, never uses the plural pronoun "we" when describing the athletic writing center. Though Andrew does mention "our," Mike relies heavily on the collective plural pronoun. Though I am looking at a small sample size, it is worth noting that the writing center with the "lack of structure" causes a consultant to speak more of the collective collaborative "we" and not the lone "I" heavily used by Andrew when describing his "preventive" responsibilities.

Finally, Mike's pedagogical focuses clashes with that of Brooke's. While Mike writes "we need to help people," Brooke leans more toward the belief that tutors are "hired to supplement," and Andrew writes of the preventative nature of student-athlete writing tutoring. Through Mike's vignette, we are looking at a creative, free-flowing writing center which aids in collaboration, a space to "grow as an intellectual and as a professional."

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Returning to Boquet and Eodice, a second principle extended from jazz to writing centers is "[t]aking turns soloing and supporting." Coltrane's "Acknowledgement" starts with a gong, cymbals, and then some tentative notes by Coltrane's tenor sax; cymbals and percussion enter and take over; the bass thumps out the melody over and over and over; Coltrane's sax is silent, and then at the one minute and 4 second mark, the sax is back and the melody recedes to the background. As Boquet and Eodice argue, "[m]embers of the band . . . cannot afford to be merely talented soloists" (16). This turn taking is seen with Coltrane. While his name and face may be on the cover of *A Love Supreme*, and while he may be credited in the liner notes as bandleader, the amalgamation of sound could not be made by Coltrane alone. He was a member of the Classic Quartet, and other musicians were instrumental to the overall effect of the album. So too with tutoring, Boquet and Eodice argue. The writer has a concern, expresses the concern and we, ideally, listen. Channeling Kenneth Burke here, we add our oar into the water, as the writer takes a step back: "[t]urn-taking . . . evolves with deep listening, reflection, collaboration, and, on many occasions, a good sense of humor—basic ingredients in our tutoring sessions" (16). Turn-taking and listening become important elements of a session as the writer and consultant collaboratively work through a text. As Mike mentioned, the OU writing center, through its "flexible guidelines," allows space for such collaboration. Unfortunately, the athletic writing center is anything but jazzy.

During my four years of working in the athletic writing center, I can say I am proud of the advances we have made. We were able to draft a more up-to-date mission statement, writing statement and goals for the athletics writing center with practical guidelines for implementing these goals and overall mission.[113] While we have not yet been able to secure funding through the athletic department to take our tutors to regional writing center conferences, we have begun holding monthly training sessions where we design sessions around topics recommended by CRLA, our accrediting agency, such as connecting with our target population and working with emotionally distressed student-athlete writers. With the guidance of the Faculty Athletic Representative, the Associate Provost, and the Associate Athletics Director for Athletics Academics Services the athletic writing center has moved to more effective writing tutoring and even introducing online tutoring. Yet here is the problem: walking into the student-athlete writing center, one gets the sense that one is entering a doctor's office. Silence abounds, month old magazines sit in the corner, a tutor and writer talk into hushed and hurried tones in the corner. Office noises, the copier, the stapler, an email alert, softly talk. During the 30 minute session, a student-athlete signs multiple forms complete with their ID number. If only tutors also wore white lab coats. The atmosphere intentionally created in the athletic writing center is miles away from the atmosphere created in the campus writing center, a writing center under the direction of Michele Eodice, one who, as seen in her article with Boquet, very much embraces a "pretty jazzy style" (16). While only 150 or so yards separate the campus writing center from the athletic writing center, the practices and everyday activity in the two spaces cannot be any more different.

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[113] See Appendix D for these documents which I helped write during the fall 2010 semester. These documents form a portion of the Prentice Gautt Tutoring and Learning Specialist Program.

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Lena Erickson, second year undergraduate, Mathematics major; first year writing consultant, University of Oklahoma Writing Center

When I first came to the Writing Center as a student, I immediately felt an attraction to the space, which buzzed with enthusiasm for intellectual challenge and growth. Consultants counter-argued my points and gave honest feedback. They connected me to resources. They made me think a little differently each time I came. It wasn't until I took the Working with Writers course and became a writing consultant that I realized how much improvisation it takes to do all this.[114] *A lot of thought goes*

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[114] English 3193: Working with Writers is a May summer session course co-taught by the administers of the OU Writing Center: Michele Eodice and Moira Ozias. During the course, students are introduced to theories and practices of writing, as well as how to effectively response to a writer's prose. Students are also invited to observe and reflect on writing consulting sessions in the writing center as well as practice

into maintaining this space that encourages freedom in scholarly discourse. People come to the Writing Center to learn rules of writing in various communities, but also to break the rules, become more original, and develop their own style and content to offer the world. This whole process roots itself in candid, friendly discussion and is nurtured by the director's [Michele Eodice's] *insistence on liberty to make mistakes in order to learn.*

Like Mike, Lena keys in on the unique atmosphere of the space. Words such as "buzzed," "freedom," and "original," drive her response. And like Mike, Lena's response seems strongly informed by Boquet and Eodice's piece on jazz improve and writing centers. Boquet and Eodice write that writers centers, like jazz musicians, should embrace "errors as a source of learning" (8), and Lena sees this belief in practice. She writes of Eodice's "insistence on liberty to make mistakes in order to learn.[115] Finally, Lena writes that the OU writing center helps writers learn the rules that govern the discourse in their discipline and then ways to stretch and play with those rules. Such a belief is echoed in Boquet's *Noise from the Writing Center*, which I touch on in the following section.

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Consider the atmosphere espoused by Boquet in *Noise from the Writing Center*: "We [writing center consultants and administrators] must imagine a liminal zone where chaos and order coexist. And we would certainly do a service to ourselves…if we spent

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giving writing feedback to classmates. While tutors in the OU writing center are not required to take the Working with Writers course, a large amount of graduates of the class go on to work in the Writing Center.

[115] Knowing Lena, I am not surprised she used the term "mistakes" instead of "error." When we had a chance to talk about Boquet and Eodice's article during a monthly training session, Lena argued that as a mathematics major, she did not see error the same as others. She had a lengthy and dense argument about why error did not exist, much of which went over my head. When I first read her response, I found myself laughing when she elected to write of "mistakes" and not "errors."

as much time championing this chaos…as we do championing the order" (84). The OU writing center embraces such an idea. The center is not playing fast and loose with conventions of written discourse governing disciplines. But they are constructing a space in which these conventions are examined and properly considered, and, if needed, stretched and adapted to meet the unique demands of composing in the twenty-first century. Yet imagine providing Boquet's statement to a lawyer running compliance at a major Division I univeristy—let's embrace chaos alongside order! OU's compliance department, good intentioned lawyers fearful of breaking any NCAA academic compliance mandate, scurry from such a suggestion, not understanding that such an atmosphere espoused by Boquet is not a spontaneous idea freely batted about but an idea grounded in theory, in practice, in effectiveness. Instead of embracing this dual chaos/order like the OU Writing Center, the athletic writing center takes its marching orders from a more dictorial and legalistic statement:

> Intercollegiate athletics programs shall be maintained as a vital component of the educational program, and student-athletes shall be an integral part of the student body. The admission, academic standing and academic progress of student-athletes shall be consistent with the policies and standards adopted by the institution for the student body in general (2.5).

Taken from the 2011-2012 NCAA manual, Principle of Conduct of Intercollegiate Athletics 2.5 is the only principle touching on athletics. Moreover, the only nod the NCAA gives to academics is laden with Old Testament force. In our Western world it is challenging to read a rule with "shall" in it and not half-expect Moses and his stone tablet to come down from the Heavens. Shall is heavy, Old Testament legalistic heavy.

But more troublesome than the auxiliary verb "shall" is the fact that the principle is so vague. The NCAA is not fully sure how academics should operate inside athletic departments. So they wash their hands of the situation by leaving it up to individual athletic departments. Read through the entire 400 plus page book—a free PDF is accessible on NCAA.org—and one will never come across a section detailing how one should academically work with a student-athlete. There are places that talk about how to athletically work with a student-athlete—here is when practice can occur and for how long. But academics? That is up to individual institutions. Both Boquet's statement and the Principle are concerned about the conditions of the writing center, with how an atmosphere of learning is created. While we can derive pedagogical strategies from these conditions, what I want to emphasize is the atmosphere these two texts are espousing.

What this means for OU and the two-thousand plus student-athletes, is our compliance department decide how one academically works with a student-athlete. Fearful of what could possible go wrong, our compliance department governs over academics with a heavy hand. I trust their intentions are sound, but when the OU writing center hosts a write night—where from 8-10 p.m. a group of students who are all taking first-year composition get together to talk and write—it takes upwards of a week to get permission from compliance for our student-athletes to attend and that is only after an athletic staff member agrees to go and monitor.

Our compliance department interprets the NCAA principle very tightly and doesn't allow a student-athlete writing tutor to take turns supporting and soloing—the student-athlete solos. Our compliance department doesn't allow us to embrace errors as a source of learning. Tutor error results in NCAA sanctions, the firing of a head coach, and the vacancy of wins. ESPN scrolls tutor error across the bottom of our television screens. My language may be slightly hyperbolic, but the idea isn't: student-athlete writing centers *cannot* embrace error as a source of learning; error simply cannot exist for staff members.

This approach is clearly manifest in the 2012 Accelerated Learning Program and Athletics Writing Center, a thick manual designed to introduce tutors of all subject matters, including writing tutors, to how athletic academic services operate at OU. Following a letter of introduction from the former Senior Associate Athletics Director for Academics and Student Life, an Equal Opportunity Statement, and a brief bio on Prentice Gautt, the program leads with "Rules, Policies, and Procedures," touching on serious issues such as sports wagering, and sexual harassment, to more trivial policies, such as use of the internet and the copy machine. The next section is the most important as it dictates how tutors interact with student-athletes, an interaction which stems from how compliance interprets the vague NCAA principle. Stipulating that "[t]utoring sessions are designed to provide assistance for student-athletes in order to enhance the chances of academic success," the program lists six responsibilities of tutors:

- Develop a subject-centered educational plan for the best academic potential in your student-athlete.
- Create realistic and content driven subject level learning goals with the student-athlete.
- Encourage the student-athlete to keep an open line of communication with the professor.

- Focus only on your content area.
- Report if the student-athlete hasn't completed necessary reading and preparation to make the session meaningful.

The section ends with suggestions for tailoring lessons to different learning styles and what to do if the student-athlete isn't talking or contributing to the session. While I appreciate the intentions of these suggestions and responsibilities—it is hard to say that keeping an open line of communication with a professor is a bad thing—it is the rigid and lock-step approach that undergirds the program that I find unsettling. Reading and reflecting on the program, I cannot help but recall early books on one-on-one teaching which too provided readers with formulaic approaches for working with a student. Harris's *Teaching One-to-One: The Writing Conference*, for example, makes copious use of charts to illustrate strategies for improving students' thesis statements, organization and wordiness, to name a few. Clark's *Writing in the Center: Teaching in a Writing Center Setting* is rife with practical suggestions for preparing for one-to-one tutoring and makes extensive use of exercises to aid in the process. Again, I trust in the pure intentions of OU compliance, Harris, and Clark, but such a codified approach to working with a writer is unsettling. Moreover, while the OU Writing Center under the direction of Eodice, too provides graduate assistants with a list of responsibilities, I cannot imagine Eodice providing her consultants with a list of 13 reasons why the student may not be talking and 10 possible responses by the consultant, as is the case with the athletic writing center, let alone providing her consultants with a 60-page spiral bound book detailing dress code and use of the copy machine.

In sum, the NCAA attempts to control academics through a vague principle; it is up to individual institutions to implement and interpret this principle; how OU athletics interprets this principle is quite rigid disallowing approaching the athletic writing center to be anything like jazz music—jamming and collaborative. Or, allow me to reframe this question to include all student-athletes, for my time in athletics has shown me that OU is not unique in how they rigidly enforce NCAA academic guidelines. As academic scandals at, for example, UNC and Florida State become more common, athletic programs are surely going to get even stricter in how we offer academic support to student-athletes. How can we—those of us working in and around writing centers—be assured that *all* students are receiving the most pedagogically effective level of writing support?

Taking the current athletic center which I work in as an illustrative of other academic writing centers my answer is mixed. I am not able to imagine a scenario where an athletic academic center, any athletic academic center, fully embraces the chaos alongside the order that Boquet describes and an atmosphere that Mike hints at in his reflection when he writes of a "combination of creativity and hard work." When a $93 million operating budget—the size of OU's athletic budget—hangs on the academic compliance of student-athletes and tutors, when the athletic reputation, and by extension, the university's reputation, hangs on the academic compliance of student-athletes and tutors, then some form of order will always be imposed. Chaos cannot reign supreme.

As we embrace the older model of Harris which embraces hierarchy and asymmetrical power relations, we too embrace the need for a set physical environment for tutoring which Clark pushes hard for. Our writing tutoring must take place in the athletic center. We cannot meet a student-athlete at, say, Starbucks and go over a paper. Compliance mandates that all tutoring sessions, from Zoology to Chemistry to writing, must take place in a predetermined and set environment. We cannot determine the space of these sessions. While composition research has consistently shown the integrality of the physical environment to the act of writing, we are stuck in the athletic center. The athletic writing center will never be able to dismantle the hierarchical relationship between tutor and tutee. Writing center practice has discussed at length how best to move against the asymmetrical power relationship inherent in most writing consultations. And while in theory the move toward a more democratic writing consultation sounds glorious, the idea would falter in an athletic writing center not only because it flirts with academic misconduct as stipulated by the NCAA but also because student-athletes thrive in an environment where hierarchical relationships are a must. The target population is unique from the traditional student body. Tutors are working with a student who has excelled and possibly will continue to excel in a highly competitive environment marked by winners and losers but also marked by innate power structures. While current writing center pedagogy stressed the need for a collaborative environment between tutor and tutee, this pedagogical need would flounder in the academic writing center. Student-athletes are given a steadfast role to play in their athletic life and seek a similar role in their academic life. Thus our suggested tutoring still follows closely to the teacher-student relationship envisioned by Harris in the mid-80s. Order over chaos.

