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PIVOTAL MOMENTS: PERSONAL HISTORIES OF LABOR IN FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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For my partner.

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Abstract

This project links historical close readings of pivotal figures in the creation of first-year composition (FYC) labor practices to contemporary debates about how to best advocate for and reform contemporary labor conditions, specifically the increasing over-reliance on exploitative adjunct labor and the unique challenges of tiered employment systems. My dissertation investigates Barrett Wendell (1890-1910), Edwin Hopkins (1900-1920), George Wykoff (1940-60), Mina Shaughnessy (1970-1980), and my own teaching experiences (2010-present) through the lens of labor. As we theorize improving the labor conditions surrounding FYC, these conversations must be complemented by microhistories of earlier compositionists dealing with labor issues in FYC. By incorporating historiographical research that offers micro-level analyses of individual case studies, our understandings of historical labor challenges can enrich our vision of current conditions as well as how we develop actionable plans for the future. This project uses feminist rhetorical practices, revisionist historiography, and local/microhistories to achieve this goal.

Chapter 1: Introduction

"If we miss the history, then we miss a critical opportunity to address current concerns about academic labor and the future of tenure."—Annie Mendenhall (26)

History and Labor: A Missing Perspective

When in the modern history of Composition and Rhetoric have labor conditions surrounding the teaching of writing been the most sustainable? How did the current labor conditions for teaching writing in American higher education—conditions like generally small class sizes and the normalization of contingent labor—come into being? What, if any, is the historical connection between teacher workload and student success? How have the labor conditions surrounding the teaching of writing contributed to its "feminized" status? We know the labor conditions surrounding the teaching of writing have changed, but *why* did they change: what arguments or strategies were effective at convincing administrators and departments to lower class sizes or create a multiple course sequence? There is much about the creation of labor conditions of Composition and Rhetoric scholars and teachers that, despite the proliferation of histories of our field, we do not know.

Yet we do have history and we do know a great deal about the development of writing pedagogy in American institutions of higher learning. Because of the work of Composition and Rhetoric historians like Albert Kitzhaber, modern Composition and Rhetoric's history has been broadly sketched. Patricia Donahue notes Kitzhaber's contributions as particularly important. Because Kitzhaber created one of the first, if not the first, modern history of Composition and Rhetoric his history serves as the foundation for subsequent histories, even if those histories seek to trouble or reject parts

of Kitzhaber's claims. Donahue goes so far as to argue that "It is possible to refer to Kitzhaber, as Foucault referred to Freud and Marx, as a 'founder of discursivity.' Like Freud and Marx, Kitzhaber created a discourse; he generated not only a subject but the terms for its future discussion" (226). James Berlin, whose seminal historical texts *Rhetoric and Reality: Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1900-1985* and *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges* helped to make Kitzhaber's work broadly known[1] also contributed to setting up the terms for subsequent histories. Like Kitzhaber, Berlin focused on the creation of the first-year composition course as the beginning of the modern iteration of our discipline's history. For Berlin, the ubiquity of freshman composition justifies its central position in our field: while "periodic assaults from teachers, administrators, and students" may force the course to reimagine itself, it has been a remarkably constant feature of American higher education since the late nineteenth century, making it the perfect barometer for the development of the field which emerged around and through it (Berlin, *Writing* 85). Berlin and Kitzhaber historicize Composition and Rhetoric through pedagogy, examining textbooks and curricular innovations. Each of these features of our discipline's histories are valuable, but they are also incomplete. Notably absent in these histories are detailed discussions of labor. While, for instance, Berlin notes the labor impetus for the Hopkin's Report and the links between pedagogy and the efficiency movements Progressive Era, overall labor is invisible and unarticulated in his work (Berlin, *Rhetoric* 53). Kitzhaber's

[1] Kitzhaber's historical work formed his 1953 dissertation but was not published until 1990.

inclusion of labor is even more haphazard—while labor issues emerge in a few lines, typically at the end of sections, they are quickly brushed over. [2]

Once Kitzhaber and Berlin established the terrain, many other historians in Composition and Rhetoric enriched our understanding of our history by complicating it, often in terms of class consciousness. For instance, Susan Miller argues that "Composition [in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century…] focused on […] correct written vernacular language, as a matter of politeness and good breeding" (S. Miller 55). This view of first-year composition as linked to supporting capitalist economies and values is shared by Sharon Crowley. Crowley's analysis of the evolution of the field goes a step further, relying on understanding the ways in which the first-year composition course evolved to sort students and enforce a set of values compatible with the economic structure of the country: "We inherit an institutional structure that was created in order to serve as a social and intellectual gatekeeper [… one] about the most efficient ways of fitting people to compete aggressively, if obediently, in a capitalist society" (Crowley, *Composition* 235). If this assertion seems strong, consider Miller's claim that "Composition met new social needs, quite accurately. It embodied no theory and no precedents for later twentieth-century versions of it that neoclassical rhetoricians have retheorized. Neither was it consciously set up to practice nineteenth-century faculty psychology" (56). If the composition pedagogies that Kitzhaber and Berlin explain did not match the rhetorical theories of their era,[3] then Crowley and Miller's

[2] A good example of this occurs on page 44, where Kitzhaber notes that teachers of composition at Harvard thought it took a disproportionate amount of time and effort to teach the course, but Kitzhaber then fails to elaborate on what this might mean for their labor conditions more generally.

[3] Miller explains that the composition courses that emerged in the 19th century were not "set up to practice nineteenth-century faculty psychology, at least not in the institution of the course devoted to freshman" (S. Miller 56). While rhetorical theory in the 19th century relied on faculty psychology to explain how writing and reading happened, and while 19th century composition texts expounded and

claims—that the pedagogies developed were instead meeting societal and economic needs—make more sense. Like Berlin, however, Crowley does not explicitly focus on labor, though it sneaks into her history. One way that Crowley considers labor, however indirectly, is in her sensitivity to ways in which different labels for different kinds of work in academia carry different statuses. Because first-year composition has been staffed and associated with "teachers" instead of "researchers," its marginalized status has been unquestioningly supported and maintained for much of our history (Crowley 121-22). If historians like Kitzhaber and Berlin provided the basic framework for historical work in Composition and Rhetoric, historians like Crowley and Miller began to complicate those histories by placing them in more complex historical contexts.

This brief and very incomplete overview of the kinds of insights and heuristics offered by our traditional histories of modern Composition and Rhetoric has focused on two points: first, that our traditional histories provide a valuable and necessary groundwork for understanding the discipline and second, that these histories are incomplete and partial. Miller and Crowley's critiques of the economic and capitalistic rationales for the creation of first-year composition are significant. Just as significant, I argue in this project, are the labor conditions surrounding the creation of first-year composition and the further development of the field in its modern from. Today, labor issues in Composition and Rhetoric, as well as in academia generally, generate significant scholarly work and sustained scholarly conversations. Labor issues within academia are important both because they are crucial to the kind and quality of work scholars and teachers (or "teacher/scholars") can do and because issues of labor in

refined those ideas, actual classroom practices—focused on correct usage—did not emerge from or appear to interact with those ideas.

academia are complex, intellectually stimulating problems with clear real-life consequences for researchers and readers alike. How then, given the power of labor issues within both Composition and Rhetoric and the university system generally in recent decades, are there no histories of Composition and Rhetoric which use labor practices or individuals' experiences of labor as a lens of history? This history begins to fill this gap, looking at the labor conditions of Composition and Rhetoric from its beginnings in American universities in the 19th century to the present as those conditions have been experienced by significant figures in the field.

A Word on Methodology

To engage in this work, I am explicit about my methodologies in ways our histories have not always been done. Indeed, weaknesses in the scope of our foundational histories were for a time obscured by the scant attention to *methodology* in our earliest histories. Borrowing historical practices from other disciplines, many of our earliest historians appear themselves unaware of the ways in which where they collect their data and how they treat and approach it both contributes to and limits what can be learned. Connors, for instance, uses textbooks as a foundational source in his study of pedagogical changes and curricular shifts in his important history *Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory, and Pedagogy.* While Connors spends a few sentences on whether or not textbooks can truly be said to represent pedagogy on the classroom level, by and large he relies on the textbooks and the evidence amassed from them to "speak for themselves." This attitude toward archival and textbook research is not unique to Connors, but it does pointedly downplay some of the assumptions and values

about what constitutes teaching and knowledge that Connors brought to his history. This is not to suggest that Connors's work was not well-researched, significant, or useful. Instead, I want to highlight how failing to theorize carefully and represent fully the methodologies that undergird many of his claims obscures the values and logics central to his historical study. Berlin can be critiqued in a similar way, though an interesting exchange in the introduction of his second book, *Rhetoric and Reality*, helps give readers more insight into his methodologies. Interestingly, this explanation of his methodologies comes not as a necessary precursor to understanding his work but as a response to criticism of his methods in his first book by Connors. Connors complains that Berlin's scholarship is heavily biased toward his own pedagogical commitments. Discussing Connors's critique that his earlier work was biased, Berlin retorts that "[Connors's] assumption here and in much of his own historical research is that it is possible to locate a neutral space, a position from which one can act as an unbiased observer in order to record a transcendental object, the historical thing-in-itself" (Berlin 17). Berlin goes on to explain that pure objectivity is impossible and that instead historians should own and address their biases: "It is thus incumbent upon the historian to make every effort to be aware of the nature of her point of view and its interpretive strategies, and to be candid about them with her reader" (Berlin, *Rhetoric* 17*).* Berlin then acknowledges some of his biases, though a careful reader may discern more. Removed from this exchange by decades, one can see the validity of both positions. Connors's historical work does strive for impossible neutrality that, in trying to mask the biases which make much historical work individually and culturally valuable, is ill-advised. At the same time, Berlin's biases, though owned in this introduction, are stark

enough to detract, at times, from his effectiveness as an historian. Additionally, while he is candid about his biases in the introduction, they are never again referred to, or apparently considered, in the rest of his book. *How* his biases shape his research practices and interpretations of data is not explicitly discussed. To avoid similar blind spots, this project works not only to make its methodologies explicit but also to actively highlight and represent its methodologies *throughout* the project.

My methodology for my historical work is deeply informed by Jacqueline Royster and Gesa Kirsch's description of feminist rhetorical practices. While their definition includes but is not limited to historical work, it provides a theoretical orientation that unites the diverse methodologies I draw on in his project. Royster and Kirsch describe feminist rhetorical practices as demonstrating "the capacity also to propel general knowledge-making processes in the field at large—if not forward—at least to another, better-informed, more inclusive conceptual space" (18). Rather than elaborating on the specific feminist and revisionist methodologies that drive my research here, I instead want to prepare readers for histories that are always making their methodologies explicit. In each chapter, in addition to providing historical context, I provide context about my situatedness as a researcher as well as the methodologies that shape my interactions with my research. The feminist rhetorical practices I employ are often messy, by which I mean that they acknowledge the impossibility of complete and perfect records or reconstructions. By acknowledging, owning, and accounting (as much as possible) for this, historians using feminist rhetorical practices better avoid producing and spreading essentializing narratives: owning and acknowledging the holes in research and making deficiencies explicit is treated as an ethical imperative. This

work, however, can be quite complicated. To honor that complicatedness—and to make my own positionality and motives as clear as possible—I incorporate my methodological theories, choices, and challenges into each chapter. While this move does not erase the weaknesses of any one person's attempt to make meaning from history, I have worked hard to provide the reader with the context necessary to evaluate my claims, and my methods, as they encounter my research and claims.

My research is also purposefully situated around individuals. By focusing on local histories, my intention is to both capture over-arching historical trends and the unique, situated responses of individual people in specific places. Even as my history spans over a century, by focusing on localized actors, I resist the impulse to—too quickly or confidently—make totalizing claims. Gretchen Flesher Moon posits the value in doing local histories as a way to complicate and test the larger narratives in our major histories: "Local histories of composition test our theories about the influence of popular textbooks, innovative teachers, dominant pedagogies, and landmark curricular reforms" (Moon 12). While historical work focused on local subjects need not necessarily use feminist rhetorical practices, it is well-positioned to allow a researcher to search out and try to understand the tensions that larger over-arching narratives may ignore. By zeroing in on an historical figure or place, looking for and considering the myriad pressures shaping their actions, a local history can destabilize and enrich traditional histories. To do this kind of local historical work, however, one must simultaneously adopt other feminist rhetorical practices, such as openness to new understandings and a willingness to understand one's relationship to their research.

Just as local histories build on and test the histories that make up the foundational historical narratives of our field, other feminist rhetorical practices interact with traditional research methods to jumpstart new insights. Lynée Lewis Gaillet explains that "Increasingly, scholars interested in primary investigation are […] revisiting primary and canonical materials with a new set of research questions in mind [as well as…] viewing (and adding to existing) archives in ways that *make* knowledge rather than simply finding what's already known" (Gaillet 36). Each of these moves qualifies as a feminist rhetorical practice. Feminist rhetorical practices do not suggest that archival materials are not valuable, important, and necessary research tools. But in seeking to expand how, who, and what counts as history, historians using feminist rhetorical practices return to the archives with new questions, new perspectives, and new tools. Additionally, the goal of such research is not simply to reinforce the histories that have functioned as the foundation of our field, but to enrich those histories with new insights. Such work may well take a researcher beyond traditional archives, but archival work is still an important source of information.

In this project, I employ the strategies discussed above, as well as methodologies examined in more depth in my chapters, both as a way to access new insights *and* as a way to treat my research subjects and my (dis)connections to them ethically. The research in this project may seem, at first glance, ill-suited to this connection. I have chosen subjects who have left traditional archival traces and who are already known, in some capacity, to the discipline. However, by employing feminist rhetorical practices, I break beyond the confines of what Donahue calls the "discourse" founded by our first histories. Those histories are important, but as a lens that shapes what and how we see,

they are also limiting. By refusing to accept common understandings of how the discipline came to be, I use the tools created for uncovering lost and minimized histories in our field to newly see the history we already have, this time through the lenses of local histories and labor.

Pivotal Moments, Important Figures

This project is grounded in local histories of individuals, but those individuals were chosen for specific reasons. First, each of these individuals worked during what I have termed "pivotal" moments in the history of Composition and Rhetoric. I also chose individuals who were widely published and influential during their tenure, either in terms of their pedagogical or institutional recommendations for improving Composition and Rhetoric instruction. While this choice does limit my research subjects to better known individuals at major universities, it also allows me to compare their ideal conditions/pedagogies with the realities of their own labor conditions. Finally, I chose subjects for which there are official archival records at their universities. This last concern reflects my own labor conditions and the material restraints on my research. To better understand my rationale for my choices, I will elaborate on each of the conditions I mention above.

"Pivotal moments," in this research project, reflect moments in the evolution of the discipline which profoundly affected the development of the field. While each of the moments I identify is distinct, they share some characteristics: these moments usually happen during surges in enrollment and are accompanied by scholarly debates about new approaches to teaching or thinking about the field. I identified four such

moments: 1890-1910, when teachers of "traditional" rhetoric courses began to create pedagogies to teach writing instead of rhetoric and recitation; 1910-1930, when teachers of first-year composition attempted to reconcile new pedagogies for teaching writing with the material conditions of lecture-sized courses and swelling enrollments; 1940-1960, when attempts were made to professionalize the teaching of writing into its own distinct discipline as opposed to a service component of English departments; and 1970-1980, when teachers of writing were tasked with creating pedagogies for "basic writers" as a result of open enrollment policies.

In choosing the individuals for my local histories, I first considered the time frame of my inquiry. Because part of my interest in these pivotal moments are the lingering effects they have on the field today, I am particularly interested in individuals who were active in the scholarly conversation surrounding the discipline. For this reason, I sought research subjects who published and were considered active and significant members of the field during their tenure. Due to the nature of my project, I also looked for research subjects who left archival traces. While feminist rhetorical practices provide important strategies for overcoming the lack of traditional archival sources, given the nature of my interests, I wanted to work with individuals who left official archival sources because this signals a particular level of institutional respect which bodes well for my specific interests. Finally, I looked for individuals whose scholarly output reflected an abiding interest in pedagogy (either in advocating new pedagogies or how to best employ favored pedagogies) or the status of the discipline (either the professionalization of the discipline or the materials conditions surrounding/limiting the discipline). Each of my research subjects contributed

significantly to the field; my research will look at those contributions alongside their individual labor conditions and their experiences of those conditions. At times, these conditions clearly spurred their work. At other times, however, their labor conditions complicated or contradicted their scholarly stances.

Given my commitment to researching and representing the material and labor constraints of my research subjects, it is only fair that I also acknowledge the material constraints that shaped this project. Because traveling to archives is both expensive and time consuming, I split my research subjects into two groups: one group (Barrett Wendell and Mina Shaughnessy) required funding and time off to visit, the other group (Edwin Hopkins and George Wykoff) were close enough to my current location and my family home that I could visit the archives at minimal cost and as part of other travel plans. Additionally, while I utilized feminist rhetorical practices throughout this project, I was limited by material considerations: looking beyond the archives takes time, as well funding for investigating additional resources, and strategic contemplations takes time and space. Though I am committed to such research tools and employ them as best I can, when money runs out or when deadlines loom, I make strategic choices. To make transparent my connections, struggles, and challenges with this research, I am committed to owning and articulating my experiences throughout this project.

The next chapter, on Barrett Wendell (circa 1890-1910), troubles common assessments of his teaching and contribution to the discipline by considering his labor conditions and argues that curriculum development must take labor explicitly into account. The third chapter reexamines the work of Edwin Hopkins (circa 1900-1920),

who devoted much of his professional life to reforming labor conditions in FYC and argues that understanding the rhetorical strategies he used to advocate for writing teachers can invigorate contemporary strategies for reforming FYC labor conditions. The fourth chapter investigates George Wykoff (circa 1940-1960), a crucial figure in the professionalization of teaching writing and the evolution of Composition and Rhetoric as a discipline, focusing on his labor conditions and the professional effects of his own scholarship on teaching writing. Here I argue that while professionalization has been largely beneficial to our field, the word itself masks labor and has contributed to rise of tiered labor structures. The fifth chapter, on Mina Shaughnessy (circa 1970-1980), explores labor in the open enrollment era and the "feminization" of the field. In this chapter I argue that "feminized" workspaces are often more humane, frequently at the cost women's physical and mental health. I conclude by sketching my own labor experiences (circa 2010-present) as they are representative of current labor crises in FYC and higher education more generally, elaborating on the connections between contemporary labor issues and the historical microhistories in this dissertation. For example, Barrett Wendell designed a curriculum that applied rhetorical knowledge to English composition: I consider how better understanding his experience of unstainable labor conditions offers today's composition instructors a blueprint for approaching curricular reform with labor in mind. My work demonstrates that as we design responses to labor crises in FYC, we must return to the history of FYC in the United States. While many have historicized the field (Berlin; Connors; Crowley), none use labor as their *primary* lens, even as labor issues in higher education are increasingly taken up in relation to FYC (Bousquet; Carter; Schell; Scott). By linking my calls for

action to historical case studies, I hope to enrich and support contemporary efforts to productively reimagine FYC labor conditions. Ultimately, I make suggestions about crafting curriculum, advocating effectively for reform of FYC labor conditions, balancing professionalization in a field that simultaneously values and devalues teaching, serving under-prepared student populations, and productively embracing the "feminized" identity of the field. In these ways, my historical research on specific individuals serves as a springboard for tackling labor issues today.

Chapter 2: Remapping Barrett Wendell: Labor as Lens

"Here, I think, is the chief thing to keep in mind: just as the sentence is a group of words, the paragraph is a group of sentences, and the whole a group of paragraphs. We should take care that each group has, for our purpose, a unity of its own; and that the unity of each larger group is of a kind that may properly be resolved into the smaller unities of which it is composed." – Barrett Wendell (*English Composition* 32)

Current Understandings of Barrett Wendell

Barrett Wendell, a teacher at Harvard from 1888-1917,[4] is well-known to historians of composition and rhetoric. He is primarily identified with the development of current-traditional writing pedagogy, which emerged as the traditional rhetoric course, focusing on Greek and Latin, was tasked with teaching students to compose in English (Donahue 232). The quote that opens this chapter, from Wendell's famous 1891 textbook *English Composition*, encapsulates certain core values of current-traditional rhetoric, such as breaking writing into hierarchical parts that can be predictably arranged. While Wendell is best known for his contributions to the development and popularity of current-traditional pedagogies, more recently, scholars like Sue Carter Simmons and Joanne Campbell have looked to the archives at Radcliffe College, the sister institution to the, at the time, male-only Harvard, to investigate how Wendell's sexist attitudes affected his teaching of women. Campbell argues that "English A [and teachers like Wendell] not only violated what [Radcliffe student's] thought the purpose of college education was—to develop the ability to learn what you thought and to express your ideas—but the pedagogical practices violated these women's understanding of how human beings should be treated" (474). Wendell has a clearly

[4] Technically Wendell began teaching at Harvard and Radcliffe in 1882 but he became a full-time member of the English department at Harvard in 1888.

defined legacy in our field: he helped create the current-traditional pedagogies the field is still working hard to escape and he harmed female students with his deeply ingrained sexist values. These understandings of Wendell, however, do not take his labor conditions into account. How did his class sizes constrain his pedagogy? Were his sexist beliefs confirmed or challenged by his supplemental employment at Radcliffe? In this chapter, I trouble and enrich interpretations of Wendell that rely on his textbook and sexist attitudes, by incorporating his labor conditions and how they both supported and constrained his work as a teacher and as a pedagogue.

Wendell's legacy is more complicated than our histories typically depict and labor is an under-utilized lens for understanding his contributions to the field and his value to contemporary compositionists. Consider, for example, the following comment left by Wendell on the coursework of Radcliffe student Annie Ware Windsor Allen:

> A simple and good-humored bit of narrative. Your sentiment does not [indecipherable] into sentimentality. As a whole, this essay is rather rambling; numerous characters are introduced who have nothing to do with what plot you have; and so on. But this is not exactly a fault in a piece of writing like this, where we care not for rigid unity. (Wendell, "Annie").

This comment does not bespeak an obsession with form and mechanical correctness which the quote in the epigraph might lead one to expect from Wendell; there is also no obvious gender bias in this assessment of Allen's writing. Something more complicated is happening here. Even without using labor as a lens to "re-see" Wendell's legacy, contradictions between our commonplace understandings of Wendell are captured in comments like this one. Such comments raise important questions, however, which looking at Wendell's labor conditions can help answer. Why were only the most current-traditional parts of Wendell's pedagogy well-known and widely adopted? Why

would an intellectual dismissive of women in academia or the public sphere work at a women's college? By investigating Wendell's labor conditions, I begin to answer these questions. To do so, I take up David Gold's call to move beyond recovering and complicating fractured pasts to focus on expanding our understanding of the past and contextualizing that past in relation to our present. Gold cautions that "moving beyond recovery also means that we can also no longer afford simple narratives of heroes and villains. It is not enough to simply to point to the past for evidence of practices that align with our own constructions of what is progressive, what is reductive; rather, we must examine how historical actors responded to their own contemporary exigencies, both micro and macro" (24). Wendell has been reduced to a narrow understanding of his role in creating a pedagogy to teach writing that focuses on his current-traditional attitudes and sexism, ignoring elements of his teaching and writing theories that complicate this view. Using a labor perspective, I revisit Wendell, his supplemental work as a composition instructor at Radcliffe College, and his legacy in terms of curricular development, especially current-traditional pedagogies. In the following pages, I use Wendell as a case study for the value of using labor to "remap" our current understanding of a significant historical figure in the field. To do this, I examine his personal labor conditions as well as the labor legacy of his pedagogies. While Wendell has taken much criticism for his current-traditional and sexist teaching practices, more fully contextualizing these parts of his teaching in relation to the labor conditions in which he worked usefully complicates our understanding of his legacy.

Understanding our discipline's labor history is crucial to understanding ourselves as well as the complexities and stakes of our current work. Looking at

Wendell's "contemporary exigencies," in terms of labor conditions and the gendered evaluation Radcliffe students, can speak across time to some of the exigencies we face as composition instructors today, even suggesting best practices or needed reforms. Wendell taught in a pivotal pedagogical moment, one defined by the addition of English composition to the rhetoric course. Such pivotal moments are by no means relegated to the past. Today, we are teaching in a similar pivotal pedagogical moment, a moment in which English composition courses are increasingly including multimodal compositions. In order to teach and grade multimodal compositions, composition instructors need training, both technological and pedagogical, and they need access to programs and equipment. Who pays for the equipment and programs? Is keeping up on training the instructor's responsibility or the institution's? How long does it take to grade multimodal compositions in relation to traditional essays? These are questions of labor that need to be answered, especially as multimodal pedagogies and compositions become more and more popular. As such, a better understanding of Wendell and his legacy offers us insights into why it is necessary to advocate for our labor needs as our pedagogies evolve and how ignoring labor needs can exacerbate teacher bias.

In this chapter, I begin by explaining the current-traditional rhetoric that Wendell contributed to as well as the unique position of Radcliffe College and its relation to Harvard, primarily by looking at the labor conditions surrounding these parts of Wendell's world. This context established, I examine Barrett Wendell's own awareness and articulation of his value for women and the division of his workload and I investigate Wendell's pedagogy in practice, complicating these issues. I use archival records, Wendell's textbook, and other important pedagogic theories of the era to

analyze and discuss Wendell and others' attempts to teach a new subject as well as the labor conditions surrounding their efforts. I also discuss the implementation of student conferences and other pedagogical differences that manifest in the, theoretically, identical English courses taught at Harvard and Radcliffe, paying special attention to their labor and gender implications. Ultimately, I argue that whenever teachers are overburdened their work necessarily suffers and this diminished pedagogical effectiveness falls disproportionately on students about whom the teacher has negative bias, creating and reinforcing space for instructors to limit student possibilities based on that bias. From this vantage point, instructors may (un)consciously work to keep students in their "place." Harvard and Radcliffe, sharing curriculum and faculty, are prime historical sources because of many factors—including documented extreme working conditions, negative attitudes about women's scholarly abilities, and their detailed records surrounding the redefinition of the rhetoric course to include English composition—but these issues, though taking different shapes, continue to the affect the field today. I end by articulating the danger, especially to students, of over-worked teachers as well as by recommending principles for contemporary multimodal curriculum development that help avoid reproducing the disastrous labor conditions brought on by adopting a new pedagogy without considering the labor required to enact it.