However, order and chaos may be able to delicately coexist. We, tutors in the athletic writing center, embrace this order through carefully documented all academic interactions we have with student-athletes; through formal tutor training and tutoring observations; through stipulating where and when tutoring may take place. But we move toward the chaos when we understand that our student population is unique, that epistemologically and ontologically they are different from the traditional student population. We may never be able to collaboratively work toward a stronger thesis statement, and we may always have to fill out a form on the level of the student-athletes participation, but we embrace this difference when we account for these epistemological and ontological differences and tutor accordingly. But most importantly, we move toward this chaos when we allow an untethered writing center—a writing center not housed in an academic department—the opportunity to advocate on behalf of student athletes. It is on this advocacy that I focus my attention at the close of this chapter. I believe forming relations between campus writing centers and athletic departments is the first step toward broadening the minds of compliance directors in charge of deciding how tutors are to interact with student-athletes.

Certainly some athletic departments aspire to be insular units, set-off from academic units. But if the student-athletes at our respective colleges and universities are to receive quality writing feedback, then we need to build bridges to athletics and illustrate that the principles we implement in our writing center are the *policies and standards adopted by the institution for the student body in general*. Remember this phrase? This is the phrase the NCAA uses in their principles for conduct of intercollegiate athletics. According to the NCAA's own language, if our chaos, or embracing errors as a source of learning is the standard adopted by the institution for the student body in general, then athletics *must* implement our strategies. For our chaos to be the standard for an institution, we must imagine an untethered writing center, one that does not answer to an academic department, and one that does much more than correct split infinitives and offer advice on structure; we must imagine a writing center much like the one described by Moira Ozias and Beth Godbee in "Organizing for Antiracism in Writing Centers."

Responding to Victor Villanueva's passionate 2005 address at the joint International Writing Center Association (IWCA) and the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing detailing what he calls "new racism" and how this concept plays out in a writing center space, Ozias and Godbee riff off organizational theory to suggest how writing centers are well-positioned to combat antiracism on campuses. They suggest

> organizing, like writing center work, involves careful attention to local and institutional culture, so that antiracism in writing centers should tap into and work toward the university's mission, campus initiatives, and goals—in addition to revising those aims when they conflict with antiracist visions for change. (151)

After offering concrete frameworks for organizing antiracism in writing centers, Ozias and Godbee conclude with analyzing an extended case study of the IWCA and the Midwest Writing Center Association Special Interest Group on Antiracist Activism. "Organizing for antiracism in writing centers is a complex process," Ozias and Godbee confess in the final paragraph, but "[w]hen working together, the action involved in antiracism becomes invigorating . . . we can learn to be in relation with others in more equitable and genuine ways" (173).

Also in response to Villanueva' address is Frankie Condon's "Beyond the Known: Writing Centers and the Work of Anti-Racism," which takes as its premise that writing centers directors should take the prominent role of combating racism at their institutes and outlines step how to achieve this level of activism. Understanding the immensity of the task, Condon writes,

> One critical challenge for white writing center directors and tutors attempting to articulate and put into practice anti-racism will be how we make sense of conflicts between what we believe we know about working effectively with student-writers one-with-one and the knowledge, experience and perceptions of faculty, staff, and students of color. (24-25)

Here Condon is not interested in providing advice for tutoring students whose difference is manifested in skin color; she acknowledges the role of difference and how difference affects the goals of a writing center. For Condon, a writing center is not simply a location, or even *the* location where a writer hones her or his writing skills a lá Clark in *Writing in the Center*, nor, at the other extreme, is the center a forgotten physical location that has no bearing on becoming an experienced writer a lá Kenneth Bruffee in *A Short Course in Writing Instruction*. The writer center is a location where difference can be met and explored.

Condon's ideas are reiterated in *The Everyday Writing Center: A Community of Practice*, which she coauthored with Anne Ellen Gellar, Michele Eodice, Meg Carroll, and Elizabeth H. Boquet. In their chapter titled "Everyday Racism: Anti-Racism Work and Writing Center Practice," the authors argue "The racism in our writing centers, like racism across our institutions . . . is not a series of aberrations, but the everyday manifestation of deeply embedded logics and patterns" (87). Pointing to the systemic nature of racism, the authors are able to investigate how racism manifests itself in the tutors, tutees and even in institutes of higher education. Through the chapter, the authors make an impassioned plea for a greater awareness of how racism manifests itself and also for an awareness of how white privilege plays out at many college and universities.

While I find myself nodding vigorously along with the larger arguments made above, what is most important for us here is how the articles project the writing center. Here are pieces of writing center scholarship, published in respected university presses and journals but with little to no mention of prose, editing, proofreading, responding to writing—without, essentially, what many believe to be the fundamental, if not only, business of a writing center. Instead, the authors, all of whom are or have at one time worked in administrative roles in writing centers, project the writing center differently. If the traditional writing center texts which dwell on writing-specific concerns project a writing center as having an inward posture—concerned only with elements directly connected to writing—then these authors paint the picture of a writing center with an outward posture—a writing center that is not only concerned with developing thesis statements but also with making an impact on the campus and larger community.

This recent scholarship has invited us to see the brick-and-mortar writing center as a fluid force that moves outside of itself and into the wider campus and community setting. In other words, for Clark the writing center was *the* location, the mecca of tutoring. With its inward gaze, writers seeking assistance had to enter its gates. Now, not only are writing centers pushing for more satellite campuses, moving into dormitories, cafeterias, libraries, essentially moving to the writers and not forcing the writer to come to them, but current writing centers are investing in more than writing. As others have shown us, the writing center is capable of much more than managing recalcitrant prose, the unruly thesis statement. Through its constant engagement with difference, the current writing center is more than the physical location of tutoring so desired and envisioned by Clark but is an instrument of social change.

I take this brief detour through recent scholarship on antiracism in the writing center to illustrate what untethered writing centers are capable of doing; how they are capable of making seismic changes to the campus climate. Closer to home, writing centers, unattached to departments and reporting directly to provosts or associate vice presidents, are capable of leading campus wide writing initiatives, constructing self-studies for accreditation where writing is a large focus, implementing writing fellows in disciples like Art and STEM courses where writing is not traditionally associated, and advancing writing-across-the-curriculum and writing-in-the-disciples programs. An untethered writing center, such as the one at OU, is able to not only change the social climate at a large university but also the writing climate because it doesn't suggest that writing is owned by a specific department or college; instead it suggests writing is owned by the university and all stakeholders should be invested.

And here is where we return to student-athletes and the troublesome modes of tutoring to which student-athletes at OU are exposed: student-athlete will receive more effective tutoring in writing when the standards used by the OU writing center are adopted by faculty across the campus as sound ways for working with writers and writing. At that point, as I stressed above, OU compliance *must* implement these changes, must implement this chaos, must take turns soloing and supporting, must embrace errors as a source of learning. When the writing center leads academic departments to begin and continue a jazzy approach to working with writers, then the athletic department must sound in, echo our melody, and may be even push academic departments in novel directions in terms of working with writers, in essence, take a turn soloing.

Interchapter #4: Sherri Coale

Two stats sum up the success of University of Oklahoma's head women's basketball coach, Sherri Coale: 981 and .680%. The first comes from the NCAA's Academic Progress Rate 2010-2011 score, a "team-based metric that accounts for the eligibility and retention of each student-athlete, each term" ("Annual Progress Rate"). Out of a possible 1000 points, the OU women's basketball program finds themselves in the 90th-100th percentile for *all* Division I sports. The second comes from the Coale's winning percentage at OU since she arrived in 1996, not bad for a program that just six years earlier had been dropped by the university.

1000 and .680 sum up Coale's success and point to the balance between what she calls books and balls, an attitude she refined during her playing days at Oklahoma Christian University (OCU) and has extended to her coaching career. Raised in the tiny mining town of Healdton, Oklahoma, Coale graduated valedictorian from her high school and found herself playing basketball at OCU, where she received a double major in English and Physical Education: "I went to college and said I want to teach English and coach basketball . . . Never changed my mind—full speed ahead" (qtd. in Davis). After captaining her college team to three conference championships, being named an NAIA Scholar-Athlete, and graduating summa cum laude, Coale went to coach high school girls' basketball at Edmond Memorial High School, in Edmond, Oklahoma. Two years later, she took the head coaching job just 30 miles south at Norman High School where she continued teaching English. The Lady Tigers excelled under Coale's tutelage; the team went 147-40 over her seven years at the school, including a 53-2 record during her final two seasons and two class 6A state championships.

And then one of the stranger moments in women's basketball history occurred. The University of Oklahoma, a top research university with over a $1 billion endowment and a record of athletic success, hired Coale to be the head women's basketball coach—Coale, a 31 year old high school English teacher who played college ball at a small NAIA college and who had no experience coaching at the college level. But OU, less than two miles from Norman High's campus, came calling.

The women's basketball program at OU was in dire circumstances. Just six years prior to hiring Coale, "school administrators had looked at the Sooners' losing record, listened to the players' gripes about the coaching staff, counted the 60 or so fans who could be found at most games and dropped the sport, during Final Four weekend" (Anderson). While the program was quickly reinstated—the administration had not considering Title IX legislation—the temporary death sentence imposed on women's basketball at OU signaled the climate into which Coale strode in 1996.

Fast forward to 2013 and women's basketball program has flourished. Coale has posted a .680 winning percentage including going 16-0 in Big XII conference play during the 2005-2006 season, only the second program—men's or women's—in Big XII history to go undefeated. Three times Coale has led the Sooners to the Final Four, and the team has made an appearance in the NCAA tournament every year since 2000. Under her coaching, three players have been named Big XII players of the year (Courtney Paris was the first player, man or women, at OU to be named Player of the Year); four players were named to First-Team All-American status; and 14 players were drafted into the WNBA. Once when only 60 people were in the stands for a women's basketball game, average attendance during the 2007-2008 season was 10, 253.

Yet with all this athletic success, academics are a central focus for Coale and her squad. For 25 of 32 semesters since 1996, her teams have notched a 3.0 cumulative GPA or better. Four teams were named to the Top 25 WBCA Academic Team Honor Roll, and 42 players have reached Academic All-Big 12 honors. Coale herself has a passion for writing and has published pieces for ESPN, local magazines, and even has a chapter in a memorial book written about legendary NC State's women's basketball coach Kay Yow. In her free time, Coale maintains a blog on the OU athletics' website titled "Write Space and Time."

In her first post, written at the beginning of the 2009 basketball season, Coale muses on the joy of connecting together all the pieces of a team and embracing the strengths as well as the weaknesses:

> For every weakness there is an opposite end of the spectrum strength. But you must look through the right lens to see it. And you have to be bold enough to hitch your wagon to whatever it is you find there. We'll run as fast as [point guard] Danielle Robinson's skinny, little legs will take us and we'll fly as high as [shooting guard] Whitney Hand's joy will lift us. And there will be things that we can do that none of us even know yet because some stuff just grows from the intricate evolution of the sharing of parts. So the gun fires this afternoon and the shaping and twisting and turning begin. I can't wait to see what we become.

As a reader, knowing Coale's dedication to academics and athletics, to balls and books, I am confident that "what we become" will be something powerful.

Conclusion: “Oh, for the Tongues of Angels”: The Rise of The Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics

> *Oh, for the tongues of angels. Oh, for that rhetorical silver bullet that might convince not only the choir, but even the most diehard, single-minded, anti-intellectual booster who loves sports but hates universities on principle, that despite all the ratings, the crowds, the excitement, the beauty of the game, and the glory of the young athletes in their prime—not to mention the billions of dollars pouring through the sports-entertainment industry—college sport is not in good health*—James Earl

During his 2012 International Writing Center Association presentation, “The Writing Center in the Big-Business Era of College Sports,” Ryan Aiello projected the following schedule for an in-season baseball player at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln on the screen:

- 4:30AM--**Wake up**
- 5-7AM-- **Mandatory Batting Practice**
- 7:30AM-- **Breakfast**
- 8:30AM-12:45 PM-- **Classes**
- 1:30-4:30PM-- **Practice**
- 5-6:30PM- **Lifting**
- 7PM-- **Dinner**
- 8-9:30PM-- **Study Hall**
- 10pm--**Bed**

Wedged between breakfast and three hours of afternoon practice, as well as between dinner and hitting the sheets, is academics—the reason higher education, ostensibly, exists. While this schedule represents a typical day for a Cornhusker baseball player, it looks similar to the narrative I told at the beginning of this dissertation: Michigan State traveling from Michigan to California to Michigan and then onto New York within four days; Oklahoma finishing a game late in California and rushing to 8am classes the next day in Oklahoma. Even more recently, during the 2013 NCAA basketball tournament, CBS aired a third round match-up between Duke and Creighton. The two teams squared off at the Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia. At half-time it was 11:15 ET. It was a Sunday night. It's hard for me to imagine that this scheduling decision was made with the student-athletes' best (academic) interests in mind.