A Pivotal Pedagogical Moment: Developing a Curriculum to Teach English Composition

The late nineteenth-century is credited with the rise of current-traditional pedagogy, known for its focus on mechanical correctness and formulaic constructions. The traditional rhetoric course, which focused on oral recitations and Latin and Greek grammar, was no longer effectively preparing students for their future careers in an increasingly industrial economy. In 1887 John Franklin Genung explained that rhetoric, as it had traditionally been taught in American colleges, was not giving students useful knowledge or skills and this was causing the class to lose some of the influence it had formerly enjoyed.[5] Genung sees several reasons for rhetoric's slipping ability to equip students with useful skills. First, he argues that the rhetoric course focuses too much on Latin and Greek, leaving students unprepared to write and speak in their native tongue (Genung 6). This leads to students who are poor writers and speakers in English; the knowledge focused on in the course was not the knowledge students most needed. To counteract this, he argues that rhetoric must begin to teach primarily English and English grammar. Furthermore, the class should teach clear, direct "Saxon" prose instead of ornate, balanced, complicated sentences and structures. He believes that "Rhetoric had become mainly theory, philosophizing, speculation; it had gone on discriminating figures of speech with long Greek names and vaporing about the Nature of the Nervous style, until there was very little juice left in it" (10). Thus, one of the root causes of the sense that rhetoric was losing utility was tied to its use of Latin and

[5] Connors later argues the decline of prestige associated with rhetoric had more to do with emerging labor conditions, exacerbated by adding writing instruction to lecture sized courses, than with the changing needs of students—though he does not discount the role of the changing industrial landscape entirely (*Overwork* 111*).*

Greek and its fondness for a complex, complicated rhetorical style that did not match the practical demands of the nineteenth century.

In addition to the pressure to focus on direct, clear English, Genung also explores the "scope" of rhetoric, which he believes must be extended from oratory to written composition. After the Civil War, as more students entered American colleges and the industrial revolution spread, the kind of information the typical college student needed changed. At the same time there was an explosion in enrollment. John Heyda argues that:

> Contemporary historians of composition have made much of the destabilizing surge in enrollments in the post-World War II era, but these increases are nothing in comparison to those of the 1870-1940 period. Consider that, in 1870, 52,000 students were enrolled in U.S. institutions of higher education; a decade later, the figure had risen to 116,000, a stunning 131 percent increase in ten years' time. The decade of the 1880s saw its own 35 percent increase, to the 1890s a 52 percent boost, the new century's first decade a 49 percent jump, and in the years 1910-1920 a 68 percent increase. (251)

These large, sustained jumps in enrollment beginning in 1870 are another symptom of the changing college landscape. Genung notes that students began coming to colleges for new skills demanded by the increasingly industrial economy of the United States. These spikes in enrollment are confirmation of Genung's argument that rhetoric courses needed to change because they confirm that new kinds of students, with different educational backgrounds and new professional ambitions, were attending college. Thus, Genung argues that the rhetoric class needed to respond to new student needs (11). While previously most students went into ministry or law, where focusing on oration prepared students for their rhetorical duties, "the vast increase of popular and periodical literature has greatly multiplied the forms of literary production" (11). He argues that

given the diverse goals of and future prospects for college students, they ought to be taught to compose the "editorial paragraph; the reporter's column; the story, short or continued; the essay on social, political, or scientific topics" as well as oration (11-12). I provide this context about the changing educational and economic forces at the end of the nineteenth century, and how the field of rhetoric began to respond, in order to illustrate the pressures on the rhetoric course to accommodate a changing world: English was identified as a necessary skill and writing instruction was elevated to a primary status within the rhetoric classroom. The eventual offshoot of such theorizing was the nearly ubiquitous Freshman Composition course. Harvard, where Wendell taught, was a particularly significant location in the creation of composition courses. Under the tenure of college president Charles Eliot, from 1869 to 1909, Harvard undertook a number of influential reforms at the end of the nineteenth century. Chief among these innovations were the creation of the elective system, which eventually left only one course that was required for all students: the newly-created composition course (Garbus 78; Kitzhaber 15). Harvard's innovations were popular and soon spread to the majority of colleges in the United States. Thus, as Eileen Schell explains, today Harvard is "seen as the birthplace of the Freshman English course" (21). Because of Wendell's position at Harvard, he was one of the first nationally recognized teachers of composition and a direct model for many of the composition courses sprouting up at other institutions.

The style of composition instruction at Harvard came to be known as current-traditional pedagogy. Crowley explains that:

> Current-traditional theory […] painted listeners and readers as curiously docile. They were never hostile or inattentive—they were just interested.

> Writers needed only to arrange their discourse, then, in a fashion that would ease the reading process—that would, in fact, reflect the way any reasonable person might have written it, according to the natural dictates of the rational mind (Crowley, *Methodical* 122).

Writing was seen as a mechanical, bottom-up affair where students were taught to spell words, string words into grammatically sentences, organize groups of sentences around a single idea per paragraph, and finally to link paragraphs into whole compositions.[6] Wendell is one of many credited for helping to formalize and spread current-traditional approaches to writing. Adams Sherman Hill, Genung, and Wendell all had famous and influential textbooks predicated on current-traditional understandings of language (Berlin, *Writing* 58*)*. Connors explains that these figures were especially influential because of the popularity of their textbooks early in the creation of the composition course. At this time, writing had never been taught in American colleges and, as more and more composition courses sprouted up across the country, textbooks by well-known early adopters of composition courses were used to conceptualize and build courses across the United States (Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric* 99).

As Genung's work demonstrates, Wendell was not the only influential educator who advocated current-traditional approaches. In fact, unlike many of his contemporary current-traditionalists, "Barrett Wendell dealt not at all with the mechanics in *English Composition*" (Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric* 131). One of Wendell's most important contributions to current-traditional pedagogy was the idea that all paragraphs should be unified around a single idea, expressed clearly in the topic sentence (Wendell, *English* 116; 128). Donahue explains that even foundational historians like Kitzhaber note that

[6] This bottom-up approach can be seen in the organization of Wendell's textbook, *English Composition.* The first four chapter are "Words," "Sentences," "Paragraphs," and "Whole Compositions" (Wendell, *English* viii-ix).

Wendell's focus on the paragraph made him a more complex rhetorical thinker than many of his contemporaries: "While Kitzhaber is more critical of Hill (for the role he played in 'rhetorics debilitation') than he is of Wendell, because Wendell was apparently interested in larger units of rhetoric like the paragraph, he is nonetheless troubled by Wendell's effort to render the subject of rhetoric/composition teachable through its reduction to a trivium consisting of 'unity, coherence, and mass'" (Donahue 232). Wendell's other major contribution to current-traditional pedagogy was his argument that, in order for students to improve, they must write every day and receive feedback on all of their writing from their teacher. To facilitate this, Wendell assigned "daily themes," short writing assignments of 100 to 150 words, six days a week and longer 500 word compositions, called fortnightly themes, every two weeks. Kitzhaber explains further:

> Perhaps the most interesting single development to come out of [the emphasis on actual writing] practice was the 'daily theme,' a device invented by Barrett Wendell in 1884 […] Wendell added that unless the teacher exercised some care, the writing of daily themes might do no more than strengthen bad habits already existing in the student. He also admitted the routine of writing of this sort would not in itself lead to 'polish and technical correctness'; he regarded daily themes as standing in the same relation to finished compositions as preliminary sketches stand to finished paintings. (Kitzhaber 210-11)

The idea that students must write often and receive steady feedback from their teachers caught on immediately. Wendell's own reputation as a writer and scholar, his association with Harvard, and "his popular textbook, *English Composition* (1891), did much to spread the notion among some early teachers of English that the best approach to composition instruction was to elicit bits of personal writing—primarily description

and narration—from students" (Crowley, *Composition* 93). For these reasons, Wendell has become a popular symbol of current-traditional pedagogies.

One cannot overstate the difference these new pedagogies made in the classroom. While oral recitation did not change dramatically and was still mostly appropriate to the large lecture format, writing instruction, as it was idealized at this time, made the large lecture classes nightmarish to the instructor (Connors, "Overwork" 110). Edwin Hopkins,[7] investigating the labor conditions connected to these curricular changes, classified this change as a move to "laboratory work," by which he meant that students were to be actively and continuously engaged in *producing* written work for the instructor to comment on.[8] While critiquing a student's oral presentation could be done in the class, and thus the amount of response a teacher could expect to give must be limited to class hours, written work could follow the teacher home. Individual comments on student writing took more time to provide. According to Connors, "The rise of 'laboratory work' in composition, while pedagogically productive, meant that a completely different set of demands were being placed on teachers" ("Overwork" 110). Good feedback was understood to be personalized to each individual student and require an individual connection with each student and his or her writing (Connors, "Overwork" 110). As personalization became a larger value, because of the shift to writing and the opportunity this gave teachers to engage with individual student work,

[7] Hopkins' research collects data from the years 1909-1915, by which time composition classes and current-traditional pedagogy had spread to most colleges in America. We will revisit Hopkins in more depth in the next chapter.

[8] After 1870, three styles of teaching were considered common: the laboratory, the lecture, and the seminar. According to Connors, "The laboratory was conceived as a specialized scientific instructional form" (*Composition-Rhetoric* 140). When Hopkins argues that composition courses were laboratory classes, he is arguing they are not (or should not be) lecture classes because of the one-on-one instruction that ought to happen through feedback. This kind of personalized feedback and one-on-one attention is seen as more analogous to the "instructional form" of laboratory courses.

the demands on a teacher's time continued to grow. In addition to theme reading, "The expectation around the turn of the century was that each teacher would provide 6-8 hours of personal conferences to students for each two hours of class time" (Connors, "Overwork" 113). While 6-8 office hours a week per course made sense for the lecture format, in which personalized attention was very limited, it became an unreasonable extra burden when individualized responses to student writing became the norm.

These shifts in pedagogy were not arbitrary or transient. Because the role that rhetoric played in society was seen as shifting, rhetoric teachers undertook the task of also teaching composition. Over time, the traditional elements of the rhetoric course, at least the recitations, disappeared almost completely. Composition teachers like Genung and Wendell were engaged, creative, and attempting to provide their students with rhetorical skills that would match the demands they would encounter as citizens and workers. And while we may not agree with this pedagogy today, it is important to remember they were attempting to solve *new* pedagogical demands which had no model and no research for them to build from (indeed, at this time no one realized that teaching writing was a complicated enough process to require research). The real problem was put succinctly by Hopkins in 1912:

> A single statement will explain the fundamental trouble. Not very many years ago, when effort was made to apply the principle that students should learn to write by writing, English composition, previously known as rhetoric, became ostensibly a laboratory subject, *but without any material addition to the personnel of its teaching force; there was merely a gratuitous increase in the labor of teachers who were already doing full duty*. [emphasis added] ("Can Good Composition" 2)

These new ideal pedagogies, designed to meet new expectations for the rhetoric course, failed to consider the labor consequences for teachers and, ultimately, students.

There were widespread and long-term ramifications of adopting a new pedagogy without creating material conditions to support it. In late nineteenth and early twentieth century composition classrooms, the root problem was the way that the new pedagogies, such as Genung's theories and Wendell's daily themes, were imagined as easily transplanted into the existing labor and classroom settings. For instance, while Genung elaborates on the material conditions he inhabits, he does not consider whether or not they could, or should, be reimagined. For instance, he explains, "I speak for conditions as they essentially exist at Amherst College: for classes of from seventy to one hundred; and for a course of at least three terms of class-room work, besides the individual training in writing and revising essays" (21). I appreciate that Genung locates his suggestions in a material context, but I am interested in the ways in which programs applying his theories selected only some aspects of his material conditions to reproduce. For instance, the three semester course did not materialize on other campuses and soon gave way to a single semester of Freshman Composition. Yet, the class size he mentions *does* materialize (or rather, is not challenged). This example shows that the material forms for this pedagogy *did* undergo some changes and that discussions must have been happening on college campuses across the country. Yet, Genung is also apparently unconscious of the ways that his innovations in pedagogy might necessitate new conditions or, at least, he does not think to ask for or theorize about them. To be fair, he also notes the tension in his ideals, but he seems to gloss over it. He writes that in classes of seventy to one hundred, it is difficult that "each man's work shall fall under the eye of instructor" but then reminds the teacher of composition "not to spare himself" and immediately describes how careful and thoughtful, both in course planning and

responding to student writing, the teacher must be (Genung 25). These are his final words on the subject: "The teacher must necessarily have much routine work in looking over and criticizing the numerous productions of his class; but he should not let it become a drudgery, —above all he should not reveal that it is a drudgery" (Genung 32). No doubt this is sound advice, but it is also advice which seems to admit its own impossibility. I don't mean to be unfairly critical of Genung, but I do want to highlight the ways that even though he appeared aware of the conflict between the pedagogy he recommends and the labor constraints of large classes, he shied away from addressing it directly. This is a concrete place where, in our current context, we have an opportunity to respond differently.

Indeed, as the pedagogy created by people like Genung and Wendell moved across the United States, the most mechanical and rhetorically barren parts of the curriculum became, in many cases, the entire curriculum (Connors *Composition-Rhetoric* 140). Berlin has theorized this as a response, in part, to the sheer volume of work to be graded, believing that focusing beyond surface level errors was often more than overworked teachers could manage (*Writing* 74). While this may account for some of the values of current-traditional rhetoric, this does not appear to be a foolproof explanation. For instance, Simmons, examining archival records, notes that while many instructor's comments are superficial, Wendell's are quite detailed: "Graded papers in the archives sometimes contain only superficial marks and frequently contain lengthy discursive responses from the instructors; the practice appears to vary according to instructor, with Wendell writing the most lengthy and substantive comments on the themes" ("Barrett" 334). Curiously, Wendell is also one professor about whom the

excessive workload is most clearly documented.[9] Despite this fact, however, there is virtually no complaint about his labor conditions or calls to address his class sizes or the number of these he was expected to grade in the archives, though his personal correspondence survives in no less than three Harvard Libraries. While the other subjects in this project were aware of and vocal about the extremes of their labor conditions, Wendell seems to have accepted his without question. As I dive more fully into the archival record, it will be important to keep in mind Wendell's working conditions and the amount of theme reading he was required to do.

Wendell's Pedagogy: Contextualizing Curriculum

While the preceding section contextualizes Wendell's approaches to and innovations in teaching writing, it is also necessary to look at his individual classroom and how he put his ideas into practice; it is here that his complex thinking about writing and teaching are evident. Wendell most frequently taught two courses: English A and English 12. As discussed previously, Wendell is typically associated with the current-traditional models of composition instruction that have largely fallen out of favor today, but Simmons usefully complicates this perception of Wendell in "Barrett Wendell's Pedagogy at Harvard." In this essay, Simmons argues that Wendell, when in control of the curriculum, favored many process-oriented teaching strategies that belie a conception of him as a pure current-traditionalist: "Wendell developed a pedagogy that

[9] While individual composition courses at Harvard initially ranged from 500 students (for English A, the required course) to 150 students (for English 12, a composition elective), Wendell was personally responsible for responding to 40 to 60 students a section (Simmons, "Barrett" 329). Other students were responded to by theme graders (Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric* 191). Given the amount of writing Wendell assigned, he received at least 240 themes per week, for *one* section of English A.

aimed to counter the underlying assumption of many writing courses and teachers during his time—that students weren't writers at all—by modeling a writer's identity for students, using techniques such as student-chosen writing topics, regular conferences, frequent informal writings, and in-class workshops" ("Barrett" 327). This troubles some foundational views of Wendell, such as Berlin's contention that Wendell was obsessed with error and efficiency:

> Wendell encouraged the daily theme, a journal entry of 100 words or so on a topic drawn from personal observation. The method encouraged writing and saved the student and teacher time (time, after all, is money) in preparing for class. He even encouraged student editorial groups, charging them with the task of seeking out errors in superficial correctness, once again introducing efficiency. Since classes continued to be large, correction symbols were introduced, an effective way for managing large numbers of essays more quickly. (*Writing* 74)

In these lines, Berlin interprets both the daily theme and Wendell's commenting style as efficient and focused on hunting out and correcting errors. However, Berlin seems to miss the possible significance of student editorial groups as a move toward sensitivity to the writing process. He also doesn't address the fact that many of Wendell's comments are quite substantive, focusing on issues beyond style and mechanical correctness. Let us consider another comment Wendell left to Radcliffe student Annie Ware Windsor Allen:

> Good. Your characters are admirably true to life. What they think and say is so true, indeed, that I find myself fancying them actual people. There is so much there is admirable here that I forget to think about faults in style, which, for the most, are not included. The greatest trouble is the frequency of the [indecipherable]. (Wendell, "Annie")

Here, for all Wendell's faith in categorizing ideas and focusing on style, his actual response to a student is more nuanced. He recognizes that something about the liveliness and insightfulness of the writing nullifies faults in style as outlined in his

textbook. Yet in our histories, Wendell is read as mechanizing writing in a totalitarian way: "Barrett Wendell's 'Note for Teachers' at the beginning of *English Composition* makes it clear that for him […] composition is a mechanical skill to be built up piece by piece, from the smallest pieces to the largest" (Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric* 84). What Connors doesn't discuss, at least not here, is what we know about Wendell's classroom activities and how this may challenge a purely mechanistic view of his pedagogy. I do not mean to dispute Berlin or Connors' useful interpretations of his textbook or some of his classroom exercises. But I do want to join Simmons in troubling an interpretation that takes *only* those parts of his pedagogy into consideration.

Indeed, Wendell's pedagogy can be misinterpreted by relying too heavily on his English A class. Berlin explains that "Harvard made the composition class the sole course required of all students in an otherwise elective curriculum. The teaching of writing was, as always, a cost-inefficient system when compared with other undergraduate courses" (*Writing* 60). This meant, then, that Harvard's administration, even while clearly seeing the course as foundational, worked to make the course as cost-efficient as possible. Simmons points out that Wendell had little control over the class size or other curricular aspects of this class. English A was a large lecture course, typically with about 500 students, in which students produced a great detail of writing. Logistically, "Wendell or another junior professor delivered the lectures, and the graduate assistants or other part-time teachers met the students in conference and graded most of their papers" (Simmons, "Barrett" 329). The curriculum and expectations had to be generalized enough that, even though "Wendell read the work of and met personally

a fraction of the English A students to whom he lectured," there was continuity between the grading of several different instructors (Simmons, "Barrett" 330). While Wendell undoubtedly valued the daily theme assignments and mechanical correctness, many of the institutional pressures concerning class size and the distribution of teaching responsibilities that helped to shape English A into a form thoroughly amenable to current-traditional conceptions of rhetoric were beyond his control.

English 12, which was not a required course, allowed Wendell much more freedom in designing the curriculum. In the setup of this course another view of Wendell as an educator surfaces. Simmons frames him as "a teacher who worked hard to make writing meaningful to his students, despite institutional constraints that shaped what he could do and could not do" ("Barrett" 328). Not only did Wendell limit lectures to one class period a week (Mondays), class time on Fridays was devoted to work on student writing (Simmons, "Barrett" 332). This suggests that Wendell valued the writing process enough to consistently devote class time to issues of process, though perhaps not quite in the ways we may do so now. In fact, on Wednesdays, class time was used to personally illustrate the writing process: "Rather than reading a prepared lecture, Wendell followed his own train of thought, modeling aloud the process of composing for his students to watch" (Simmons, "Barrett" 333). Also essential to his pedagogy were conferences with students: "To maintain some forum for meaningful student-teacher interaction, Wendell, along with the other writing teachers, believed individual conferences were a central component of writing instruction and willingly invested the time necessary to conduct them" (Simmons, "Barrett" 340). These elements of his teaching, especially when the shape of the class was entirely under his

own control, paint a picture of Wendell as engaged with the processes by which students become better writers and as looking for multiple places in this process to interact with them. This does not, however, mean his pedagogy was unproblematic. And it is worth reiterating that as Wendell's pedagogy spread across most of the United States, these less mechanistic and more complex elements of his pedagogy were not widely developed or adopted while his rigid rules about topic sentences and assigning daily themes were.

Harvard, Radcliffe: Institutional Contexts

In addition to teaching at Harvard, early in his career Wendell also taught at Radcliffe College. The creation of Radcliffe was due in large part to the efforts of Arthur Gilman, who wanted an equivalent to Harvard for his daughter. Harvard allowed the formation of "The Annex," which eventually became Radcliffe College (Simmons, "An Absurdly" 266-67). Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, in her book *Alma Mater*, which describes women's educational opportunities at the end of the nineteenth century, explains that "Gilman planned to gather qualified women in Cambridge and arrange for Harvard faculty to offer them the courses they taught to men at Harvard College" (Horowitz 95). As a result, Harvard and Radcliffe students took the same classes, taught by the same instructors (at least in the early years). However, not only were the student populations markedly different, the attitudes of Harvard faculty about those students were different as well. Horowitz is blunt about the goals of Radcliffe's organizers: "Annex founders had no wish to offer students anything beyond the intellectual element of the college experience. They were thinking of their own kind and attempting to open

to the polite daughters of literary families the full taste of Boston culture" (102). In other words, Radcliffe founders and early faculty were often not open to the idea of Radcliffe students as true intellectuals. In this unique environment, in which nearly identical classes were offered to different students, the archives at Harvard and at Radcliffe have preserved student texts, commented on by English faculty. In reading these texts we can see how teacher comments are affected by their labor conditions and biases as well as how those biases are interpreted by students. While Horowitz does important work explaining and documenting Radcliffe's early years, her goal is to represent and contextualize the beginning of higher education for women in the United States. As such, she does not focus on the unique inter-play between Harvard and Radcliffe so much as she places Radcliffe in relation to other institutions of higher learning open to women. In this section I extend her work on the early years of Radcliffe, in light of my particular concerns about its English curriculum and that curriculum's effect on students.

In order to best understand the student texts preserved in the archives, a fuller context is necessary. At this time the debate surrounding the higher education of women, an issue Harvard English instructors were aware of and vocal about, was in full swing. Harvard, which had recently abolished all general education excepting freshman English, believed that speaking and writing well were crucial to a liberal education (Berlin, *Writing* 60). Amy Zenger, writing about Harvard's composition program in terms of creating a racial consciousness, usefully summarizes the goals of the English department at Harvard (which, due to the unique arrangement between the schools, was also the English department for Radcliffe) as including knowledge about the history of

English, familiarity with great literature in English, and basic proficiency in English composition (334). She clarifies, however, that "Of these three goals, the study of composition was considered to be the most essential for the 'man who wishes to know […] about the language he is going to use all his life'" (Zenger 334). As the pronouns in the last line make clear, many of Harvard's English faculty saw college level writing as a distinctly male arena. Vickie Ricks elaborates on the types of sexist attitudes prevalent at Harvard. She presents as evidence of this the views of Edward Clarke, a doctor and author connected to Harvard: "According to Clarke, a Harvard overseer, women had fallen behind men in intellectual development because of their mothering role in the evolutionary process; thus, they could not mentally or physically tolerate men's educational environment" (Ricks 62). One response to this kind of sexism was to advocate separate education, entirely, for women. Harvard clearly falls into this camp, creating a separate sister institution and vigorously suppressing attempts at co-education on Harvard's main campus.

This was not, however, an issue of separate but equal. Susan Kates investigates the rhetorical theories of Mary Augusta Jordan, professor of rhetoric at Smith College, who reacted to the pervasive sexism in many colleges not by calling for coeducation but by advocating for separate women's education. Jordan, explaining the kind of sexist bias women on nineteenth-century college campuses faced, writes:

> [T]here is an almost hopeless prejudice against a woman's feelings; they are looked upon as a barrier between her and real success; they are popularly believed to be without rhyme or reason; it is thought to be dangerous to meddle with them, and peculiarly undesirable that a woman should investigate them herself. (qtd in Kates 506-07)

Jordan's complaints, that women's feelings were ignored or devalued by male instructors, are more or less supported by the espoused views of many like Clarke. For Jordan, the solution was not to co-mingle men and women, to but to develop a separate education that catered to the needs and experiences of women. Jordan's ideal women's college, however, was not to be found in Radcliffe. Even though Radcliffe was a women's only college, the curriculum was developed and taught by men, many of whom held deeply prejudicial ideas about women. Those prejudices extended, in fact, beyond the faculty and permeated the administration at Harvard as well. Harvard president Charles Eliot believed women dangerous to the intellectual atmosphere of university. After summarizing some of Eliot's prejudices about women, Horowitz points out that "Eliot's vision of the separate intellectual nature and culture of women hardly fostered opening Harvard to them" (97). Indeed, Eliot's solution was not to open Harvard to women, but to create a separate institution. This decision probably reflected the increasing number of women wanting to attend (and pay) for college, an enticing money-making opportunity for Harvard. Radcliffe occupies, then, a complex position. While women are devalued as intellectual beings, they are also offered a male (read "superior") education that incorporates Harvard's male-developed curriculum and male-only faculty.

In addition to sexism perpetrated toward Radcliffe women, the comments given to students at Harvard and Radcliffe were also shaped by the extreme working conditions of composition instructors. Wendell, by introducing the daily theme assignment as a key part of the pedagogy at Harvard, contributed to an enormous growth in the workload of composition instructors. Connors explains that "At Harvard

in 1892, Barrett Wendell read daily and fortnightly themes from 170 students—over 24,000 papers each year" ("Overwork" 191). Connors discusses these working conditions, primarily, in terms of how they reveal the pedagogical values and assumptions underpinning the teaching of composition near the end of the nineteenth-century. Yet, it is worth troubling this further by noting that even as working conditions for composition instructors were at their most extreme, their position in the University was eroding. As Crowley explains, American universities began to move toward the German model of academics, valuing research and specialized degrees over teaching (*Composition* 121). This meant that famous Harvard professors, like Adams Sherman Hill and Barrett Wendell, despite their strong professional reputations and publication records, were not fully rewarded or valued by their institutions. Crowley points out that "Since none of these men possessed Ph.Ds. […], they were never awarded the rank of full professor" (*Composition* 121). Nevertheless, Wendell was an accomplished scholar and wrote popular books on both Shakespeare and Cotton Mathers. The tension between teaching and publishing responsibilities only intensified the effects of over-work and under-valuation.