With all the problems currently plaguing college sports—pay-for-play proposals, rising football coaches salaries, concussions, academic eligibility standards—one of the more pressing yet less acknowledged is grueling travel schedules eroding away academic time. A forgotten consequence of conference realignment, a money-grab periodically sweeping across the college sports landscape, travel schedules are becoming increasingly ludicrous. The Big 12 lost Missouri, Texas A&M, Colorado, and Nebraska but welcomed TCU and West Virginia. The ACC watched Maryland walk away but then saw Norte Dame enter their ranks. The shuffling largely is not of interest to anyone outside of college sports, but what all this means for faculty is that, more times than not, student-athletes are now traveling farther for road games. Now instead of traveling to Missouri for a tennis match, the OU tennis team travels over a thousand miles to Morgantown, West Virginia. For a tennis match. No disrespect to the sport of tennis or any sport for that matter, but the idea that a team should travel over a thousand miles to find competition is inane. Forgetting, for a moment, the logistical and financial challenges of moving a team and gear over a thousand miles and back in two days, such a trip inevitably chews into academic time. Even if the student-athletes are in class Monday morning, the faculty is faced with a student-athlete who is tired and worn out. Conference realignment occurs because the powerful stakeholders of college sports believe it will help football generate more revenue. The lesser-revenue sports are forgotten in this cash-grab. And the result is that our student-athletes are spending more and more time on the road. Faculty are growing frustrated, and at the close of this dissertation I call for the field of composition and rhetoric to align themselves with other faculties and advocate on behalf of *all* issues involving student-athletes—scholastic, physical, and financial.

Composition and rhetoric is well-positioned to help remarry athletics and academics when it comes to issues of rhetoric, of writing. As I detailed in the first chapter, rhetoric and athletics formed a reciprocal relationship in fifth and fourth century Greece. While this relationship has slowly eroded—starting with the Romans, who adopted much of the Greek education system but jettisoned music and athletics from the curriculum—we can look productively to the work of the Sophists for a stronger sense of the mutually beneficial relationship between rhetoric and athletics. However, the beneficial relationship is turned on its head in the contemporary first-year composition classroom. Shown in chapter 2, one current result of this steadily eroding relationship is that student-athletes fail to see a connection between the plays they learn and embody and the writing typically asked of them in first-year composition classes. While I stressed that both the literate activity involved in football and basketball and that of common first-year writing pedagogies adopt traits of multimodality, the differing epistemology and practices undergirding the use of multimodality in these two spaces conflict. All stakeholders of higher education are affected by this conflict as student-athletes, representative of athletics, grow frustrated with faculty, representative of academics. And the other way around. Helpfully, theories of writing which emphasize the trajectory of a text—its genesis, composition, delivery and circulation—help reestablish a stronger connection between the multimodal literate practices of sports and those of FYC. Moreover, envisioning multimodal as multisemiotic, as I did in chapter 3, allows discussions of embodiment and embodied approaches to learning and meaning-making, hallmarks of college sports and beneficial concepts for FYC, which are slowly gaining traction in theory and practice. As composition and rhetoric provided a theoretical lens for understanding the multisemiotic practices of college sports, college sports provided pedagogical strategies—namely embodying multisemiotic texts—for FYC. A reciprocal relationship reestablished.

I continued exploring this reciprocal relationship in chapter 4 by using embodied multisemiotic texts as a launching-pad for developing a more helpful pedagogy for student-athletes. Such pedagogy focuses on socially situated participation and resemiotization, elements, again, seen in college sports that are beneficial to a general FYC curriculum. Looking the other direction, I explored how an untethered writing center—one not housed under an academic department—can positively advocate for stronger writing support given to student-athletes in athletic academic services. Focusing attention on the athletic writing center and the OU writing center, both at the University of Oklahoma, I considered how the OU writing center can help dictate the role of student writing and student writing support. Remembering the NCAA Principle

2.5, which stipulates that the academic services given to student-athletes must be in accordance with the services given to the student body in general, I argued that through changing the climate of student writing and student writing support campus-wide, the athletic writing center *too* must change how they work with student-athlete writers. Such a change would involve the athletic writing center dropping troublesome methods of working with writers and instituting recent developments in writing center theory and practice calling for, as Elizabeth Boquet puts it, embracing chaos alongside order.

Yet these issues I laid out above and throughout the dissertation deal with writing and rhetoric. While I agree that these are exactly what composition and rhetoric should be focused on, I recall Gwendolyn Pough's assertion which I touched on in the introduction: "It has made me a little weary of our own profession when I see us digging in our heels and demanding that everything have something to do with writing or the first-year writing course as if that is the only thing we do . . . comp/rhet is bigger than we are allowing it to be" (305-306). In honor of Pough's call, future research on the relationship between athletics and academics should continue in the vein of thinking of ways athletics and academics are mutually contributive but especially focus on how faculty can positively advocate for student-athletes. Not just in terms of writing, like I covered with the untethered writing center as advocate, but advocating for all issues facing student-athletes. To be a positive advocate, composition and rhetoric needs to do just what Pough suggests, move beyond thinking of the field narrowly—"just classroom writing, please"—and move more squarely into advocacy and civic engagement: hallmarks of the work of Isocrates and even a strand of current scholarship, such as the work of Linda Flower and civic engagement programs established at, for example, Colorado, Duke, and Penn State.[116] To make this move productively, we need to align ourselves with the larger academic community and neighboring community. In an effort to give more specificity to this call, I provide an example here in the conclusion.

Returning to conference realignment: composition and rhetoric and its many subfields, journals, presses, conferences, listservs, and special interest groups, does not have the strength, time, or gravitas to advocate alone against grueling travel schedules. No field does. As budget belts are tightened, football will become an even larger player in college sports. Because of the money, conference realignment is not just a temporary blip on the radar screen. It signals the present and future state of college sports—moving conferences in hopes of a bigger payday. As such, American higher education is at a crossroads; faculty can either (again) signal diffidence and naivety toward college sports or be an active and productive voice. To be this voice, composition and rhetoric needs to align with the larger academic community. One such group is the Coalition of Intercollegiate Athletics.

Established in 2002 by James W. Earl at the University of Oregon, the faculty-led COIA aims to promote the comprehensive reform of college sports. Started as a grass-roots campaign among faculty senates at what was then called the Pacific-10 conference, the COIA strives to "help all stakeholders in college sports bring about comprehensive reform of the entire industry, for the sake of both college athletics and the university system" (Earl para. 14).[117] Through connecting with Bob Eno at the

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[116] Colorado's Program for Writing & Rhetoric recently instituted a Writing Initiative for Service and Engagement (WISE) component under the direction of Veronica House; Duke's Service-Learning Program offers a first-year writing course with a service-learning component; Penn State's Rhetoric and Civic Life program, co-directed by Debra Hawhee, housed under the honors college also implements civic engagement into the two required writing courses for honors students.

[117] Through this assertion they are in concert with sentiments sounded by a litany of other organizations and individuals who point to the stained but salvageable relationship between athletics and academics.

University of Indiana, Earl and the COIA has gone national, claiming membership at 58 of the 120 FBS schools.[118] Partnering with other governing bodies such as Faculty Athletics Representative Association (FARA), the Association of Academic Advisors for Athletics (N4A), and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), the COIA has quickly positioned itself in the center of the debate surrounding intercollegiate athletic reform through policy papers, speeches at national conventions and a steady presence in publications such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Inside Higher Ed.* While other reform-minded groups populate the landscape, the COIA is the most recent *faculty* response to what many perceive to be an ever-growing chasm between athletics and academics. The presence of a faculty voice in intercollegiate athletics has been sorely absent in previous reform undertakings and if lasting changes are to be made to the strained relationship between athletics and academics then faculty, the voice of a university, need to be heard.

In what follows, I turn my attention to COIA's formation in the early twenty-first century, highlight the importance of faculty-backed reform movements, and focus attention on the specific rhetoric adopted by the COIA in their most recently released policy paper titled "Framing the Future: Reforming Intercollegiate Athletics." At the

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For example, The American Association of University Professor's 2003 report "The Faculty Role in the Reform of Intercollegiate Athletics: Principles and Recommended Practices," provides "give guidance to all campus constituents on the principles that should inform sound institutional policy governing intercollegiate athletics." In this same vein of finding ways for athletics and academics to co-exist, but through must-needed reform, are Charles T. Clotfelter's *Big-Time Sports in American Universities;* William G. Bowen's and Sarah A. Levin's *Reclaiming the Game: College Sports and Educational Values*; James J. Duderstadt's *Intercollegiate Athletics and the American University: A University President's Perspective*; and Ronald A. Smith's *Sports and Freedom: The Rise of Big-Time College Athletics.*

[118] Football Subdivision Schools (FBS) replaces the previous designation of Division I-A schools, but only for football. All other sports still adhere to the Division I-A label.

close, I suggest how a history of the COIA responds to rhetoric's active concern with the intersection of rhetoric and civil engagement.

$90 million stadiums renovations and slashed academic budgets

Writing in *Academe*, Earl describes the activities on the University of Oregon's campus that provided the impetus for the COIA:

> Shortly [after I became the senate president], the athletics department announced a $90 million expansion of our stadium. I first learned about it from the local paper over breakfast one morning. Oddly, in the same issue, I read about the latest rounds of cuts to the university budge by the state legislature. I saw several things at once: a looming crisis in our academic budget; a second crisis in the relationship between academics and athletics . . . ; and a third crisis in faculty governance—for I could barely believe that the university would launch such a huge and expensive project without even informing the faculty. (para. 31)

These events became the center piece of a 2002 informal conversation between Earl and several other senior faculty at the University of Oregon (Earl). The apprehension regarding what others saw as unregulated athletic spending stirred Earl to comment, "If we just let it continue, we'll have a billion dollar athletic enterprise that owns us, the university and all the academic departments. It is supposed to be the other way around" (qtd. in Pennington para. 26).[119] Earl and the other senior faculty contacted faculty senate presidents at what were then Pacific-10 schools to form a loosely affiliated grass-roots movement that would push for more faculty voice in athletic decisions. With the help of Bob Eno, who at the University of Indiana was living through the tempest that was legendary basketball coach Bob Knight, the COIA went national with an immediate goal of allowing "faculty senates from coast to coast [to] agree on clear, practicable, and meaningful reform of intercollegiate athletics" (Earl para. 3). Under the current leadership of John Nichols at Penn State, the COIA is an *ad hoc* group operating without a staff or budget. Membership is open to any FBS school upon a vote by said university's faculty senate or equivalent and no dues or obligation toward membership are required. The COIA maintains a presence on-line through their website, holds annual meetings and publishes regularly in the *Journal of Intercollegiate Athletics* as well as releases policy papers and presents at national conferences. Originally designed to last only a few years, create practical reform steps, and then disappear (Tublitz qtd. in "Faculty Group's Efforts" para. 4), the COIA has gained the respect of the NCAA through their practical suggestions and tireless patience. Additionally, the COIA has achieved staying power and effectiveness through a relatively peaceful approach to a polemical issue. This peacefulness is absent is the work of other reform-minded groups such as The Drake Group (TDG).

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[119] Through Earl's and other's efforts at Oregon, the faculty senate won "concessions on scheduling…and successfully pressed the university to end a $2 million annual subsidy from the general fund to the athletic department" (Pennington). It is worth mentioning that not all athletic departments are siphoning money from the general fund. At the University of Oklahoma, for example, the athletic department has a complete self-sustaining $93 million operating budget, $1 million of which is annually funneled to the general academic mission of the university.

At the Knight Commission's annual meeting in May 2005, then TDG's executive director and assistant professor of sports administration at Mississippi State, David Ridpath, verbally lambasted the Knight Commission for being co-opted by the NCAA and refusing to "face the real problems" in intercollegiate athletics (Lederman para. 9). Members of the Knight Commission, reacting to Ridpath's harsh rhetoric, decried his stance and his word choice (Lederman para. 9). The sentiment directed toward TDG by the Knight Commission was echoed by then NCAA President Myles Brand who called TDG "radicals" intent on destroying the athletic mission of colleges (Lederman para. 6). Compared to TDG's more polemical agenda, the COIA has a moderate stance, inviting Brand to write that he is "confident that through efforts such as the one being undertaken by the COIA, the integrity of academic-reform movements will be secure." As Gary T. Brown points out, the COIA, unlike TDG, is not a "watchdog group, but—as its name indicates—a coalition" ("Faculty Group" para. 48). The COIA is committed to improving college sports through reform which Brand calls "strong but realistic" (qtd. in "Faculty Group" para. 14).

The COIA is run by faculty, not university presidents and members of the private sector (like the Knight Commission) or positioned as a liaison between the athletic department and academics (like the Faculty Athletics Representative Association). This push toward faculty involvement in reforming college sports has been documented and argued for in recent publications. Writing in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Gerald S. Gurney and Jerome C. Weber provide brief but powerful suggestions for how faculty can be more involved in the reform of college sports: "gain more control over special admissions" (para. 10) and "work more forcefully through independent faculty-based organizations" (para. 12). In a similar vein, John R. Gerdy asserts,

> The faculty's responsibility for defining and defending academic values requires them to become directly engaged in the issue [of academic reform in college sports]. Simply put, without significant faculty attention and involvement, the

> critical mass necessary to force substantive change cannot be achieved … As the primary guardians of academic integrity, faculty must advance the dialogue about the appropriate role of athletics on campus … ("Athletic Victories" para. 7)

Furthermore, AAUP's "Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities," clearly states the role of the faculty: "The faculty has primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, *and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process*" (The Academic Institution: The Faculty section para. 1; emphasis added). Under this extracurricular umbrella of "aspects of student life" fall activities such as band, choir, clubs, the Greek system and intramural and even varsity level athletics. Former President of the NCAA Myles Brand understood the integral role of faculty in academic reform arguing, "Faculty involvement in the implementation of stricter [academic] standards—and faculty oversight of the academic integrity of the institution—is a critical piece of the reform puzzle" (para. 13).