Barrett Wendell: Labor and Gender Bias

Wendell taught at Radcliffe for about a decade early in his career. It has already been established that Wendell was enormously overworked. He also believed intellectual work to be a decidedly male enterprise. This was an environment in which, as Ricks points out, "Few educators sought ways to adapt educational processes to women's ways of knowing, and many in both single-sex and coeducational institutions

expressed misgivings about the practicality of teaching women to write and to speak publicly when the public had little need for women's views" (63). What we would today call women's ways of knowing (provided we could essentialize so far) were not considered worthy of consideration in higher education at Harvard. Indeed, women's ways of knowing, as a separate from men's, were not conceptualized of by Harvard educators as significant or important. Women belonged in the home and academic (read *male*) knowing was not considered natural to or useful for them. Wendell participated as a teacher at Radcliffe, which might lead one to believe that he had different ideas about women's public roles. However, this does not appear to be the case. Wendell himself was clear about his motives for teaching at Radcliffe and the great harm he saw in extending Harvard resources. Paul Buck explains Wendell's attitude toward the institution of Radcliffe: "Wendell thought Radcliffe harmful to Harvard in every way, but the first of these, he said, was 'incontestable.' It was harmful to instructors, and through them to the college" (45). Initially, reading about Wendell's defense of a male-only educational atmosphere and concerns that teaching women was dangerous to male instructors, it was easy for me to read any of Wendell's flaws as a teacher at Radcliffe as motivated by sexism. Yet, if we look at what Wendell actually says about teaching at Radcliffe, his concerns are more rooted in labor than in sexism. Wendell taught at Radcliffe not because he believed in its mission or that women were particularly worth teaching. He taught there because it paid. This pay, obviously, was not the harm he speaks of. Instead, labor redirected in pursuit of that pay was the harm. In a letter to Radcliffe President LeBaron Russell Briggs dated September 1905, Wendell explains that he will not be returning to work at Radcliffe. He had recently been promoted at

Harvard, earning a raise which alleviated his need for additional money. He writes "As I think I made clear yesterday, my own powers of teaching appear to me so limited that I would never, with justice to my work at Harvard, again [indecipherable] course of institutions elsewhere" (Wendell, "LeBaron). He also complains that, "while Radcliffe has undoubtedly helped Harvard instructors to increase their scanty earnings, there can be as little question that it has on the whole impaired their original power. [Working at two institutions] has thus tended to diminish the reputation which they might have won both for themselves and for the old college to which they owe prime allegiance" (Wendell qtd in Buck 47). Wendell's critiques of Radcliffe are labor, rather than gender, based. He is already overworked and under paid. Because of his financial needs, he takes another position for the earnings, yet this position keeps him from developing his own professional reputation, and thus the reputation of his primary institution, by inhibiting his scholarly work and publications. While his sexist attitudes are documented in several other contexts, he never complains about teaching at Radcliffe because the students are women. The direct complaints he makes about Radcliffe are rooted in the problem of supplemental employment that divides a teacher and scholar's effort between institutions and requires an overload in teaching responsibilities.

This does not mean he was unaffected as a teacher by his personal biases. Wendell was still profoundly opposed to the notion that women were intellectual equals worthy of the kind of ideal instruction for which he aimed. In fact, women in the classroom were dangerous, dangerous because their submission and lack of intellectual vigor had the power to corrupt the teacher. According to Buck, "To Wendell, there was a danger inherent in teaching—arbitrary self-confidence and impatience of

contradiction—and this was augmented by teaching women who provided a comparative lack of mental resistance" (48). While Wendell does not express hostility to women themselves, he frames them as insignificant. He acknowledges that his instruction is based on economic necessity (something many of us, perhaps teaching at more than one institution or picking up additional sections, can certainly relate to). However, he also acknowledges that the students he has extended himself to teach are students he views in gendered terms. His honesty here is helpful. We have records of his comments and can therefore begin to theorize about the ways that his own ideas about his students and the appropriate realms for their writing color those comments. Thus, Wendell's labor conditions do not excuse moments when his sexism colors his feedback, but they do complicate the idea that he didn't take his teaching responsibilities seriously because his students were women. As we will see, Wendell's feedback to female students suffers from sexism *and* demonstrates his extraordinary work ethic and dedication to teaching.

Daily themes, especially as Wendell assigned them—asking students to record their thoughts and observations—often times took on the role of policing student thought and student values (Crowley, *Composition* 93). Reading the archives at Harvard, Zenger noticed that "The themes suggest that students in Wendell's course saw themselves as practicing more than fluency and correctness, more than being good users of English; the themes suggest that students also understood the extensive required writing, reading, and critiquing as a means of negotiating a racially inflected identity: speaker of English as the mother tongue" (Zenger 332-33). For Zenger, the move of asking students to produce an appropriate, academic voice was very much a

racial move. But I suggest, particularly in the context of Radcliffe, that it was also a gendered move; this will be dramatized as we look at some of Wendell's responses to his Radcliffe students. These themes become a place for Wendell to evaluate not only the writing of his students, but the students themselves. Describing daily theme assignments Crowley cautions, "What happened, of course, was that reading dailies about students' observations and experiences put the professors in the position of passing judgment on the students' intelligence and character (in this respect, the dailies replicated the function of the daily recitation in the classical colleges)" (*Composition* 76). At Harvard, this was problematic enough, as Zenger points out, but at Radcliffe (given the sexism of Wendell and other professors) the stakes were often even higher for students. Composition courses offered students useful processes for becoming writers, but at the same time were explicit about the values and attitudes "good writers" must have.

Wendell at Radcliffe: Combining Contexts

We now have a good picture of Wendell as a professor at Harvard; a picture that includes his attitudes towards his students and his mix of current-traditional and process oriented teaching values as well as his labor conditions. At Radcliffe, Wendell taught, theoretically, an identical curriculum. But important differences emerge that deserve closer examination. In both Harvard and Radcliffe classrooms, the pedagogy, especially in English A, was essentially hierarchical. Campbell explains this as a pedagogy "where the student's authority is contested or negated, and must ultimately be wrested from the teacher" (474). At Harvard, this wresting occurred in large classes, typically of

approximately 500 for English A and 150 students for English 12 (Simmons, "An Absurdly" 268). But at Radcliffe, in the 1884-1885 school year, there were four sections of English A for a total of 59 students, making for much smaller class sizes (Simmons, "An Absurdly" 267). This had real implications for many classroom activities and for the ability of a student to "wrest" power for herself, especially considering the sexist attitudes of many professors. For instance, Simmons points out that "A central part of the pedagogy in those classes was reading aloud student papers and criticizing them before the class. The class sizes at Harvard offered anonymity to student writers whose writing faults were exposed to their classmates. At Radcliffe […] anonymity was not possible" ("An Absurdly" 268). Nineteenth-century women, many of them trained to defer to male authority and eschew all public display, had a completely different experience of the Harvard English A curriculum, which their smaller class sizes exacerbated. Other changes in the curriculum include changing class meetings from three to two hours a week. On top of this, while all men taking English A or English 12 at Harvard could expect access to office hours, this practice appears to have died away for women at Radcliffe (Simmons, "An Absurdly" 268). Part of this was in response to a ban restricting women from Harvard's campus, where their teachers' offices were located, which Wendell vocally supported: "In fact, Wendell, an outspoken opponent of formalized coeducation at Harvard, defended the practice of forbidding women to walk in Harvard Yard as Harvard's foremost 'virile' tradition" (Simmons, "An Absurdly" 268). Not allowing women to walk in Harvard Yard, when Radcliffe itself had no office space, essentially meant that women had no access to office hours. The fact that their teachers were comfortable with this no doubt reflects their willingness to believe that

women simply were not worth the extra time commitment. After all, these women, who most did not believe were capable of full public lives, would not bring praise back to their teachers or their institutions in the same way that male students could be expected to.

An inability to visit office hours was not the only difference in English A for the women at Radcliff. For comments, gender considerations also changed "identical" aspects of the class. Looking at themes by male students, the current-traditional corrections on papers took on the form of comments like "badly massed" or "not sympathetic" or "trivial" (Campbell 477; Simmons, "Barrett" 337; Zenger 341). In my perusal of the Harvard archives, I saw many brief comments left on men's themes. Oswald Garrison's papers, for instance, contain many examples of Wendell's brief comments, such as "One very bad sentence" and "Lively," as well as few longer comments like "Your style here was distinctly unfinished. In not useful [indecipherable] focus on traits that should come from careful application This might, however, be rewritten into a good theme" and "This is vivid [underlined] but has palpably fictitious air" (qtd, "Daily"). As in the comments Campbell, Simmons, and Zenger analyze, the comments to Garrison focus mostly on issues of style and correctness, only occasionally delving into a discussion of the subject matter, such as Wendell's response to Garrison's theme on funerals: "There is great pride on this subject by Catholics: and they often get their money's worth" (qtd, "Daily").[10] When male instructors turned to women's

[10] While I was unable to locate any comments to Harvard students as long as his responses to Allen at Radcliffe, it is difficult to draw conclusions about this for two reasons: (1) at Radcliffe, the only archival materials with Wendell's responses on them come from very early in his career and at Harvard the only archival materials with Wendell's responses on them come from later in his career, and (2) Wendell's sections at Radcliffe were small (sometimes with only 10 students) and very large at Harvard. For these reasons, it is difficult to fairly compare the length of the comments from each institution, which is why I have, instead, focused on the content of his comments at each institution.

papers, the focus on form over content remains the same. However, the valuation of writing style now took on gendered tones with the "labeling [of lines the instructor objected to] as 'feminine' and therefore nonacademic" (Campbell 473). In looking at comments given to men or to women, the current-traditional obsession with correctness can be problematized. For example, Zenger links it not only to economic changes but to racial consciousness and policing: "Compositionists have previously interpreted the concern for correctness […] as a response to an increased need for managers who could write correctly enough to function in a newly industrialized nation [….] Nineteenth-century theories of language indicate that a concern with linguistic correctness may have been a function as race as well" (Zenger 337). This claim can be extended to include a focus on linguistic correctness as a function of patriarchy with the goal of excluding women, at least as intellectual equals. Consider the following collection of comments from Radcliffe women's papers that illustrate ways in which the current-traditional focus on correction is conflated with a degrading disregard for women's thoughts:

> You write 'with a good deal of sentiment'; 'Your words are far too colloquial, your sentences are halting and confused; your paragraphs lack definiteness… It is clear, it has some force, but no elegance'; 'Avoid the strained exaggeration of the feminine style'; Your 'tone of personal injury detracts a little, possibly, from the success of your work.' (qtd. in Campbell 479)

These comments, while appearing to focus on issues of style and correctness, actually make gendered claims about the value of the ideas in these themes and thus about the value of the writers themselves.

And what were women's responses to these classes? Campbell found that many female students struggled to adapt to the current-traditional, male-oriented curriculum.

For instance, she found among a Radcliffe student in English A, Mary Lee's,[11] writing (though apparently this critique was never handed in), the following:

> In English A we sink our individuality in a sea of criticism… Whatever idea, whatever individuality of style we may naturally possess, we must drop under the red pencil of the section man… English A does not teach us to write, it teaches us not to write. It is not a path to future composition courses, it is a stumbling block, over which most of us get so bumped and battered and discouraged that we let English alone through college. (qtd in Campbell 475)

The instructor becomes a silencing foe instead of a guiding light. Teacher and student, in this exert, are positioned in an antagonistic relationship. Tellingly, for Lee at least, the only possible response is to subsume her own style, her own voice, to the "red pencil of the section man" and pretend to accept advice that she believes kills good writing. Would this have been true of a male student? A student from whom Wendell would have expected "mental resistance?" Still, because the archival evidence at Radcliffe before 1900 is sparse it is possible to read Lee's response as atypical, as an angry student venting some irrational steam. It is also possible to read Lee's response as an all too common one, stretching across composition classrooms from campus to campus and era to era. Students often find the demands of academic writing stifling and constrictive. However, Crowley, discussing the attitudes of male teachers, presents this excerpt from the 1897 *Harvard Reports*, which makes Lee's criticism sound quite justified:

> [The report] described themes written at Radcliffe in just the way we might expect late-nineteenth-century men to characterize women: 'In mechanical execution, —neatness, penmanship, punctuation and orthography, —they show a marked superiority in standard over the papers from the courses of the College proper…. In their contents also

[11] Lee was likely not one of Wendell's students. However, since Wendell played a central role in developing aspects of the course like the daily themes, her comment can still help us imagine the experiences of women in Wendell's classes. Indeed, her complaint is not about a specific "section man" but about the course itself.

> they reveal unmistakably a greater degree of conscientious, painstaking effort, —the desire to perform faithfully and well in the allotted task. On the other hand, in thought and in form, they are less robust and less self-assertive. A few are sprightly; none of them indicate any especial capacity for observing, or attempt, in pointing out defects and difficulties, anything which might be termed a thoughtful solution of them […]' If the men at Harvard were sloppy, inattentive, and erratic, the women of Radcliffe were self-effacing, unobservant, and thoughtless. (Crowley, *Methodical* 76-7)

This gendered, paternalistic, and belittling response to the efforts of women students is clearly not invisible to Radcliffe writers. Lee's angry response notes not only her clear perception that her ideas are not being taken seriously, but her evaluation of the skills she is learning as somehow antithetical to real writing. Given the pervasive documented sexism at Radcliffe, Lee's response becomes more than one angry student or even a common expression of student frustration: Lee is reacting to an academic atmosphere hostile to her ideas and to her writing, indeed to her very presence. It is not a stretch to link to the exhausted and haphazard teaching of over-extended (yet also prejudiced) teachers to negative student experiences. In fact, describing her reading of the Radcliffe archives Simmons argues that "In these women's writing, I see a range of critiques of academic writing, a variety of strategies for resisting it, and a record of women's voices bearing witness to their experiences in a male-centered curriculum" ("An Absurdly" 265). Campbell, Simmons, and Crowley all make the point that gender prejudice at Radcliffe affected the quality of teaching and teacher response to student writing. But none of them extend this beyond its original context. Stretched between several institutions, with different student populations and different compensation for classes taught, could not similar prejudices or exhaustion occur today?

This blindness or inattention of Harvard teachers to their Radcliffe students had other consequences as well. Positioning Professor Mary Augusta Jordan's rhetorical theories against those of her contemporaries, Kates writes, "Most well-known theorists of the time, such as John Franklin Genung, Adams Sherman Hill, and Barrett Wendell, never address the issue of language and identity and the barriers for rhetorical study posed by issues of differences such as race, class, or gender" (502). These men never address these issues, probably because they do not see these issues. Comfortably ensconced in a dominant ideology that took as natural their identities and values as writers, they struggled to extend that identity to women students or conceptualize an equal, yet feminine, identity. Zenger argues a similar point, albeit from a racial perspective. Arguing that Harvard writing worked to create a homogenous racial identity for its students, she points out the power of the language to frame our possible experiences: "as a cultural institution language forms its speakers in the most fundamental sense, determining what they will be capable of thinking, saying, or doing" (Zenger 335). This determining of doing takes on new significance at Radcliffe. What are these women, recognized by instructors as mentally inferior, supposed to *do* with their educations?

Wendell, not surprisingly given his sexist attitudes, displays a disregard and belittling of the "feminine" in feedback to female students. For example, Allen, a student from 1883 to 1888, took English 12 with Wendell several times and was dedicated to improving her writing; many of the comments on her work that survive in the archives are from Wendell himself. Given the smaller class sizes at Radcliffe, especially pre-1900, Simmons and Campbell point out that Wendell knew Allen well

and, near the end of her presence in his classes, he heaps upon her high praise. Let's look, however, at an early comment left by Wendell on one of Allen's papers. Wendell writes:

> Your reasoning, if you will permit me to say so, is charmingly feminine. That is, you base it upon the notion of the world which insists in a well-brought up feminine mind, & not upon the world as it is. In the real world, things are askew; they always have been & always will be. Again, as I hope Shakespere [sic] will begin to show you, nobody was ever wholly good or wholly bad. To go no further, study Falstaff & Prince Hal. Finally, —I hate to dispel illusions, but your argument from family examples is a terribly weak kind of thing. If there is ever one class of people that we don't know in all their complexity, it is the people that we live with & care for. (qtd in "Annie")

Campbell, critiquing Wendell's sexist and current-traditional comments argues that this is a perfect example of a paternalistic disregard for Allen as a true intellectual (473). I notice immediately that this comment on Allen's essay does not retreat into grammar and punctuation to assert dominance, yet Wendell is not meeting Allen with intellectual respect. Here he uses an assumption that feminine ideas and feminine values are necessarily divorced from the "real world," being sure to impress upon Allen that her ideas are "charming" yet "terribly weak." This careful coding of his response as springing from a natural, superior male perspective both caresses her for "natural" mistaken ideas while suggesting that in order to do well in the academic world, she'll have to become more masculine. Yet, thinking about Wendell's labor conditions as well, especially during early years in his career when his teaching load was highest, this comment—which does engage with Allen's ideas and offers ample feedback (especially when compared with the short one or two word responses most instructors left on themes)—depicts a commitment to teaching that is hard to ignore.

Eventually, Wendell sees Allen as a more competent and interesting writer, but only after Allen discloses to Wendell her professional goal; to be a teacher (Simmons, "An Absurdly" 279). Although Allen came to Radcliffe with the goal of teaching, Wendell's ready acceptance and approval of this identity for Allen fall in line with his gender prejudice: "Wendell mentored outstanding Harvard men believing that he was helping to create the next generation of American writers and men of letters. In fact, his English 12 course at Harvard nurtured dozens of writers, scholars, and men of letters. Both Wendell and Annie came to believe that her destiny would be as a schoolteacher, not a writer or a scholar" (Simmons, "An Absurdly" 279). It seems entirely reasonable that teaching at Harvard, Wendell would encounter a promising writer with somewhat vague or limited goals and give new vistas to his ambition. But at Radcliffe, among women intellectuals, this was not the case. But, again, the labor of such a response—especially to a student that his sexist biases could have encouraged him to dismiss as not needing his full engagement—shows dedication to teaching. This does not excuse or erase the sexism in this moment but it does complicate it. Wendell is not a "bad person" or a "bad instructor," but his sexism, represented by his habit of depreciating women's opinions as "feminine," and therefore weak and confused, in his comments, speaks to his personal limitations, especially as a teacher to women. These limitations become more problematic when applied to the lives of the women he taught and corralled into his worldview. Certainly not all of his students at Radcliffe were limited by his response to their writing and their thoughts, but others most certainly were.

Remapping for our Current Context

In the late nineteenth-century, rhetoric expanded to include English composition. Today, composition is expanding to include multimodal compositions and composing processes. Both are pivotal pedagogical moments. Using Wendell as a case study, I make two major recommendations for contemporary teachers of composition 1) unfavorable labor conditions can exacerbate personal biases in ways that harm students and should be considered counter-productive at institutions valuing diversity and strong teaching and 2) curricular reform and pedagogical innovations must explicitly take labor into account. Without careful planning and quick action, composition instructors—often with the laudable goal of meeting new student needs—who design and implement new pedagogies designed to incorporate multimodal compositions into the composition classroom risk exploding their labor conditions. We must and should design ways to incorporate the composing skills that students need into our classrooms, but as we do so we must also explicitly consider the labor implications of our ideas and advocate for the resources and support we need.

Instructor bias is something that all teachers must confront, but difficult labor conditions can exacerbate and intensify those biases and, thus, are harmful to students. The semester that I applied to PhD programs, I taught full time at Indiana University South Bend; I had four composition classes and three different preps. I also served as a co-chair on an assessment committee and juggled other mentorship roles. However, I could not afford applying to graduate school without additional income. To that end, I also taught a developmental writing course at Ivy Tech State College's South Bend campus. At Ivy Tech, I had no office space and no official office hours. Many of my

students did not graduate high school, instead completing their GEDs. Most of my students were racial minorities, many quite poor. Krista Ratcliffe, in *Rhetorical Listening*, suggests laying our experiences alongside one another and listening, arguing that this move allows for more productive communication across differences. Listening to Wendell's experience, I hear the frustration of an over-extended teacher. I also hear a dismissive impatience of his female students and the additional work they occasion. Rather than investigating or challenging this impatience, Wendell refuses to reconsider his sexist views. Laid next to this, my own experience takes on new urgency. I hear my fatigue and my struggle to teach consistently in different contexts. I hear, also, my disappointing lack of awareness, at that time, of my own unstated biases. Did I expect the same level of work from my Ivy Tech students, even adjusted for the course level? Were these biases economic? Racial? How could I have more effectively combatted them? Did my students see them? I do not mean to downplay the real differences between Wendell's situation and my own (for example, the systemic sexism at Harvard—championed by Wendell— and the fact that I have never publicly professed or defended views questioning the intellectual validity of some portion of my students). Yet, according to Ratcliffe, rhetorical listening allows for compelling moments of recognition without minimizing difference. In discussing Wendell's pedagogy and practice, I strove, as much as possible, to be fair. He was no monster; he was no saint. But he was a teacher of writing, and as such we must interrogate and learn from his strengths as well as his weaknesses. In looking at his constraints, over a hundred years in the past, one would hope that the conditions for instructors have improved; not just

because as fellow composition instructors we care about our working conditions, but because those conditions affect our ability to teach and to teach well.

Curiously, contemporary scholarship does little with teacher bias and how it affects composition instructors and their students. Jeff Pruchnic writes about conservative students who have co-opted the language of liberal teachers describing oppression to frame their own experiences of what they perceived as a biased and hostile learning environment (54). While his work obviously points to a group of students who feel as though there is bias against them in composition classrooms and the university more widely, his scholarship focuses on the rhetorical moves of those students rather than on teacher bias itself. Additionally, Lad Tobin's scholarship focuses on response to student writing and many of his insights deal with teacher bias, at least tangentially. For example, reflecting on how he is drawn to moments in student writing that reflect his own personality and beliefs, he explains:

> [F]ew writing teachers want to go so far as to admit they we actually *create* the meaning of our students' texts, particularly if this creative act is largely the result of our unconscious biases and associations […] if great literary works are unstable and subject to multiple readings and interpretations, then how unstable is the evolving draft of an inexperienced composition student? (Tobin, *Reading* 336)

Tobin asks this question to push and develop his response to student writing, but in this moment he admits what is both obvious and uncomfortable: engaged and committed teachers necessarily bring their biases into their classrooms Tobin argues "it's not that writing teachers are unaware that our own unconscious issues often obscure and shape our actions; it's just that we hope if we don't talk about this, it will go away" (*Reading* 342). In a later work, Tobin presents new ways to read student work attempting to address this truth. However, he cautions:

> And yet my suggestions are more *what if* than *how to*. My guess is that some of these suggestions—for example, giving ourselves permission to read rough drafts with less focus and precision in order to explore our own unconscious associations—may initially seem counterintuitive, while others—such as reading each student's text against our reading of the student writer as text and our reading of the classroom as context—may seem overly ambitious given the time constraints we all face as teachers. (Tobin 15).

Here Tobin acknowledges not just the labor of his suggestions but the limits of that labor. While neither Pruchnic nor Tobin are taking up the issues of instructor bias toward particular students or institutions directly, their work requires them to acknowledge that, as complex human beings, writing teachers do have biases and those biases do affect their teaching. My argument is that this bias is exacerbated by overly-demanding labor conditions and that identifying and addressing both our biases and labor conditions that sustain them are ethical imperatives of our work.

Thus, it is imperative to our effectiveness as teachers that composition instructors have humane working conditions. Contingent, part-time employment, cobbled together from numerous institutions is unethical employment. It damages our ability to meet the needs of our students, and it exacerbates ugly, though sometimes unstated biases which affect our teaching. We are all human and most of us strive to be exemplary instructors. But we also have biases about our students. We have an ethical obligation to search for, to recognize, and to address those biases bravely. I believe that most instructors, given humane working conditions, could do this. Yet, it also strikes me as impossibly cruel to put this concern, this imperative, on top of ugly working conditions. These issues are wedded. We must demand writing instructors who vigorously interrogate their biases, working to become powerful allies to all their students. But to do this, we must also recognize the link between our material work

conditions and our effectiveness. Gold reminds us that while "not every institution maintains clear ties to its historical roots or is the convenient subject of scholarly inquiry" we can still "imagine ways we might turn to history to examine and enrich our own local contexts" (29). This chapter both highlights the complicated link between working conditions and instructor bias through remapping Wendell and advocates addressing it now, today, before another generation of students are disenfranchised.