If we believe that the central mission of American colleges and universities is academics and believe that faculty members are the stewards of this academic mission, then it holds that faculty should have, and should desire to have, a voice in all matters under the purview of a university including athletics. Reform needs to come largely from faculty, then, and not other bodies such as presidents and athletic staff members.[120] As Libby Sander points out, the tenuous position a president often finds him/herself in—glad-handing big-time donors, appeasing alumni, balancing athletics and academics—disallows time or space for meaningful reform. In concert with Sander, Nathan Tublitz, former co-chair of the COIA contends that "mak[ing] long-term impact is not in the president's best interests . . . especially when the president has to butt heads with trustees, donors, alumni, boosters, and students who are proponents of athletics" (qtd. in "Collaborative Effort" para. 7). Instead, Tublitz contends, responding to an argument made during the creation of the COIA by Earl, faculty "must insist on upon academic integrity, ensuring that every activity . . . falls within the educational mission" (qtd. in "Collaborative Effort" para. 10). Indeed, as Earl reminds us, "[faculty] are the university. We are the chief guardians of what makes it valuable, what makes it worth the high price parents pay" (para. 9)

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[120] This is not to say presidents and athletic staff members cannot be integral to the process. Then chancellor of Vanderbilt, Joe B. Wyatt, penned a convincing case for presidents taking a more active role in reform in a 1999 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

Near the end of his article, Earl expresses the dire circumstances in which college sports find themselves: dangerously poised on the brink of excess and commercialism. He believes the COIA is best positioned to combat this excess and to do so now. He ardently believes that through persuasive language, he and the COIA can reform athletics. In a Homeric fashion, Earl concludes his piece through summoning the muses:

> Oh, for the tongues of angels. Oh, for that rhetorical silver bullet that might convince not only the choir, but even the most diehard, single-minded, anti-intellectual booster who loves sports but hates universities on principle, that despite all the ratings, the crowds, the excitement, the beauty of the game, and the glory of the young athletes in their prime—not to mention the billions of dollars pouring through the sports-entertainment industry—college sport is not in good health. (para. 25)

Coming to the aid of ailing athletics is the faculty-led COIA. In the section that follows, I examine the most recent policy paper published by this coalition. It is my hope to illustrate the specific rhetoric, what I label "irenic rhetoric," the COIA adopts to engage in academic reform and how this rhetoric best positions the COIA as a productive agent for reform.

Framing irenic rhetoric

While my understanding of irenic rhetoric arises from Robert Connors's *Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory, and Pedagogy,* I must point out some importance differences.[121] In his text, Connors arrives at irenic rhetoric through moving the reader from "the probate courts of ancient Syracuse in the fifth century B.C." (23) to the writing process movement of the 1980s. Thinking specifically of American colleges, Connors seeks in his sweeping historiography to "make the case that coeducation at American colleges represents one of the most highly fraught cultural shifts ever to have occurred in the United States" (24). More specifically, this shift is a from agonistic rhetoric to irenic rhetoric. As I detailed in my first chapter, early Greek and Roman rhetoric is imbued with athletic, even jingoistic, metaphors. Concomitant with or because of such language, this period was dictated by the male voice. While Cheryl Glenn, Sue Blundell, and others have dug through the dusty remnants of the past and brought to the surface erased or marginalized female voices, this period was lorded over by the male voice. Such a patriarchal tradition leads Connors to write of the agonistic rhetoric of the period and how such a rhetoric excluded the presence of a female rhetor. Connor's argues—rightly, I believe—that agonistic rhetoric was the dominant rhetoric in the Western world, but then makes the (relatively) arguable assertion that agonistic rhetoric underwent a profound change between 1860-1900, specifically in American higher education. Connors writes that "Education in all-male institutions was set up as a struggle for dominance" (47); however, "Real men do not fight women," and "when women entered the educational equation in colleges, the whole edifice built on ritual contest . . . came crashing down" (49). Resultant of this "crashing down" is "lecture halls and recitation rooms became forums of irenic rhetoric" (49).

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[121] While Connors may be the most prominent figure in composition and rhetoric to use the term "irenic rhetoric," he is not the only. In his unpublished dissertation, as well as his 1998 *Advances in the History of Rhetoric* article, Bohn Lattin suggests that the medieval rhetorician Erasmus operatized irenic rhetoric. Lattin argues Erasmus "offers an irenic perspective on the nature of speech, a perspective partially based on the Ciceronian concept of *sermo* or conversation" ("Erasmus" 33). Lattin contrasts such a view by Erasmus with classical agonistic rhetoric, a rhetoric inundating the period in which Erasmus wrote, and a contrast also put forth by Connors.

Connors is careful not to argue that agonistic rhetoric has completely subsided from the classroom, but he does take the hard stance, which I am in line with, that "argument, debate, teacher criticism, hierarchies, and personal contests . . . are not at the heart of our discipline anymore" (67). While Connor's sketch of American education through the lens of agonistic/irenic rhetoric and all male coeducational classrooms has been challenged—Suzanne Bordelon's "Contradicting and Complicating Feminization of Rhetoric Narratives" comes to mind—his understanding of irenic rhetoric provides a helpful lens for examining the rhetoric adopted by the COIA. However, before moving forward, I point to how I understand irenic apart from how Connor deploys the term.

For Connors, irenic rhetoric is closely linked to the female gender and emphasizes "the inner world of feeling, introspection, and the myriad meanings of the self" (68). Such an emphasis is understandable considering Connors positions irenic rhetoric against agonistic rhetoric and connects it with feminist rhetorics and discursive strategies such as "personal writing" (64). Respectful of irenic rhetoric's roots, when I operatize the term I do so by moving it outside of the (writing) classroom and reemphasizing attention on the context and the audience, a heavy feature of agonistic rhetoric I believe is lost with Connors's depiction of irenic rhetoric. Describing the features of irenic rhetoric—features detailed at the fore of this paragraph—Connors almost projects irenic rhetoric as expressivist pedagogy, no surprise since Connors includes personal writing as a discursive outcome of irenic rhetoric. However, I suggest such a projection does not adequately address important rhetorical components, such as audience and context. Instead, Connors's irenic rhetoric appears to emphasize the self over the self in interaction with an audience, the "inner world of feeling" over a Berlian social-epistemic rhetoric in which self and context coalesce and drive meaning-making. While I still find irenic rhetoric a useful term for considering how athletic reform organizations deploy language, the view of irenic rhetoric Connors's sketches seems to stifle the ability of such a rhetoric to move outside of the classroom, outside of an individual and engage with the larger community, the larger context.

When I use the term "irenic rhetoric," I hope to honor the rhetoric's position as the antithesis of agonistic rhetoric, as Connors suggests, but add the following additional dimension. I have come to think of irenic rhetoric as a rhetoric arising during polemical or challenging discussions (written or verbal), which positions itself as the mediator between two clashing sides. Through being the antithesis to more agonistic rhetoric, irenic rhetoric attempts to facilitate productive problem-solving dialogue through identifying and acknowledging a variety of positions (not just focused as a single individual à la Connors), adopting a conciliatory tone through rhetorical moves and specific word-choice, and, ultimately, assuaging a potentially volatile situation while still positing a firm stance. Be it through the COIA stating their unique position or responding to others who have voiced concern in the larger conversation regarding academic reform, the COIA adopts this beneficial rhetoric as most notably seen in their most recent policy paper.

Adopted by vote of the COIA on June 15, 2007, the 18-page policy paper titled "Framing the Future: Reforming Intercollegiate Athletics," provides 28 proposals which cover four areas of concern: academic integrity and quality, student-athlete welfare, campus governance of intercollegiate athletics, and fiscal responsibility (2). The policy paper's ultimate goal is to "stimulate dialog" (2) at the local, conference and national level, in hopes of "having these proposals accepted as standard working policies and practices" (2), and is organized as follows: after a one page summary (2), a pithy one-paragraph overview is provided (3) and then an introduction (3). The introduction outlines why faculty should care about athletics (3) and how faculty can strengthen academic integrity (4-5). Next, principles underlying the proposed reform are stated (6) and then the proposed reforms, broken into the four categories listed above. Page 12 illustrates how, at the local, conference and national level, these proposals can be adopted and the remaining four pages are devoted to appendices concisely reiterating the proposals.

In the summary and introduction, the COIA deploys irenic rhetoric to quell the growing concerns regarding the perceived dominance of intercollegiate athletics over the academic mission of a university. This rhetoric separates them as a reasoned and informed voice in the growing field of reform minded groups. The opening paragraph reads as follows:

> The Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) is an alliance of 55 Division IA faculty senates whose mission is to provide a national faculty voice on intercollegiate sports issues. Our underlying premise is that intercollegiate athletics, while providing positive benefits to athletes, the campus, and the broader community, at times clashes with the educational goals and missions of our institutions. These conflicts, which by many measures are on the increase, have the potential of undermining the values and aims of higher education. This paper . . . offers a set of proposals that are meant to enable college sports to be integrated into the overall academic mission and remain a positive force on our campuses.

The first paragraph utilizes the word "positive" twice ("positive benefits to athletes"; "positive force on our campuses"). In both uses, the adjective is attributed to athletics, not academics, faculty, or the university as a whole. Instead of attacking what some have seen as athletic encroachment on academic turf, the COIA positions itself alongside athletics yet all the while, as a faculty-led group, it's concerned with upholding academic values. So too, with the title of this organization: Coalition *on Intercollegiate Athletics*. While the stated aim is for *academic* reform at FBS universities and colleges, "academics" is absent from the organization's title. Instead, the organization speaks to and for issues related to athletics. This rhetorical move of including "intercollegiate athletics" in the title of the organization—a move not seen in the Knight Commission or The Drake Group, for example—codes the COIA as a collective group invested in building bridges to those in athletics and establishing a common goal and method of academic reform.[122] In a rhetorical move similar to what Kenneth Burke calls "identification," where the rhetor "persuade[s] a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, *identifying* your ways with his (55; emphasis in original), the move of identifying with athletics, of looking for the benefits of college sports, lends ethos to the COIA's argument.

On a more global level, the underlying premise stated in the opening summary paragraph projects a conciliatory tone that is echoed throughout the policy paper: "intercollegiate athletics, while providing positive benefits to athletes, the campus, and the broader community, at times clashes with the educational goals and mission of our institutions" (2). Allowing for the benefits of athletics to be acknowledged at the "campus" and "broader community" level and qualifying the friction between athletics and academic as "at times," properly and effectively hedges the argument the policy paper is prepared to unleash. The policy paper connects with its audience, faculty at FBS schools, allowing for the beneficial aspects of athletics, while still carving out space for the challenges inherent in college sports.

The summary section on page 2 continues with irenic rhetoric. The second paragraph points to the many groups the COIA has teamed-up with. From the AAUP to the FARA, the COIA has emphasized "close consultation," (2), "campus wide dialog" (2) through partnership with many external groups. Later, the partnerships are labeled

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[122] For an interesting discussion regarding the rhetoric behind organizational naming, see Wendy B. Sharer's "The Persuasive Work of Organizational Naming: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the Struggle for Collective Identification." Through an in-depth discussion of the WILPF, Sharer aims to provide "insight into the rhetorical construction and evolution of collective identity within political organizations" (236).

"strong" (4) and the dialogues "respectful" (4). The second paragraph of the summary section provides a lengthy list, directly naming all the groups the COIA has partnered with in the creation of this policy paper. This rhetorical move of directly naming partners aids in establishing the firm stance the COIA has regarding college sports. In other words, the reform proposals unpacked in the policy paper were not created *ex nihilo*; during the construction of these proposals, other groups, other sources, were consulted. As the noun "coalition" connotes, the COIA strives for collective input. Unlike TDG, which prides itself on working alone, a lone ranger on the road to reform, the COIA embraces the ties formed with other faculty governing bodies and groups outside of academe. We are given a set of proposals that are well-considered and reflect the input of various groups, which reflect a variety of issues. As James Berlin reminds us, "[l]anguage…is a social—not private—phenomenon, and as such embodies a multitude of historically specific conceptions that shape experience" (*Rhetoric and Reality* 166). In tandem with Berlin's social view of language, Lester Olson argues, "difference and similarities among people intersect, overlap, and mingle through communicative practices in multilayered ways that are historically and socially situated" (449). It is this view of language, an acknowledgement of external phenomena shaping the way we understand language, which provides space for, possibly even implores, the COIA to respond to other positions regarding academic reform. Like Bakhtin, both Berlin and Olson understand the polyvocal dimension of language, and the irenic rhetoric deployed by the COIA captures and teases out the various positions (Bakthin would say "chains") composing the communicative act(s) surrounding athletic reform.

One chain in this larger conversation is the Knight Commission. Formed in 1986 and composed of from both the private (e.g., television networks and apparel companies) and public (e.g., college presidents, professors, and U.S. senators) sector, the Knight Commission dedicates itself to stressing the needs for higher academic standards and greater transparency regarding college sports' finances. Releasing periodic white papers and reports, the Knight Commission asserts "college sports, when properly conducted, are worth saving" (*A Call* 10). Speaking to members of the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics in late 2011, National Collegiate Athletic Association President Mark Emmert said he would push for an "academic threshold for participating in…postseason [competition]." (qtd. In "NCAA's Mark Emmert" para. 5). This threshold would require the student-athletes of collegiate programs participating in postseason play to meet predetermined academic standards. Arguing that "If you're going to be eligible for postseason play, you have to be able to do more than win games," Emmert took a step the Knight Commission has advocated for a decade ("NCAA's Mark Emmert" para. 4). Additionally, Emmert brought to the fore a relatively forgotten article in the NCAA's Constitution. Article 2.5, titled "The Principle of Sound Academic Standards" reads:

> Intercollegiate athletics programs shall be maintained as a vital component of the educational program, and student-athletes shall be an integral part of the student body. The admission, academic standing and academic progress of student-athletes shall be consistent with the policies and standards adopted by the institution for the student body in general.

As the NCAA continues the increasingly difficult task of policing college sports, academic standards are often jettisoned with more and more attention devoted to recruiting violations, improper benefits, and mischievous sports agents roaming college campuses. However, one of the many missions of the NCAA, as stated in their constitution, is an emphasis on academics. Through his speech before the Knight Commission, Emmert was tapping into this larger conversation, a conversation in which the COIA is deeply invested. While the NCAA doesn't state who would enforce the academic standards, the COIA's policy paper argues "The maintenance of academic integrity and quality for all students, including student-athletes, is the primary responsibility of the institution's faculty" (7).[123] Using Article 2.5 of the NCAA's Constitution as a springboard, the COIA provides a clear path for academic integrity by placing the faculty as the chief stewards of Article 2.5 of the NCAA's Constitution.

In this opening section, then, we see components of irenic rhetoric: identifying and acknowledging a variety of positions, adopting a conciliatory tone, and assuaging a potentially volatile situation while still positing a firm stance. These critical components are notably absent in the proposals outlined by TDG. According to their website (thedrakegroup.org), the mission of TDG is as follows:

> The mission of The Drake Group (TDG) is to help faculty and staff defend academic integrity in the face of the burgeoning college sports industry. The Drake Group's national network of college faculty lobbies aggressively for proposals that ensure quality education for college athletics, support faculty whose job security is threatened for defending academic standards, and

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[123] The COIA's 2005 policy paper "Academic Integrity in Intercollegiate Athletics: Principles, Rules, and Best Practices," provides more detail on academic reform measures espoused by the COIA.

> disseminates information on current issues and controversies in sport and higher education. The Drake Group seeks to form coalitions with organizations that share its mission and goals.

To this end, TDG has released a position paper outlining three phases that they believe will help reduce the widening gap between athletics and academics; they have posted recent news—complete with links—on their websites and hold an annual conference. Created in 1999, TDG provides a uniquely different faculty-led voice on college sports. Illuminating this voice, helps further illustrate the rhetoric adopted by the COIA.

The mission statement above signals the timbre of TDG: impassioned and borderline incensed. We are not looking at a reform group interested in compromise, of identifying with college sports and acknowledging the potentially positive benefits of college sports. Instead, we are given words like "defend," "aggressively," and "threatened." TDG is not talking about college sports; TDG is talking about the "college sport *industry*." And through this not so subtle move of equating athletics with a capitalistic enterprise, TDG additionally paints college sports as towering over academics. Yet, the final sentence of the mission statement is most curious when used alongside TDG's three phase proposals, for no other organization is mentioned. While TDG mentions the Knight Commission and the NCAA, the organizations are mentioned to support assertions made by TDG and are largely relegated to a footnote. Unlike the COIA who seems to strive for a level of partnership, TDG, while appearing interested in forming coalitions, provide but a cursory nod to two and, as mentioned early, appear somewhat combative even to those two.

In the "news" section of TDG website, readers are directed to a link providing the text of a letter written by TDG and sent to the Knight Commission. The description of the letter, as provided by TDG, is as follows: "TDG wrote a letter to Mr. Ibargüen [CEO and President of the Knight Commission] making him aware of the fact that The Knight Commission has NOT [sic] been effective in defending academic integrity in the midst of the big-business of commericialized [sic] college athletics." The link accessing the full-text of this letter is no longer working.[124] With the little information provided, one can surmise that again, as at the 2005 Knight Commission's annual meeting where member-at-large David Ridpath blasted the Knight Commission for being too cozy with the NCAA, TDG was on the attack, directing verbal barbs at those that do not take the same aggressive stance on reform that they do.

Like TDG, the COIA provides concise proposals aimed at realigning college sports with a university's academic mission. Believing "when in concert…athletics clearly adds value to the educational experiences of our student-athletes and to the institution as a whole" (6), the COIA's policy paper unpacks four proposals. At the close, the COIA provides a lucid "road map for reform" (12) and begins this section with the following paragraph:

> It is increasingly clear that national sports reform cannot be implemented without the strong support and leadership by faculty. The COIA, as an organization of faculty governance bodies, has emerged as one of the primary faculty voices for a realistic and feasible reform agenda. Success will not be

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[124] The link directing the reader to a letter written to President Obama is also faulty and no further description of this letter is provided on the news section. To be fair, not all the links on TDG's website were broken.

> possible, however, if faculty do not work together with other stakeholder groups. Dialogue is a necessary first step to identify and delineate the issues, and collaboration with groups mentioned throughout this document is imperative for forward progress. To achieve the reform goals outlined requires consensus, concerted effort, and action at a variety of levels, from local to conference to national.

"Dialogue," "collaboration," "consensus," "concerted effort:" these words drive the COIA and are indicative of the irenic rhetoric adopted in the policy paper. The final paragraph ends with similar phrases: "respectful conversation" and "strong consensus" (14). As the COIA continues the Herculean task of reforming college sports—through speaking at national conventions, maintaining a consistent publishing record in journals such as the *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*, steadily encouraging faculty senates to vote for membership, releasing data charting FBS's schools attempts at implementing the COIA's best practices—the COIA continues to approach reform through irenic rhetoric.[125]

At the beginning of advocacy…

Tracing this partial history of the rise of the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics speaks to those of us in composition and rhetoric in important ways. We are and have been a field actively invested in how various groups use language as a vehicle for social change. Grafting onto these interests then allows for detailed histories of how faculty at our universities and colleges use language and rhetoric to push for productive academic reform amid the swirling tempest of intercollegiate athletics. As the 2004 NCTE position statement "NCTE Beliefs About the Teaching of Writing" reminds us, a purpose of writing is "engaging in civil discourse."[126] And research in rhetoric has adhered to this belief about writing, locating examples of writing enacting social change. Closer to home for those of us in post-secondary education and responding to the NCTE's position of writing as civil engagement, the "CCCC Position Statement on Faculty Work in Community-Based Settings" adopted in November 2009 argues

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[125] See the September 2011 issue of the *Journal of Intercollegiate Sport* for the results of a study charting the implementation of COIA's best practices at select FBS schools.

> Reading and writing … matter to people outside the academy. Increasingly members have sought to extend their expertise and professional commitments beyond the traditional boundaries of classrooms and campuses … CCCC believes these efforts should be understood, valued, and rewarded.

While this position statement is concerned with what Anne Ruggles Gere called "extracurriculum writing," the emphasis on the social dimension of writing and language cannot be ignored; language, individual scholars and collective organizations have argued, has transformative power and this power needs to be acknowledged and valued. If we adhere to these arguments, then a history of an academic reform movement such as the COIA is of special interest. Here we have an amalgamation of professors, some in composition and rhetoric, many not, forming a coalition with the desire of renovating the current structure of athletics in higher education. If we are concerned with the connection between the university and the transformative power of language in regard to social change, we need look no further than the COIA.

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[126] A November 2007 "CCCC Statement on the Multiple Uses of Writing," additionally points to the civil dimension of writing.

But this history does more than invite further discussion; this history, and this dissertation in general, asks rhetorical theorists and critics to become actively involved in the reform movement of college sports. We are uniquely positioned—as professionals trained in language use—to assist in this challenging yet beneficial task. If we adhere to the CCCC position of working outside of the classroom and in novel environments, and if we believe the NCTE position on the civil power of language, then it only holds that we should actively work alongside reform minded groups such as the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics in the quest for strengthening the academic foundation of our colleges and universities.

…and at the close of this project.

Since 1990 the database *Dissertation Abstracts* lists 375 dissertations and theses with the phrase "student-athletes" in the title. 349 of the 375 have been published since 1998 signaling a rising interest in student-athletes and college sports. Moreover, a quick search for "student-athletes" on Amazon.com yields 7,762 books, most of which are directed toward helping student-athletes navigate boosters, coaches, and sports agents. Despite this near avalanche of thought directed toward student-athletes and intercollegiate athletics, composition and rhetoric has been relatively mute. Aside from a handful of dissertations (e.g, Broussard [2007], Drew [2009], Hara [2008], Wright [in progress]), the rare CCCC presentations, and even rarer book length projects, composition and rhetoric has been disinterested in connecting the recent fascination with embodiment, extracurricular composing, and advocacy to one of the more dominant presences on the American college and universities campuses: college sports.

While I have attempted to push our field toward more expansive notions of embodiment found in college sports, towards developing pedagogies tailored for student-athletes, toward advocating on behalf of the academic needs of student-athletes, my larger goal is to ignite a more lasting conversation in American higher education and with the field of composition and rhetoric revolving around the multibillion dollar industry that shares space with us on campus, revolving around the value of college sports for composition and rhetoric.

Yet I have left areas intentionally unexplored. I have not, for one, focused much energy on the financial and material benefits of college sports. This has been commonly trod ground. A large corpus of texts devoted to college sports have discussed the financial windfall a campus absorbs when the football teams excels on the playing field, how admissions skyrocket following a national championship in a prominent sport. Nor did I move into the social sciences and education to consider how participation in sports yields intangible benefits for student-athletes, how participating in sports aids in socialization, improves self-worth, or graduation rates. Again, commonly trod ground.

Moreover, within my narrow focus of the first-year writing classroom, high-profile college sports, and Division I athletics, there are additional unaddressed areas of inquiry. When considering the literacy practices swirling around college sports, my focus was solely on football and basketball at the highest level of competitive college play. I did not consider other sports which also include textual practices of meaning-making (such as a soccer or hockey coach quickly sketching a play with a dry erase marker during a time-out) or even gestural forms of meaning-making (a softball or baseball coach flashing hand signals during a game situation, a form of communication with close affinities with American Sign Language, an object of study in composition and rhetoric). I did not focus on the thousands upon thousands of student-athletes competing at other levels: Division II, III, NAIA.

Additionally, I focused only on the traditionally required two-step composition sequence so many of us are familiar with, a sequence often taken during the first year of college though models of delaying the second step are available. I did not consider upper-level writing and rhetoric classes, advanced composition, honors composition, writing intensive classes, writing across the curriculum, or writing in the disciplines. Surely such classes, any class for that matter where writing plays a prominent role in helping achieve the desired outcomes, are areas fertile for developing rich connections between classroom and non-classroom writing, for creating a discursive space in which athletics and academics collide.

Yet instead of looking at the above paragraphs as incomplete thinking on my part, I offer these gaps up to further scholarship. Writing through this conclusion, I find myself reflecting on the gestural modes of communication used by baseball and softball coaches and the small but significant body of scholarship in gesture studies (McNeill; Kendon). Or even Isabelle Thompson's recent *Written Communication* article, which analyzed the gestures used by writing tutors when working one-on-one with a writer, as well as important work of those in disabilities studies who focus on American Sign Language and the synergies and dissonances between ASL and traditional rhetorical and composition theory. Considering gesture theory briefly, I am struck by the close affinities between gesture theory and social semiotics as both are considered, largely, with how meaning is made through social and bodily interaction. Additionally, the entry for “sign languages” in Paul Bouissac’s edited *Encyclopedia of Semiotics*, reminds us that sign language is used by more communities than the deaf and hard of hearing community; Amanda S. Holzrichter and Richard P. Meier, who wrote the entry for “sign language,” point to the work of Adam Kendon who charted the use of sign language for aboriginal peoples in Australia during periods of mourning and male initiation rites. Similarily, Jean Umiker-Sebeok and Thomas Sebeok edited a collection on monastic sign language used during periods of voluntary silence. In the same encyclopedia, Fernando Poyatos provides a lengthy entry for “nonverbal bodily sign categories.”

Taken together, the work of gesture theories and semiotics of sign language and nonverbal bodily sign categories, as well as Thompson’s interest in connecting gestures to writing center work, suggests a future research would do well to consider the role of gestures in college sports and how the uptake of gestures in this particular extracurricular community of practice can be leveraged in a curricular space.

*

The majority of this dissertation was (mentally) drafted in Oklahoma Memorial Stadium. OU’s football stadium is unique in that it is regularly open to the public; students walk through the stands in the west end-zone as a shortcut from campus buildings to the parking lot; more ambitious souls run the stadium stairs—all 140 steps—in a snaking pattern around and around the stadium; late at night, the stadium makes for a silent sanctuary of sorts for reflection. The stadium is also a material result of the separation of athletics from academics. In my interview with OU Director of Athletics Joseph Castiglione, found in Appendix E, Castiglione spoke against the critique leveled at college sports for adopting an entrepreneur approach: "Look, I know people don't like the idea that college sports has become a business but when the university said we cannot pay for you and do not want pay for you and pushed you over here [then] in order to survive, programs had to become entrepreneurial." A result of entrepreneurism, is that OU athletics has constructed their massive 85,000 seat stadium, a stadium used eight times a year for a football game, once a year for spring graduation—weather dependent—and the occasional concert.

As I sat in the stadium, thinking through this dissertation, it struck me that not only is the stadium representative of what people love about college sports—the pageantry, the community—but also what people hate about college sports—the excess, the jingoism. But more importantly, the stadium and the football games played there, provide an apt metaphor for the relationship between school and sport, a metaphor I have used in the title of this dissertation: the coin toss.

Before the start of every football game, and an overtime period, if needed, the two team captains meet in the middle of the field. Surrounded by the referees, and, depending on the level of pomp and circumstance, videographers and celebrities, the referee shows the two sides of the coin to the opposing teams and asks the captain of the visiting team to "call it in the air." The coin is tossed, lands on the ground, and the logistics of the game are determined based on who won the flip: which team starts on defense, which on offense, which direction the offense will be heading, which direction the defense will be protecting. Prior to this coin toss, the two teams are shuttled away on opposing sides, where they plan, practice, and scheme ways to beat each other. After the coin toss, again, the teams are shuttled away on opposing sides where they cycle through and embody plays on the field in hopes of beating each other. But during this brief moment of togetherness, the two sides meet in the middle, literally, and shake hands.