Alongside the problem of contingent labor, today we are undergoing what has been described as the "multimodal turn" in Composition Studies. The multimodal turn has been defined as not only a renewed awareness that *all* communication is multimodal, but as acknowledging a rising demand that students and writers react to the radically different composing processes open to them today. Thirty years ago a student in a composition class could not have created a hyper-link, easily made a companion video to a paper (or website, or PowerPoint presentation, or blog entry) or easily imbedded images into their texts. The technological advances which have made such forms of multimodality commonplace, according to this theory, necessitate new ways of teaching composition and even new ways of defining the essay. While I find the details of the "multimodal turn" compelling, I also find the term problematic. The "multimodal turn" suggests immediately the "social turn." The social turn, which argued that writing on political and social issues could create a level of investment in composition courses that would both benefit students personally and as writers, absolutely produced several new and lasting pedagogies. Thus far the comparison is apt enough. However, the social turn did *not* reimagine what composition was or redefine what counted as an essay. Though the topics and classroom pedagogies were very different from current-

traditional and expressivist pedagogies, the *products* were similar. This is not the case with the multimodal turn. Indeed, it more closely mirrors the seismic shifts I have been describing at the turn of the nineteenth century, in which the very nature and scope of the rhetoric classroom shifted from Classical Rhetoric and recitations to a focus on English and composition. Wendell's history reminds us that all curricular innovations have a labor component which must be directly considered and that, if ignored, risks exploding our labor conditions. Wendell and other early current-traditionalists never considered in detail the labor conditions required to effectively teach the pedagogy they recommend. By 1923, when Hopkins published his results on the labor required to grade and comment on all the themes composition instructors were assigning, the cost of this oversight is made clear. By surveying colleges around the country, Hopkins discovers that "the theme reading labor expected of a college freshman composition instructor is more than double (250 per cent) that which can be carried without undue physical strain" (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 20). While our labor conditions no longer match the lecture-sized classes and (for the most part) current-traditional pedagogies that led to Hopkins' findings, we are still doing important pedagogical work that must consider labor explicitly, lest we repeat the mistakes of those like Wendell.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the growing sense that explicit instruction in English instruction was necessary, as well as a changing student body, were some of the major factors for changes to the rhetoric course. Today, one of the driving changes for the multimodal reconceptualization of composition is technological. Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen, after establishing and describing the different modes available to rhetors throughout history, point to a fundamental difference in composition as a

result of new digital technologies: “Today, however, in the age of digitization, the different modes have technically become the same at some level of representation, and they can be operated by one multi-skilled person, using one interface, one mode of physical manipulation, so that he or she can ask at every point: ‘Shall I express this with sound or music?’, ‘Shall I say this visually or verbally?’, and so on” (Kress and Van Leeuwen 2). The goals of Kress’s semiotic theory are to ensure that community members have access to the cultural resources necessary to compose, that community members are able to weigh in on discussions about their shared goals and causes, and that community members are aware their semiotic options and the effects of those options (Kress 18). These goals, increasingly, are being considered as potential benchmarks for the college composition course. In light of these new technologies and theories, compositionists and rhetoricians are beginning to ask if composition, in its print-based “traditional” essay form, is capable of meeting these goals. The answer to this question is by no means settled. As Jewitt and Kress point out in their collection *Multimodal Literacy*, “Multimodality is an emergent field; there is no orthodoxy. This lack of certainty [about the possibilities and applications of multimodal pedagogies] adds equally to both the excitement and usefulness of multimodality” (4). While a stable, coherent multimodal composition pedagogy has yet to arrive (and, perhaps, given the flexible nature of multimodality never will), this historical moment mirrors the changes during the end of the nineteenth century in terms of questioning the basic nature and products of the composition classroom.

While it is not clear that what exactly the “multimodal turn” will mean for composition in the long term or even the kind of technologies that will become required

for such composition, Tracey Bowen and Carl Whithaus, in their collection *Multimodal Rhetorics, Emerging Genres*, bring together many articles that theorize about how composition might react to the changing compositional options available and to the multimodal expectations of the modern workplace. Bowen and Whithaus's text does not offer an over-arching, coherent new pedagogy; instead, this text records several pedagogical innovations in order to begin to theorize about what kinds of multimodal pedagogy we may choose to adopt, particularly for composition courses. Even shifts as basic as using new programs and equipment in the composing process translate into instructor labor. As such, I appreciate the way this text is devoted to the classroom and pedagogy.[12] I applaud, also, that its chapters are especially down-to-earth and explicit about ways that multimodal composition theories may be strategically applied in the classroom.[13] I preface my response with this because I want to think about the pedagogies in this text a little more critically; mostly in terms of the material conditions facing the typical composition teacher. Texts like Shipka's and Ellis's side-step a major issue facing our field which *most* essays recommending a specific pedagogy tend to side-step (the same mistake I argue that Wendell, to such tragic effect, made), one that it is vitally important to unveil and discuss further: namely, considering the working conditions, training, and curricular objectives of most composition teachers, are these approaches practicable, particularly in terms of our current material realities? Shipka explains her pedagogy's goals as giving students "tasks that function largely as

[12] For example, Jody Shipka's essay, "Including, but Not Limited to, the Digital: Composing Multimodal texts" offers practical strategies for including multimodality—both high and low-tech—into the classroom.

[13] Erik Ellis's essay, "Back to the Future?: The Pedagogical Promise of the (Multimedia) Essay," devotes time to discussing the logistics of a course that asks students to produce multi-modal work.

communicative problems to be solved—and that can, in fact, be solved in a variety of ways […] and that require students to consider how the contexts in which texts participate shape the way those texts are received and responded to" (78). This explanation is particularly compelling because of its links to rhetorical theory and because of the freedom it gives students. However, hidden in this explanation is a lot of *labor* on the part of the instructor. I don't mean to suggest that instructors shouldn't employ pedagogies requiring labor, but I do want to be mindful about how realistic that labor might be for graduate students, adjuncts, lecturers teaching a 5/5 load, or for those whose expertise and training is in literature and not composition. For example, because students are encouraged to compose in a "variety" of ways, the instructor takes on the additional burden of a "variety" of instruction and a "variety" of grading. Ellis, meanwhile, discusses the logistics of a course that asks students to produce multi-modal work: "When students devote more creative energy and ambition to their multimedia essays […] the essays require more time to complete. I typically devote five or six weeks to a multimedia essay project" (Ellis 65). Ellis, however, appears to have a great deal of freedom in designing his course. If nothing else, he has the freedom to assign a multimodal essay enough weight on this grading scale to justify five to six weeks of class time. But many composition instructors, particularly when teaching freshman composition, do not find themselves in a similar position. Should we adopt these ideas, we must be ready to lobby for altering our material constraints to better support these pedagogies. Any time that new curriculum or pedagogy are discussed, we *must* discuss the labor connected to those innovations. What kind of training is involved? Who will pay for that training? Do preps for continually evolving courses need to be supported

with course releases? What is the ideal class size for a pilot? For a multimodal curriculum?

Wendell taught in an era defined by shifting attitudes about the role of Rhetoric. Should Rhetoric teach a student to speak well or to write well? As the answer to that question changed, the demands of the course—for both the student and the teacher—changed. But those changes took place without careful consideration of their material, physical effects. The pedagogies which were developed, revolutionary in many important ways, ignored the different demands placed on teachers of rhetoric and led directly to extreme work conditions and the abrupt loss of prestige of both the rhetoric course and rhetoric teacher. When instructors like Wendell took on additional classes at other institutions to supplemental their "scanty pay," their biases (in Wendell's case about women but potentially about any subset of students or institutions) affected their teaching and harmed their students. Today, the composition course is undergoing similar reevaluations. The multimodal turn asks composition teachers to reconsider what counts as composition. As we enter a new rhetorical reality, a reality in which students not only have access to technologies that change their composing options but in which students are often expected to have basic technological literacies and an understanding of many modes of composition, teachers are responding with several new, innovative, and thoughtful pedagogies. In this moment, exciting in several ways, I see parallel developments which give me pause. Much of the pedagogy that has been theorized and implemented ignores or downplays the material alterations to the working conditions of composition teachers. While the technologies themselves necessary to these pedagogies often are mentioned, the changes in teacher workload and work-type

remain under-theorized. I argue, therefore, that unless we want to further compound our unfavorable work conditions and our tenuous role in the academy, we must carefully theorize the material conditions necessary to enacting these pedagogies, advocating for material, technological, administrative, and financial support *before* we undertake drastically reinventing the composition classroom. Failing to do so will only compromise our ability to successfully implement our pedagogies and engage our students, as well as risk exacerbating our already difficult working conditions.

Chapter 3: Learning from Edwin Hopkins: Early Attempts at Labor Reform in Composition

"Let it be known either that instruction in English is provided for a limited number of pupils only and that others must go without; or else that training in English, such as it is, while open to all, is inferior because the schools cannot afford to pay more than 40 per cent of instruction necessary to teach it properly, and because it is not fair to ask or to expect English instructors to furnish the rest at their own expense; let it be known that, as schools boards and officers been saying privately for years, it is 'too bad, but it cannot be helped.'" – Edwin Hopkins ("Can Good" 7)

Mining the Past: Strategies for Labor Reform

This chapter is a personal and historical study of the labor conditions of composition teachers, in which I analyze the work of Edwin Hopkins, a professor at the University of Kansas from 1889[14] to 1937, who collected data on composition teaching between 1909 and 1915 in an attempt to reform the labor conditions of composition teachers. This chapter is necessarily personal because I employ rhetorical listening, a concept developed by Ratcliffe, and strategic contemplation, developed by Royster and Kirsch, as research methods for engaging with historical and archival research. Both of these methods require careful analysis of my personal interests in and motivations for this research. This analysis of my personal interests and motivation takes two forms: (1) narrative vignettes of my own labor experiences, which I use to facilitate rhetorical listening, and (2) descriptive analyses of my reactions to my research, which document how strategic contemplation works in my reflective practices. The reader should

[14] While Hopkins and Wendell began teaching English composition in the same decade, "In his later years, Wendell abandoned work in composition as an impossible task. Students still wrote badly, and he lamented the years he had spent teaching the unteachable" (Kitzhaber 69). Hopkins began his research on the labor responding to student writing in 1909, just as Wendell was abandoning composition. Hopkins remained dedicated to composition, both as a valuable class and as a class he personally taught, until the end of his career in 1937, almost twenty years after Wendell's death.

therefore be prepared for the chapter to alternate between readings of Hopkins's work and reflections on my own teaching and research. Using rhetorical listening and strategic contemplation, I evaluate Hopkins's strategies for reforming labor conditions in the early twentieth century and what they offer compositionists interested in reforming our current labor conditions. I focus particularly on Hopkins's attempts to persuade those outside the composition classroom that labor conditions in those classrooms were untenable and directly related the "problem" of unsatisfactory student writing, looking for resonances—my term for connections and similarities—between attempts to reform modern labor issues in the composition classroom and Hopkins's strategies. David Gold challenges revisionist historians in Composition and Rhetoric to explicitly articulate connections between their historical work and the major conversations happening in the field today (24). As such, one of the goals of this chapter is to illustrate the value of understanding Hopkins's history as the field wrestles with how to create supportive labor conditions in the present and the future. Ultimately I argue that attempts at labor reform need to consider historical case studies, particularly from pivotal moments like Hopkins's, when strategizing ways to improve the teaching conditions of writing instructors. Too often, attempts to improve labor conditions surrounding the teaching of writing ignore the rich and complex labor history of our field. When we ignore this history, we risk repeating mistakes and over-looking potential solutions.

Just as Wendell taught in a pivotal moment, so too did Hopkins. While Wendell's moment was pivotal in terms of the pedagogy developed, Hopkins's moment was pivotal in terms of the labor conditions of writing teachers. The labor intensive

current-traditional writing pedagogy popularized by Wendell and others spread across the United States, affecting the labor conditions of composition teachers throughout the country. Within this context, Hopkins's commitment to reforming the labor conditions of composition instructors grew out of his personal experiences as a teacher and administrator. In 1909, when Hopkins was serving as what we would now call Writing Program Administrator (WPA) at the University of Kansas, he became convinced that the best way to make his case for improving the work conditions of composition instructors was to undertake a study to prove whether composition instructors worked more hours, due to paper reading and commenting, than other faculty. Ultimately, Hopkins convinced the Modern Language Association to form a committee to look into the labor conditions of composition instructors, a committee he chaired. On this committee, "Hopkins addressed the overwork issue in a long empirical research project—one of the first of its kind in composition history" (Popken, "The WPA" 7). By the time that Hopkins began his empirical research into labor conditions of English composition teaching, many of the pedagogical innovations advocated by people like Genung, Hill, and Wendell had taken root in American compositions classrooms, such as the emphasis on daily writing assignments that received personalized feedback from instructors. Hopkins believed that other faculty members, as well as most administrators, did not understand the work conditions of composition instructors—in other words, they underestimated the time it took to read and respond to student work. He also believed that if presented with hard data to support his arguments for reform, other faculty members and university administrators could no longer ignore the serious overburden he experienced firsthand. This burden, he believed, was physically and

emotionally disastrous for composition instructors. Though Hopkins's research was often delayed by his work conditions and the poor health brought on by those conditions, during the next fifteen years he collected an enormous amount of empirical data and shaped it into the argument of *The Labor and Cost of the Teaching of English in Colleges and Secondary Schools with especial reference to English Composition*. The findings of the report were damning:

> The committee report shows why [poor teaching happens]; it shows that under present average conditions of teaching English expression, workmen [sic] must choose between overwork and bad work; between spoiling their material or killing themselves; and the end for which the committee is striving is to place these painfully simple facts before the public so that the responsibility for the continuance of present conditions, if they must continue, may rest where it belongs. (Hopkins, "The Labor" 70)

With the findings from this study in hand, Hopkins embarked on a PR campaign of sorts, striving to alert those both inside and outside academia to working conditions which he believed made teaching students to write well impossible.

Despite Hopkins's commitment to composition pedagogy and desire to improve the labor conditions of composition instructors, this study is focused on understanding how and why his work failed to create lasting change (at least of the magnitude he envisioned). Hopkins's goals were complex and ambitious; he wanted nationwide reform, ideally on the both high school and college level. In light of the scope of his goals, it is impossible to *blame* him for what he failed to accomplish. His accomplishments—presenting his research results, making improvements on his own campus, and bringing scholarly attention to the crucial role of labor conditions in

composition teaching—should not be dismissed or under-valued.[15] Nevertheless, I argue that certain of his rhetorical decisions, decisions which indirectly validated the values that produced the damaging work conditions he fought against and relied on a valorization of suffering that potentially alienated those outside the field, had problematic and unforeseen consequences that are instructive for contemporary composition teachers and scholars as we attempt to achieve our own brand of labor reform. Today, as we attempt to persuade administrations, students, and the general public that labor issues like the increasing reliance on contingent labor or the constant pressure to raise course caps on composition courses are related to the type and quality of instruction we can give, Hopkins's experiences can help us prepare for these debates by providing argumentative strategies we may wish to adapt and appeals to suffering we may wish to avoid.