Since the first football game was played in 1869, American higher education has shown little interest in college sports and even less interest in mining this community of practice for pedagogical developments in the teaching of writing or for how literate practices are strewn across various states of representational media. Instead it seems at times that since 1869, academics and athletics have lined up on opposing sides and taken shots at each other. But to take this coin toss metaphor one step further, the history of American higher education is dotted with moments where athletics and academics meet in the middle of the field and shaken hands. One example was detailed in this chapter: the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics. Faculty senates from across American higher education gaining a collective voice for advocating on behalf of the academic side of the student-athlete and, at the same time, gaining the attention of the NCAA. COIA and the NCAA meeting in the middle; faculty-senates and administrators of the NCAA shaking hands in mutual greeting.

But all too often we don’t stay in this space—where the coin toss takes place—for very long. Athletics retreats to their side of the field and thoughts of tightening eligibility standards of incoming student-athletes is forgotten in the wake of playing for the March Madness basketball tournament; academics retreats to their side of the field and thoughts of tightening eligibility standards of incoming student-athletes are forgotten as annual tenure review portfolios are due. This dissertation is a call to stay longer in the middle, for the coin toss to not just be an immediate action but a way of being, an embodiment. The Sophists of fourth and fifth century Greece, a time where athletics was instrumental to the rise of rhetoric, understood the coin toss as a way of being. For Isocrates, Gorgias, and the other Sophists, the coin was perpetually in the air, flipping around, as athletics and rhetorics shook hands in the middle of the field of play. Eventually the coin landed with a thud, and athletics and academics went their separate way to the detriment of all stakeholders of American higher education.

Here’s to hoping for overtime, a time where neither side won but both get the chance to meet again in the middle. Here’s to hoping that when we toss the coin again it stays in the air.

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Appendix A

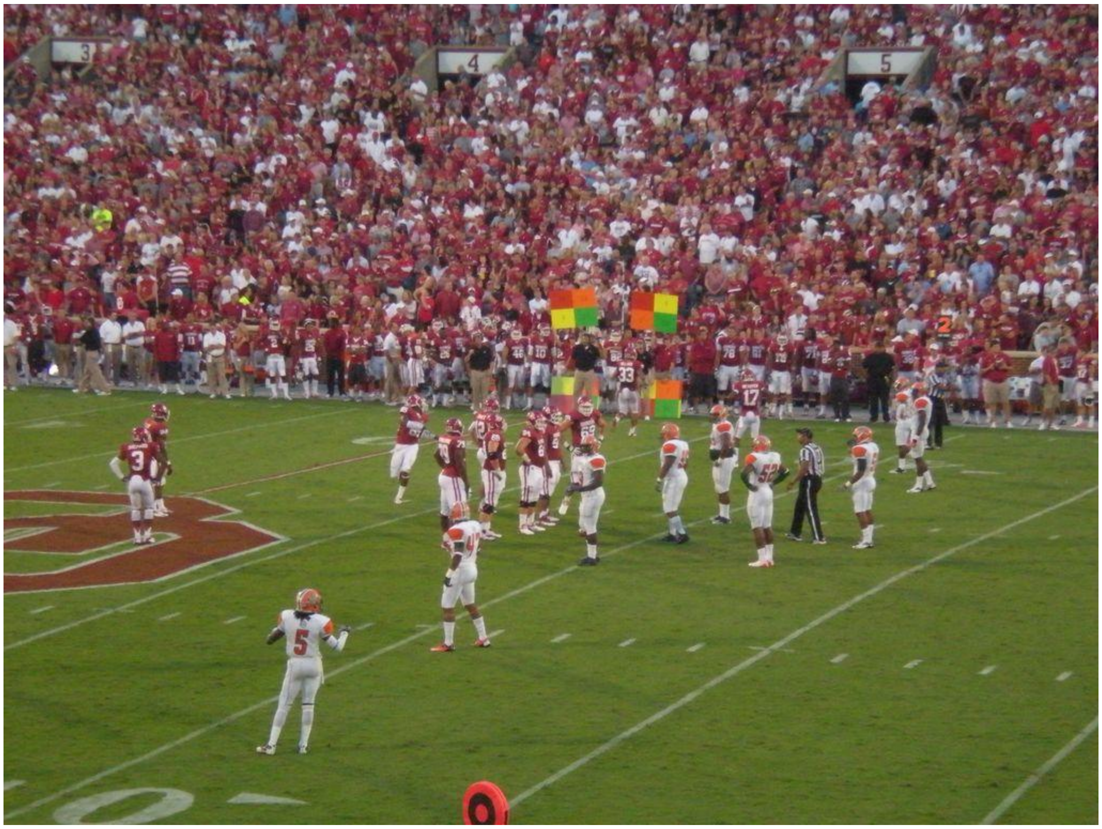
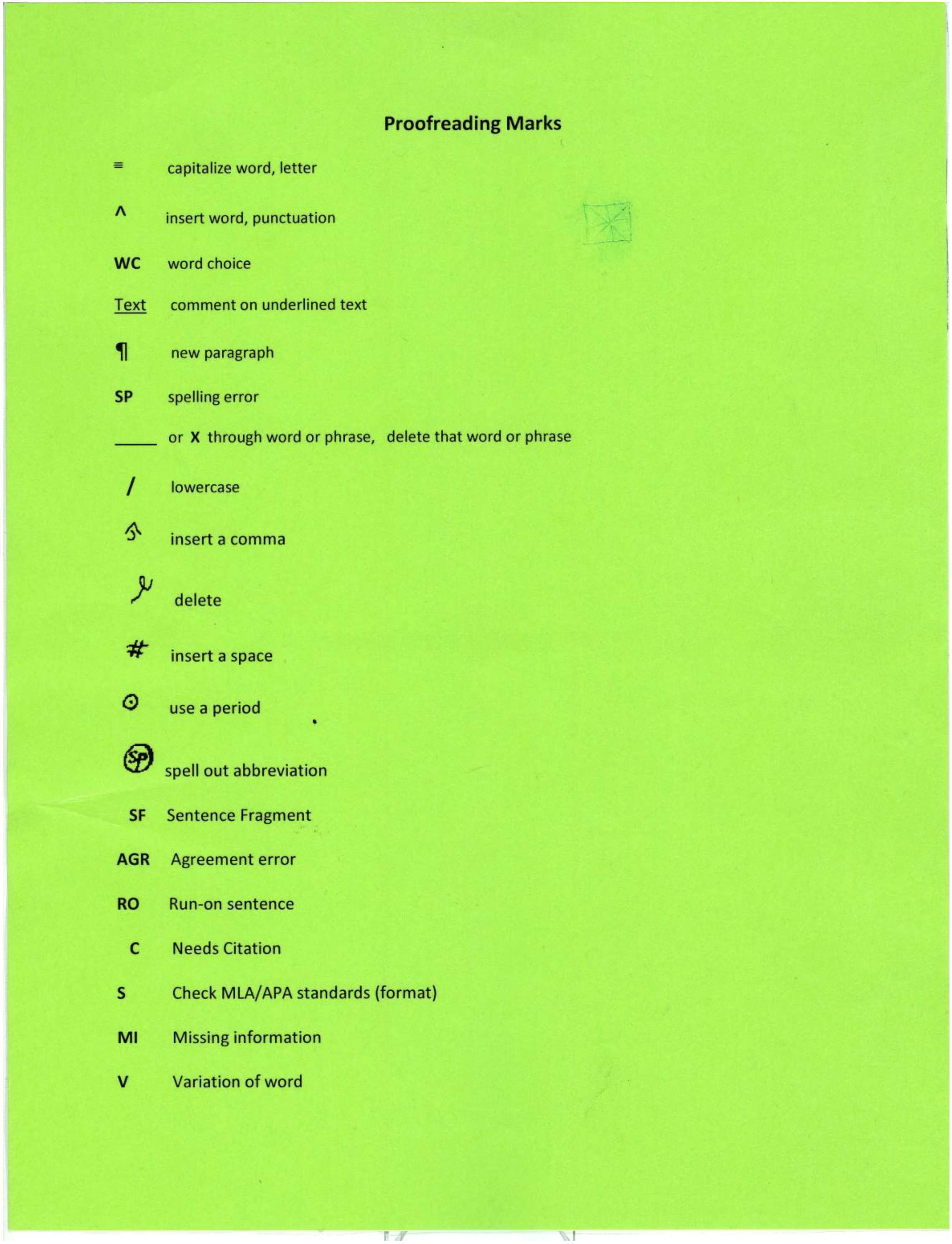
- 

Figure 10: To relay offensive plays, OU, like Auburn, uses a complex array of literate artifacts. Two assistant coaches hold up a large cardboard sign divided into quarters. These quarters are separately colored and a black number is inscribed onto each quarter of the placard. An additional coach, here seen between the signs and to the left of player number 33, flashes hand signals.

Appendix B



Proofreading Marks

≡	capitalize word, letter
^	insert word, punctuation
WC	word choice
Text	comment on underlined text
¶	new paragraph
SP	spelling error
_____	or **X** through word or phrase, delete that word or phrase
/	lowercase
⁁	insert a comma
ℓ	delete
#	insert a space
⊙	use a period
(SP)	spell out abbreviation
SF	Sentence Fragment
AGR	Agreement error
RO	Run-on sentence
C	Needs Citation
S	Check MLA/APA standards (format)
MI	Missing information
V	Variation of word

Figure 11: Coding sheet previously used by the athletic writing tutors.

Appendix C

English 1113: Principles of Composition II

Course Theme: Expanded Understandings of Writing
Instructor: Michael Rifenburg
Email: rifenburg@ou.edu
Office: 312 Gittinger Hall
Office Hours: M & W 8:30am-10:00 am
Required Materials

- Wardle and Downs's *Writing about Writing (WAW)*, 2nd edition
- Graff and Birkenstein's *They Say/I Say*, 2nd edition
- Additional readings provided by the instructor
- 3 ring binder

General Information:

Background

This composition class, the second in a required two-semester sequence, calls for students to approach writing more expansively, by including forms of composition and communication such as podcasts, blogs, multimedia projects, dance.

Using Wardle and Down's text, we will begin by focusing on the sorts of writing that saturate your life as a student and the various other social roles you fill: sibling, child, friend, sorority sister, teammate, etc. Next, we will shift focus to a community (such as a football team, a community drama troupe, a Greek organization) and analyze the writing which animates the work they do. Finally, we will consider how the writing practices adopted by your chosen community can be incorporated into the writing that is asked of you in higher education. In other words, we will push at the relatively rigid understanding of Academic Writing.

Two important concepts undergird the work and writing we will do this semester: kiarotic and resemiotic. While you may not be familiar with these words, you most certainly are familiar with the concept. For the first, the work we do will be timely and response to pressing issues driving our campus and larger community. For the second, and in concert with the course theme, you will be asked to construct your argument(s) in various ways beyond traditional alphabetic print. While we will still rely on the traditional typed essay, you will be asked to transfer your typed argument into various others types of delivery, such as a t-shirt slogan, a speech, or other modes that fit your argument.

We will, of course, talk in much more detail as the semester progresses.

Additionally, the completion of a journal will service as a method of invention and will receive an effort grade. Students will leave this course with a strong understanding of the rhetorical foundation that undergirds contemporary composition.

Additional Modal Projects (AMPs)

In an effort to expand your thinking of writing beyond traditional alphabetic text papers, you will be asked to turn in an Additional Modal Project (AMP) alongside your traditional essay. This AMP can take many forms, some described above, but will display the same central argument as your traditional essay, just in a different mode. To aid in the construction of an AMP, the Literacy Task assignment sheet I provide will specify an audience for your traditional essay and a *different audience* for your AMP.

Finally, when I use the term "Literacy Task," as I do below, I am thinking of a traditional essay plus an AMP.

Below is the breakdown of assignments will percentages:

Mini-essay #1:	10% of final grade
Literacy Task #1:	18% of final grade
Literacy Task #2:	25% of final grade
Literacy Task #3:	25% of final grade
Journal:	10% of final grade
Presentation:	12% of final grade

Syllabus

Paper due dates

All papers due electronically by 11:59pm that day.

- Literacy Task 1: Literacy Narrative
- Literacy Task 2: Community of Practice Ethnography
- Literacy Task 3: Connecting non-school and school writing

Week by week plan

Week 1

Introduction to course
Journal goals for class; writing strengths and weaknesses

Assignment sheet Literacy Task 1, Literacy Narrative, chapter 3 *WAW*
Journal tentative thoughts regarding assignment

Week 2

Malcolm X "Learning to Read" *WAW* pp. 353-362
They Say/I Say

Week 3

Journal: detailing your educational background
Sherman Alexie "The Joy of Reading and Writing" *WAW* pp. 362-367

Week 4

Journal: connecting Malcolm X and Alexie
Unpacking "literacy"
Deb Brandt "Sponsors of Literacy" *WAW* pp. 331-353
Start thinking about AMP

Week 5

Writing time dedicated toward Literacy Task 1
Dennis Baron "From Pencils to Pixels" *WAW* pp. 422-442
Journal: connecting your literate development to one of the four readings.
They Say/I Say
Set-up conference to discuss Literacy Task 1 (traditional essay and AMP)

Week 6

Connecting "they say" to "I say"
Rough draft Literacy Task 1 due
Peer review groups

Week 7

Assignment sheet Literacy Task 2, Community of Practice Ethnography, Chapter 4 *WAW*
Journal tentative thoughts regarding assignment

Week 8

John Swales "The Concept of a Discourse Community" *WAW* pp. 466-481
Ann M. Johns "Discourse Communities and Communities of Practice" *WAW*, pp. 498-520.

Journal: connecting terms from Swales or Johns to discourse community you are a member of

Week 9

Ralph Cintron *Angel's Town* (handout)
Margaret Finders *Just Girls* (handout)
Journal: pick Cintron or Finders; describe what writing looks like for studied group

Week 10

Writing time dedicated toward Literacy Task 2
Set-up conference to discuss Literacy Task 2 (traditional essay and AMP

Week 11

Rough draft Literacy Task 2 due
Peer review groups

Week 12

Assignment Sheet, Literacy Task 3, Connecting non-school and school writing
Journal tentative thoughts regarding assignment
Brief discussion: how writing is taught—high school versus college

Week 13

Writing time dedicated toward Literacy Task 3
Set-up conference to discuss Literacy Task 3 (traditional essay and AMP

Week 14

Rough draft Literacy Task 3 due
Peer review groups

Week 15

Literacy Task 3 due
Presentations

Week 16

Presentations

Literacy Task 2: Community of Practice Ethnography

Final Draft due:[127]

Overview

For this project you will improve as a reader of complex, research-based texts. In addition, you will learn to design and conduct field research of your own and synthesize your findings for an audience. Finally, you will consider reading and writing as literacy practices that shape and are shaped by intersecting communities of practice, a term nearly synonymous with Swales's "discourse communities."

More specifically, you will study an academic community and write a 5-8 page ethnographic report in which you answer the research question: *What are the goals and characteristics of this community?*

This traditional essay will be written for your academic advisor; imagine convincing this person that you understand and are capable of working in this major.

The AMP will take the central argument of your traditional essay and gear it toward a different audience: the curator of a modern art museum interested in exhibiting student-centered work.

Process

7. Choose an academic community you wish to study
    - If you've chosen a major, you might study the academic unit that houses your major.
    - If you've not chosen a major, you might use this project to study a potential area of interest. Check out OU's website for a variety of different colleges and academic units: http://www.ou.edu/content/web/landing/academic_colleges.html

8. Research your community
    - History: Find out the history of your community at OU. How long has it been here? How many majors? What are strengths and weaknesses of the program?

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[127] Adapted from Sandra Tarabochia's English 1113: Composition I course at the University of Oklahoma who adopted the assignment from chapter 3 of Wardle and Downs's *Writing About Writing*.

- Public representation: How does the community represent itself publically? You might conduct a rhetorical analysis of the department or unit website.
- What have others said: What have other researchers learned by studying your community or communities like it? You might check out the following journals or databases to find existing research:
    - Across the Disciplines: http://wac.colostate.edu/atd/
    - The WAC Journal: http://wac.colostate.edu/journal/
    - Jstor (from OU library homepage)
    - Premier journals for your academic unit—ask around, if needed

9. Collect data
    - *Observe members of the discourse community while they are engaged in a shared activity*. You might attend a class period, a lab section, a test prep session, a writing group meeting, etc. Take detailed notes. Use the following questions to focus your observation and note-taking: What are community members doing? What kinds of things do they say? What do they write? What do they read? How do you know who is "in" and who is "out" of the community? How do you know who the experts are and who is new to the community?
    - *Collect several texts that represent what people in your community read or write* (their genres). You might collect a scholarly journal article, class notes, syllabi, professor's PowerPoint (with permission), etc.
    - *Interview at least one member of the discourse community*. Record and transcribe the interview (so you have a text-based script to analyze). You might ask things like: How long have you been in this community? Why are involved? What do X, Y, Z words mean? How did you learn to write A, B, C? How do you communicate with other people in your community?

10. Analyze data: Begin by analyzing your data using the six characteristics of Swales discourse community:
    - What are the shared goals of the community; why does this group exist and what does it do?
    - What mechanisms do members use to communicate with each other (face to face meetings, email, texts, reports, journal articles, websites, etc.)?
    - What are the purposes of each of these mechanisms of communication (to share research, teach new members, improve performance, solve a problem, etc.)?
    - Which of the above mechanisms of communication can be considered *genres* (textual responses to recurring situations that all group members recognize and understand)?
    - What kinds of specialized language (lexis) do group members use in their conversations and in their genres? Name some examples—

restaurant workers say “86 burger buns” instead of “we are out of burger buns.”
- Who are the “oldtimers” with expertise? Who are the newcomers with less expertise? How can you tell? How do newcomers appropriate/learn language, genres, knowledge of the group?

Then use Johns to analyze your data further:

- Are there conflicts within the community? If so, why?
- Do some participants in the community have difficulty? Why?
- Who has authority here, and where does that authority come from?

11. Research your community (again)
    - As questions and/or points of interest emerge from your data analysis, conduct library research to find out what others have written about those questions/topics. For example, in the student example, Branick’s data made him curious about connections between literacy and reading. He uses an article from *Reading Teacher* in order to help analyze and situate his findings.

12. Planning and Drafting: As you develop your analysis, start setting some priorities. Given all you have learned about your community, what do you want to focus on in your report? Is there something interesting regarding goals of the community? Types of literacies in the community? Write a more specific research question and think about how you will use your data to answer that question.

    Your draft should have the following parts or make the following moves (unless there is a rhetorical reason not to):
    - Begin with a brief review of the existing published research on the community (We know X about discourse communities in general [cite Swales and Johns as appropriate]; We know Y about my community more specifically [draw on research you conducted in the library].
    - Name a niche (But we don’t know Z about this community or No one has looked at A.)
    - Explain how your research fills that niche.
    - Describe your research methods.
    - Discuss your findings in detail—quote from your notes, your interview, the texts you collected from the community, etc.

Quick Reference Guide

Traditional Essay

- Word count: 1200-1800 words

- Stance: Your choice
- Topic: describing your literate development
- Format: MLA or APA format
- Audience: your academic advisor
- Images: Up to two, if appropriate to your stance and audience

Additional Modal Project

> Audience: the curator of a modern art museum interested in exhibiting student-centered work

Good luck! I'm happy to help if you need some additional assistance at any stage of this paper. My office hours are ___________. You can reach me as well via email at___________.

Appendix D

Athletics Writing Center Program

A. Writing and Study Skills Center

The Thompson Writing and Study Skills Center serves all student-athletes at the University of Oklahoma. It is staffed by a full-time Coordinator and specially selected and trained tutors. The Writing tutors offer personalized instruction to help develop a more effective reading, learning, and writing process for those who seek assistance in refreshing, reviewing, or improving skills. Services include assessment, conferences, computers, handouts, and a resource library.

B. Writing Statement

- We believe writing is an act of communicating with others through intellectual inquiry.
- We believe writing at the university level oftentimes asks student-athletes to negotiate and write in unfamiliar spaces, and our job as tutors is to help navigate the sometimes esoteric rules that govern writing in individual disciplines.
- We believe writing should be taught as a recursive process.
- We believe that when we tutor student-athletes in writing we should teach them to understand the rhetorical situation (i.e., analyze audience, purpose, style, voice and so on).
- We believe that writing, while a rhetorical act for all disciplines, is discipline specific. For example, the rules that govern writing for the Humanities may not govern writing for the Sciences.
- We believe that when we tutor student-athletes in writing we should teach them to reflect on their own writing before, during and after the writing process
- We believe the teaching of grammar is best taught in the context of a student-athlete's own writing and agree with composition scholars who argue that the use of grammar worksheets, divorced from the student-athlete's own prose, does not translate into better writing
- Finally, we believe 'writing, like any other skill, can be taught to all.

C. Goal of the Athletics Writing Center

Our goal is to encourage learning and to allow the student-athlete to "own" the paper and take full responsibility for it. This only occurs if the student-athlete does the majority of the work. We emphasize higher order concerns (e.g., organization, theses and conclusions) over lower order concerns (e.g., punctuation and usage). While direct instruction is a necessary component of Writing tutoring, an effective session asks for the tutor to use guiding and probing questions. The purpose behind the use of questions over statements points back to the previous statement (allowing student-athlete to do the majority of the talking/walk) and to the need to give the student-athlete a sense of agency in his or her own learning.

D. Practical Implementations

The following provides practical implementations in Writing tutoring of our philosophy of English and Writing student-athlete tutoring as outlined in part I. Once again, here is our stated philosophy: Finding genesis in the tutoring methods of early Greek sophists, our philosophy embraces the asymmetrical relationship with tutor and tutee, meets the student-athlete where he or she is, and works from an admixture of cognitive and motivational scaffolding.

To enact this philosophy in a 15 minute Writing tutoring session, five steps, purposefully constructed with active verbs, need to occur:

- Building trust
- Setting the agenda
- Allowing student-athlete to do the majority of the work/talking
- Asking guiding and probing questions
- Wrapping up.

These five steps will be elaborated in the following pages.

Building Trust

One of the most important components, if not the most important component, of a successful tutoring session is establishing and building trust with the student-athlete. Returning briefly to Classical Greece, a fundamental job of the tutor is to project a trustworthy ethos. In other words, a tutor needs to convince a student-athlete that he or she is knowledgeable in the field, and that he or she is comfortable transmitting this knowledge to the student-athlete. All too often tutoring sessions break down as a result of some sort of disconnect between the tutor and tutee. This breakdown can be avoided through continual work toward establishing a professional and amiable relationship with the student-athlete. Additionally, doing so helps us achieve our philosophical goal of meeting the student-athlete where he or she is. *It is important to inquire about the student-athlete as an athlete, as a student, and as a person*. Building trust and establishing a relationship invites the student and the athlete into the tutoring session

The challenge for Writing tutors is that, unlike English tutors, the Writing tutors are not working with the same student-athletes each week. Therefore, trust is not something that can be worked on over a period of time. In this case, it is more critical and beneficial for the Writing tutor to project a knowledgeable ethos—a necessary component of building trust in tutoring sessions. Here, we ask tutors to be confident in their statements and verbalize their statements with assured speech. Poise and proper self-confidence are critical for building trust during sporadic tutoring sessions.

Setting the Agenda

Following the advice of Thomas Newkirk's article "The First Five Minutes: Setting the Agenda in a Writing Conference," we argue that a clearly articulated agenda needs to be set forth before work begins on a paper. *This agenda comes from the student-athlete and can be something as rudimentary as proofreading or more complex such as aligning the argument with the thesis statement*. While impossible to fix everything in a paper during one tutoring session, setting down a clear agenda demonstrates to the student-athlete that writing and editing is not a onetime occurrence but a continuous process.

Here are questions that need to be answered in the first five minutes of a 15 minutes tutoring session:

- What class is this for?
- What is the assignment? Request the assignment sheet.
- When is it due?
- What do *you* want to work on?

Finally, Newkirk argues, and we agree, that the agenda set forth should be limited to one or two major concerns (e.g., organization or thesis statements).

Allowing student-athlete to do the majority of the work/talking

Jeff Brooks's article "Minimalist Tutoring: Making the Student Do All the Work," captures nicely what we are trying to do. *Our goal is to encourage learning and to allow the student-athlete* to *"own" the paper and take full responsibility for it*. This only occurs if the student-athlete does the majority of the work. Here are some practical tips Brooks relays:

- Sit beside the student-athlete—not across the table where a boss would sit
- Try to get the student-athlete closer to the paper than you are
- If you are right-handed, sit on the right side of the student-athlete. This makes it harder for you to write on the paper
- Do not hold a writing instrument in your hand

While we emphasize higher order concerns (e.g., organization, theses and conclusions) over lower order concerns (e.g., punctuation and usage), if the student-athlete would like to work on lower order concerns here are some practical suggestions. Keep in mind that is impossible to address all lower order concerns in a student-athlete's paper during the 15 minute session. First, quickly read over the first two paragraphs of the paper and locate what some call "trademark errors"—those errors that are repeatedly made in the writing. These trademark errors are generally limited to one to three things. Bring the student-athletes attention to one of these trademark errors, explain why it is an error and provide instruction regarding the trademark error. Next, have the student-athlete try to locate additional examples of the specific trademark error in the next couple of paragraphs. Sit patiently by and provide help when needed. Finally, ask the student-athlete to work on the remainder of the paper at home. All the while keep on mind the idea of teaching and not telling. We are here to teach how to fix grammatical missteps in one's own writing; we are not here to simply tell how to fix the misstep.

If the student-athlete would like to work on higher order concerns, create a brainstorming session where the tutor and student-athlete co-generate ideas. It is important to keep in mind that this may be done more effectively by the tutor *not* reading the paper. As counter-intuitive as this sounds, oftentimes tutors get too bogged down in the content of a paper that they struggles to see the paper as whole document in need of reshaping. Staying above, say, the dense details of a political science paper allow the tutor to bring fresh ideas to the table.

Asking Guiding and Probing Questions

While direct instruction is a necessary component of English tutoring, an effective session asks for the tutor to use guiding and probing questions. The purpose behind the use of questions over statements points back to the previous step (allowing student-athlete to do the majority of the talking/walk) and to the need to give the student-athlete a sense of agency in his or her own learning.

The following information is taken from Rob Traver's article "What is a Good Guiding Question?" Traver suggests that good guiding questions are open ended, yet focus inquiry, are non-judgmental and are succinct. *When sitting down with a student-athlete we are looking to ask questions that cannot be answered in a single word, yet are focused enough to bring the student-athlete into the lesson plan*. Avoid questions that invite yes/no answers; utilize questions that invite opinion and reflection.

Non-judgmental questions are simply questions that do not have a right answer. Epistemologically, English studies operate from a system of relativistic thought. It is hard to say specifically and correctly what Melville's white whale stands for and it is hard to say what constitutes a "good" paper. As such, when we implement guiding questions, it is important to verbally construct these so that the student-athlete is able to operate from a system of relativistic thought. Traver argues that non-judgmental questions "encourage thinking because to answer them the learner must ask other questions" (71).

Finally, these guiding questions need to be succinct. Verbally construct your question in as little words as possible. Re-ask the question if needed and be prepared to deliver a follow-up question.

Wrapping Up

As mentioned, writing tutors may never encounter the same student-athlete twice. However, if possible provide the student-athlete with a "task" to complete. It is impossible to help a student-athlete with every component of a paper during a single tutoring session; therefore, it is productive to tackle a single component and then ask the student-athlete to work on something else, say a conclusion, before they bring their paper in again. *Doing so, once again, places the student-athlete in a position of agency over his or her own learning.*

Finally

These five steps are interrelated and do not work as well in isolation. Combined they are components of a successful tutoring session. The bulk of a tutoring session is devoted to allowing student-athletes to do the majority of the talking and/or work and asking guiding and probing questions. During these steps cognitive and motivational scaffolding come into play. Part IV outlines the practical manifestation of cognitive and motivational scaffolding.

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Appendix E

In the summer of 2012, I emailed the secretary of Joseph Castiglione, the Vice President for Intercollegiate Athletics Programs and the Director of Athletics at the University of Oklahoma. I had taken a class with Castiglione the previous semester and was hoping he would make time to sit down with me and talk more in-depth about some of the academic challenges facing college sports.

The secretary responding quickly and politely, asking if late summer would work. I said it would. I did not hear back for another 8 months and was able to sit down with Castiglione in February 2013. We talked for over an hour and our conversation moved through a wide variety of topics: establishing a psychological resource center solely for student-athletes, the rise in online classes, the perception of corruption in college sports.

Leaving the interview, I was struck by Castiglione's honesty and conviction. He was transparent with the challenges facing college sports and continually emphasized that all decisions made in the athletic department would resonant with the core values and mission statement adopted by the department; that student-athletes were the reason for the athletic department; that creating an environment for the student-athletes' academic success was a number one priority.

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Castiglione came to OU in 1998 from the University of Missouri. In the time since his arrival, OU has notched seven national titles and 49 conference titles. Two years after his arrival, the football team won the national championship, their first in 15 years. He has overseen the renovation and construction of numerous facilities and lead successful fundraising campaigns, campaigns that allow OU athletic to operate a self-sustaining $93 million annual budget *and* operate in the black for the past 14 years, a feat rarely seen in the current athletic landscape. For his efforts, the Bobby Dodd Foundation named him Athletics Director of the Year in 2004. In 2003, he was inducted into the National Association of Collegiate Marketing Administrators Hall of Fame. In June 2001, he received the General Robert R. Neyland Athletic Director Award for lifetime achievement from the All-American Football Foundation. The National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics named him Central Region AD of the Year in 2000.

But more important than these awards, and the reason I include him in my dissertation, is his commitment to academics. Under his tenure, the cumulative student-athlete GPA has risen from the mid-2's to 3.03. Likewise, graduation rates have increased. Roughly a decade into the job, Castiglione went back to school and received his master's in Education from OU in 2007. With his graduate degree in hand, Castiglione is now an adjunct professor in the Department of English where every fall he teaches a graduate seminar titled "Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics," a class I had the opportunity to take in 2012.

Below is my complete interview transcript with Joseph Castiglione. My questions are in bold.

*

What was the climate like in the athletic department prior to your arrival in 1997?

You find a program with a great deal of tradition and areas of success within the program, but as a whole it was a department that needed strong leadership, reestablishment of the right culture, certainly an intentional approach to defining the vision or mission. And then the set of core values that was going to guide the decisions that we made. Wouldn't know how to grade the level of morale, but it wasn't conducive to the long term vision we had for the program. Found a lot of various areas were operating in their own little silos, if you will, very poor communication between people. That sort of was the internal piece. The department was dealing with a great deal of financial stress. Had incurred significant operating debt and just wasn't on good footing financially. Facilities were in very bad shape. The facilities in many cases were allowed to lapse into disrepair and or be insufficient for what the team needed. As an example, we had started a women's soccer program but there hadn't been any place to compete on campus. So we were basically utilizing some fields run by the Norman parks and recreation department for our varsity program. You could probably say that because of its great tradition and overall support, the program still had a huge fighting chance to get it turned around.

Thinking about academic services. What did that look like when you came here and what were some changes you quickly made?

That actually was one of the stronger parts of the department and that came from some directives put in place in the early part of the decade coming out of an NCAA investigation dealing with some of the issues the campus faced. But there had been noticeable steps taken to strengthen the academic services part of the department. When I got here and started learning about what we were doing all we did was try to strengthen what had been done. Certainly we evaluated everything that had taken place. We looked at graduation rates and the success of student athletes as compared to the rest of campus. Surprisingly, the graduation rates of student-athletes was significantly higher than that of the campus. The graduation rates have gone up incrementally since that time, but the graduation rates of the student on campus have improved dramatically. Some years we are mirroring what is going on on campus but largely the graduation rates have improved on campus and that is because of the leadership of President Boren, Provost Mergler and others who were involved in initiatives to improve the graduation rates.

I will say during part of the time since 1998 we have also participated in that task force and development of those initiatives and have developed a similar model inside our program. One can't say one can take the exact same model and apply it because we are different but we have taken the theory and the spirit and the intent behind such initiatives and created a hybrid version if you will for student-athletes. And it has had a positive impact because we are moving our student-athletes closer to graduation during their four years of eligibility. So that would be a good example of a program we have instituted. [Because of that initiative to increase graduation rates] we have done everything from a more intentional review of academic background prior to offering a letter of intent. If we cannot anticipate a student being successful at the University of Oklahoma, we will not offer a letter of intent. They still have to qualify and there are some cases where they are close but you have to remember that what happens in secondary education directly affects what we are seeing in academic preparation or lack thereof before they come to campus. At least we try to find out everything we can, that is public. Once they get here we do our own assessment, so immediately can find out more about the academic profile of the student-athlete. So if they have areas that need to be addressed, a learning disability or remediation, we are more prepared to do that as early in the process as possible.

One other thing we started was an attendance policy.

That wasn't in place before you?

No. Candidly, we had seen a rise in missed classes for whatever reason. We would find ourselves getting into debates—the student-athlete saying they were there and the professor saying they were not there. We created a program that we \were going to check. And there was a significant financial invest to do that. There were only a few schools at the time that we doing that. And we spend a great deal of time examining what they were doing. And we have that in place and are doing that now. The policy obviously has punitive measure in it but it is meant to send the message that class attendance is a very important part of the journey toward academic success.

If you think about back then and here we are now. When I got here I think the average GPA was in the mid-2 and now our cumulative GPA for student-athletes is 3.03. Now, we will be the first to say that we need to make strides in graduation rates but if the basic premise is to put them in the best position to be successful going through and the grade improvement is any indication then it should correlate with more graduation. So that has been helpful.

A lot of big changes. I want to ask a question about you. I know from taking your class you are a humble person. I asked about these changes and you talk about other people. Two things I greatly appreciate about this department are the self-sustaining budget and the fact that you went and got your master's degree almost ten years into the job. Why does the athletic director of a major university go and get a master's degree?

There were several things that motived me. One of my personal core values is a commitment to lifelong learning. I don't know if you would call it selfish but it more of me modeling the behavior I thought I should. One, I try to become a better leader all the time so the idea of learning isn't foreign. Whether I accomplish that in the classroom, ongoing readings watching other people's experiences, all that can provide moments for learning. I really felt like it would a great demonstration of my commitment to that value. Number two, it would give me a real-time glimpse of what our students were facing, albeit in a graduation program opposed to undergraduate program. And three it was something I wanted to check off my bucket list.

The same motivating factors that drive you to teach Issues in Intercollegiate Athletics every fall? To have an athletic director teach a graduate level class, it has got to be unique?

Well, I enjoy it. Probably the motivating factor is to give back. It doesn't do any good to have all this experience and not share it. It doesn't mean I have all the answers; it doesn't mean my way is the only way. It doesn't mean everyone is going to like what I have to say. As you know, I am very open in the classroom. I want it to be a really great learning experience that people could apply to their pursuits. And, you know, there is something to be said for staying in the classroom.

Under your guidance, the athletic department has started a psychological resource office (PROS), a career center, a writing center—all in house. Thinking about it from a faculty perspective, it makes me a little concerned that athletics has their own career center when there is another one on campus, that they have their own

writing center, when there is another one on campus. Has it ever concerned you that athletics is almost creating an insular environment, having everything in-house opposed to having student-athletes utilizing on campus student-services.

Good point, and it does cross our mind when we think of these kinds of initiatives and the PROS would be a perfect example of it. We were using the university services previously and there was a need to use them more but there wasn't enough staff to take care of the demand. I will tell you exactly what happened. Dr. Gerald Gurney and I started talking about it. He brought the concern to my attention and he had been working with the university. And they asked if we would co-fund a position. That was a novel idea and I was open to it. But the more I thought about it the more I realized that even with the cofounding we would still be having the same problem. So I proposed back to him that if we were going to put up that kind of funding why don't we put the funding in for our own position and have it housed in the department. Still needed to have a licensed psychologist and would connect with any one and everybody on campus and be very well aware of how the [OU] wanted it to be run—we are not talking about creating an island here. It really came down to a funding decision if we wanted to do it, and I said I would find the funding to pay for the whole position and we would take the strain off of university services and have this person in house. And this person would be more known [to student-athletes] and create more comfort level.

We were the first university in America to do that. In fact, we received a couple of awards for doing that. Again, it is part of our proactive nature. Look you can talk about a lot of things. An athletic director is charged with a great deal of responsibility and one of those is fiduciary. But for me, I know that at times the athletic director has to be the face of the department. But I much prefer to put the student-athletes and the coaches out there in front versus the athletic director. I will stand up and take the arrows when necessary; I will make the tough decisions; I will run the ship with a firm hand. That's ok, I can do all that. But when people think of the athletic program, I want them to see the student-athletes because that is why we exist. So if you think about what we are doing, there is nothing more important than having anything and everything we do reflect back on the number one priority and that is creating the best atmosphere for student-athlete academic success.

Thinking about a student-athlete's academic success. I work in the [student-athlete] writing center and a lot of the ways we are allowed or not allowed to help a student-athlete with writing is dictated by the compliance department which is largely run by lawyers. One concern I have is that people with a law degree are deciding how best to help a student-athlete not people with backgrounds in education.

I think you raise a fair point. Compliance isn't making decisions about what we do in academic services as long as it's in compliance with the NCAA rules. And they are there to ensure there is ongoing monitoring and checks in balances in place so that someone doesn't go astray. There are several ways can violate NCAA rules but the most hurtful to a program is blatant academic fraud. And even as intentional as we are about integrity and trying to do the right thing, people with intent on doing something wrong can find a way to beat the system eventually. So I am somewhat disappointed our world has gotten like that but it is the world we are in. So we have to do our best to ensure that we are protecting the student-athletes, the program, the university. Having said that doesn't mean that [compliance] gets involved with determining academic initiatives. If there are some that send out a threat from a compliance standpoint, we will run it by them.

That's a really good question.

To speak candidly, sometimes [in the athletic writing center] we are frustrated because we feel compliance is more concerned about us not breaking rules than they are about us helping the student-athletes.

Fair question, and being very blunt it is something we need to watch. It doesn't mean we don't want the strict compliance with the rule and we don't want to be proactive in protecting ourselves. But we are here to promote education. And I will tell you from a compliance standpoint, the worst thing coming down the road is the preponderance of online courses. How does the university known that the person doing the work is actually the student they are providing a grade for in the course.

You know right now student-athletes can email their papers to the writing center and receive feedback via email on their paper. And the writing center on campus under the direction of Michele Eodice, the associate provost, does the same thing. But the concern you voice is the same one voiced by faculty in general regarding the rise in online classes. It is a big concern for all of higher education.

You know what, you can't completely fight it. It is moving that direction.

It's very lucrative, too.

That's the reason we have to do what we can. I am very concerned. How can you stop it? You can get someone to do the work, and it will be tough to monitor.

Getting back to your point. We don't ever believe that our athletic department operates outside of institutional mission. When you think about student-athletes having to balance their time so wisely, we think that providing the services here in a more convenient fashion makes sure that our student-athletes have every resource to be successful. If a student-athlete has to wait four weeks to get an advisement, chances are they may never take advantage of it.

That's true. At the University of Oklahoma, our number one mission is to provide education, to educate students, why do we have an athletic program?

It's an extension of the quality of life that is created around the university. If it was just about offering and taking classes, you could do that in a building downtown. What makes a university is the opportunity to be exposed to so many different things. It doesn't mean that everyone will like everything that a university offers. But the fact that there is a wide variety of opportunity is important for a university campus. We have a wide range of universities and colleges across the United States. Not all of them offer athletics or not robust athletic programs because that doesn't fit their mission and that's perfectly fine. People know that this campus offers that because it builds community. I think at the end of the day, that there is so much good that can come of it, a sense of community, how it keeps people connected to an institution, and the way it brings people to the campus and engages them in an activity that can be unifying. For those institutions, Oklahoma being one of them, it serves a very valuable purpose.

I want to ask about the college sports landscape in general. College sports are a popular book topic and the large majority of these books position college sports as a corrupt enterprise. For example, *Beer and Circus, Varsity Green: A Behind the Scenes Look at Culture and Corruption in Collegiate Athletics*. What do you say to these vocal, almost angry, critics of college sports?

Well, in some cases they have had grist for their mill. They have taken some real life examples and have used that factual evidence to support their claims. But where some of those authors go too far is to apply the broad brush approach: this is college athletics everywhere and these things are happening everywhere. On occasion could they have happened in many more places than people know? Sure, it is possible. But does it happen with regularity everywhere? Absolutely not.

Look, I know people don't like the idea that college sports has become a business but when the university said we cannot pay for you and do not want pay for you and pushed you over here. In order to survive, programs had to become entrepreneurial. And some of them have done a better job than others and are now being criticized for doing what they were asked to do.

Is that why OU athletics has a separate athletic budget?

Well, I don't really know when that happened.

But we have been operating in the black for what?

14 straight years.

That's amazing.

Yeah.