Feminist Revisionist Methodology: Rhetorical Listening and Strategic Contemplation

According to Ratcliffe, rhetorical listening is a tool for hearing the responses and experiences of another which helps the listener avoid the impulse to create immediate identification (19). Ratcliffe imagines this tool as primarily pedagogical, helping students to engage in difficult discussions, particularly conversations about race and gender. This method asks students to name their own experiences and emotional reactions explicitly, and then to name the positions and experiences of the speaker. In

[15] Added to these accomplishments, in the next chapter I suggest that his work, while not persuading those he set out to persuade, nevertheless helped create the standards of accrediting institutions and thus, eventually and not in the way he intended, lowered class sizes.

the process of this naming, students are asked to avoid instinctively identifying with the argument and ideas and instead to allow ideas to exist alongside one another (Ratcliffe 32). By resisting the impulse to identify, the listener can begin to consciously sift through moments of both non-identification and identification. Ratcliffe uses metaphors of sound (hearing) and space (distance) to illustrate how rhetorical listening makes it possible to map the (dis)connections produced by such conversations, a process which makes previously obscured areas of overlap or disconnection visible. The "hearing" reflects how rhetorical listening can be used as an invention practice because new "voices" are made accessible to the listener. The metaphor of space highlights the different outcomes that become possible when difficult discussions are based on "distance" rather than identification (Ratcliffe 46). While Ratcliffe posits rhetorical listening as a teaching and composing skill, the space for difference it fosters allows historians of Composition and Rhetoric to balance their personal connections to research subjects with the distance necessary for thorough historical work. Using rhetorical listening, historians are not asked to ignore or mask their personal connections; instead, they are asked to listen to them in order to critically consider the ways in which those connections limit or enrich their research.

Because rhetorical listening invites researchers to think about the complicated interactions between self and research, strategic contemplation is particularly well-suited to work alongside it. According to Royster and Kirsch, strategic contemplation is a purposeful methodological technique which asks researchers to pause for intuition and unconscious thought in the hope such ruminations will lead to new insights (86). They explain that:

> Contemplative moments seem to be a driving force for many scholars who have reported not only on how they have found passion in their work (a spiritual dimension) but also on how they have made chance discoveries and traveled down unexpected paths […]—all when they allowed themselves to pause, to wonder, to reflect, to see what else they might not have considered, and to articulate these moments in language. (Royster and Kirsch 86)

Strategic contemplation goes beyond simply thinking deeply about one's work. It is a methodological practice which supplements the hard work of gathering and analyzing research with the conscious choice to make time for unconscious thought. By inviting reflective thinking and following up on the leads that strategic contemplation suggests, researchers can deepen engagement and allow for new insights. While rhetorical listening requires researchers to grapple with the complexities of their connections and disconnections to their research, strategic contemplation "asks us to take as much into account as possible but to withhold judgment for a time and resist coming to closure too soon in order to make the time to invite creativity, wondering, and inspiration in the research process" (Royster and Kirsch 85). Together, these methods for engaging in research can push a researcher to notice different and additional connections and make more complex arguments. In the following pages, I use these methods to engage with the scholarly and archival materials on Edwin Hopkins and to make sense of my own connections to Hopkins, his research, and his goals for that research.

Attachment, Identification, and Scholarly Research

When I first encountered Edwin Hopkins, I was looking for information about Barrett Wendell and Radcliffe College or Harvard's composition program in 1880s and 90s. I was interested in three issues: the kinds of comments Wendell left for his

students, his classroom pedagogy, and his labor conditions. I was tired and frustrated; none of my sources were giving me the information I wanted. I noticed an unusual title, "Edwin Hopkins and the Costly Labor of Composition Teaching." The essay, written by Randall Popken, focuses on the story of one early teacher of composition, Edwin Hopkins. The name was only vaguely familiar; I was suspicious that he was connected to my research on Wendell—after all, Hopkins was part of the next generation of composition teachers, working until roughly 1940. While Wendell was part of the generation that created the first-year composition course, Hopkins, who remained committed to composition throughout his career, was part of the generation in which first-year composition became both ubiquitous on college campuses and dreaded by English professors who saw the class as a hell of mental drudgery and overwork. Still, I scanned the first few pages: "[Hopkins's] ideal is that writing faculty should read their students' writing carefully and provide thoughtful commentary on it. Further, Hopkins promotes the individual conference" (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins" 621). I was surprised to see many of my own values represented so clearly and found myself wishing for a hard copy of the article to annotate. My reading slowed; I was no longer skimming. "As his career progressed, Hopkins ran headlong into the conflict between his sense of duty and the intense demands of his labor. No matter how many hours a day he spent and how much effort he put into his paper reading, for instance, he couldn't get everything done" (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins" 629). I thought of my psoriasis, flaring up after a weeklong rush to respond to student papers; I thought of my Temporomandibular Joint Disorder (TMJ) and the painful swelling around my jaw that can leave me near tears if I grade too many essays in one sitting. Now, all my attention focused on the pages in

front of me. I never found the connection to Barrett Wendell implicitly promised, but I had stopped reading for that. Something was reverberating inside me; I felt deeply drawn to Hopkins. In response, I printed off and annotated the essay. Unable to connect it to my research on Wendell, I filed the essay away in my desk, labeling it with a sticky note: "Come back to this!" I underlined the words three times. Given my frenzied schedule, I should have been frustrated to lose an hour of my time. That hour could have been filled with lesson prep, grading, committee work, or research that would contribute to my current project—all the things pressing down on me relentlessly and endlessly. Instead, I felt energized.

In a matter of months, I traveled to the University of Kansas archives, intent on learning more about Hopkins. I had read his published works and located him in the histories of our field but I wanted more. I wondered about his teaching and his daily life. At the University of Kansas archives I read Hopkins's personal journals, an unpublished manuscript of his literary criticism, and other assorted papers. I was most interested in his journals, which he began keeping as a small boy and continued throughout this life. Hopkins's journals were very business-like and compact. One page might contain entries for an entire week, with tight scrawl listing time markers and the day's accomplishments, sometimes accompanied by brief commentary. I wrestled with his handwriting. One word in particular gave me trouble. It appeared over and over again. Usually, it followed "Classes and." Sometimes there were elaborations about a topic, but the handwriting, the cramped pages, and the deterioration of the paper combined to baffle me. I recognized it was the same word: the same jutting "h" near the beginning, the same slope, the same general size. Finally, after nearly three hours it

dawned on me. Chapel. Classes and chapel.[16] Solving this riddle left me elated, as though I had cracked a code. Thumbing through his journals—seeing mentions of his wife, his teaching, his daily routines—Hopkins became very real to me. I imagined him as grandfatherly and felt fond of him in a personal way that surprised and, initially, unnerved me. What would it be like to research and write about a person that I felt connected to and even protective of?

As women and feminists make their mark on historical work in Composition and Rhetoric, they remind us that we should allow ourselves to feel passionate attachments to our research subjects (Royster 68). Liz Rohan argues, for instance, that "While traditional methods encourage critical distance from a subject, scholars […] demonstrate that empathy and identification with a research subject can be integral to the research process; emotions can drive and inspire scholarly questions" ("Reseeing" 30). In her essay, Rohan talks about her own passionate attachment to her research subject Janette Miller.[17] It motivates her; it leads her to surprising sources and to patient insights; it helps her push for a lovingly honest assessment of a complicated and imperfect individual. Royster in *Traces of a Stream* notices a similar connection, but one she attributes to spiritual ancestors (87). For Royster, African American rhetors erased or minimized in traditional histories represent a legacy of thought she can place herself within. By rescuing and reconstructing their histories, she can more fully understand and position herself. She argues that "people who do intellectual work need

[16] When Hopkins began working at Kansas in 1889 chapel was only a nominally religious activity and served more as a daily assembly (Rudolph 75; 77).
[17] Janette Miller (1879-1969), grew up in Detroit Michigan, where she worked as a librarian. She later became a missionary in Africa. Rohan encounters her journals decades later and comes to both identify with and resist elements of Miller's experience (Rohan, "The Personal" 233).

to understand their 'intellectual ancestry'" (265). Part of her attachment to her research subjects, then, is derived from her sense of their contributions to the world she currently inhabits. As a compositionist, understanding Aristotle and other important historical figures in rhetoric is certainly part of my intellectual ancestry. But what about my nearer ancestors, those teachers and thinkers of the past 150 years who also came before me? What about Edwin Hopkins—his messy handwriting and passionate attempts to reform the labor conditions of composition teachers?

What was it about Hopkins that reverberated in me? How can I understand my connection to this man separated from me by time and by place? Why is understanding that connection important, not just to me but to others in the field? Early in this project, I feared my deep identification might actually be a hindrance. I saw our connections clearly and felt confident in my ability to develop them. Would I also be able to remain open to our differences, to the distance created by different historical contexts, different genders, and different values? How could I tease the purely personal connections from the professional ones? Wanting to treat Hopkins with respect and care, I applied Ratcliffe's concept of rhetorical listening. Ratcliffe explains that "*rhetorical listening* signifies a stance of openness that a person may choose to assume in relation to any person, text, or culture" (1). Thus, I could use a stance of openness and a willingness to hear difference, as well as connection, as a method for invention. For this research project I wanted to push past my instinctive identification to better understand our distances and differences while also investigating where my identifications might take me. Hopkins's work, both as a WPA and as a champion for labor reform, take up key values of our field. Understanding how those concerns have evolved in our history is

important. For example, Amy Heckathorn argues that "Other than documenting and legitimizing the work of former WPAs, a history can and should inform current and future practices. Modern WPAs benefit greatly from the theorizing and evolution of a disciplinary identity" (211). Hopkins's research is dedicated to documenting the early labor conditions of our discipline, conditions that certainly affected the creation of our "disciplinary identity." In this way, part of what Hopkins offers me and, I argue, the field, is an in-depth look at the reality of teaching early in the history of the field as well as a sense of our labor history. Many of the "resonances" that exist between Hopkins and I are personal, but others are signs and symptoms of engaging with layers of responsibility—as a teacher, scholar, and administrator—and remain key preoccupations of our discipline. With these layers of personal and professional identification in mind, I returned to Popken's essay on Hopkins, the one which had so enamored me, and consciously worked to apply rhetorical listening.

Where did I hear identification? Where did I see myself and my concerns, as well as the concerns of my field, reflected in Hopkins's history? In the fall of 1890, Hopkins taught two composition courses with a combined total of 119 students, *as well as* three literature classes (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins" 623). Personally, I immediately identified with the overwork described here; I've also taught five or six classes in a semester. Like Hopkins, my response to demoralizing labor conditions was a new kind of awareness, a thrill of electricity jolting my consciousness: I must do… *something* about labor in my field. Professionally, the issue of overwork is a pressing reality the field discusses in its journals and professional organizations, though today the culprit is more likely to be adjunct labor spread among several institutions than lecture-sized

classes. Laura Micciche identities this problem as one prevalent among academics generally: "Surely, disappointment in relation to working conditions and employment opportunities is one of the most familiar contexts for diminished hope and cutting cynicism among academics" (73). In Composition and Rhetoric, scholars like Marc Bousquet, Christopher Carter, and Tony Scott (to name only a few) are deeply invested in how to create sustainable and supportive labor conditions for teachers of writing. Even Derek Bok, writing about the problem of teaching college students to communicate on a university-wide level, devotes serious time and attention to the labor conditions of teachers of writing (87-91). Hopkins's descriptions of hellish overwork resonate with me personally, but they are also representative of deep and ongoing labor problems for teachers of writing.

But what about moments where a more careful mapping of our differences, as well as our similarities, might be useful? This is where rhetorical listening became especially generative for me. Pursuing the strategy of rhetorical listening, I discovered moments of difference. For example, Popken explains that "Hopkins's commitment to the teaching of writing and the labor it entailed was both theoretical and spiritual" ("Edwin Hopkins" 621). Theoretically, Hopkins was aligned with New Rhetoric composition pedagogies that rejected large lecture classes and called for personalized teaching (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins" 621). According to this pedagogy, careful response to student writing was integral to writing instruction. Spiritually, Hopkins believed that finding one's professional calling was a religious experience (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins" 622). Hopkins himself was deeply religious, as the archival materials at the University of Kansas attest. His personal diaries contain weekly references to attending

church (where he played the organ), various church activities and groups, and a robust spiritual network (Hopkins, "Journal 14")**.** His personal papers also include addresses delivered at chapel, with varying degrees of religious inflection (Hopkins, "Kansas Day in Chapel"). For Hopkins, then, his ideal pedagogy was grounded in the discipline of Composition and Rhetoric—before it was a full-fledged discipline—but it was made meaningful and worth the enormous sacrifices of time, and even health, by his belief in the religious rewards of this work. It is here that I am no longer comfortable; it is here that I need to look more closely and make space for difference.

I too ground my pedagogy in student-centered theories. But I cannot follow Hopkins into his religious zeal for his work. The religious rewards which come from identifying God's role for one's work may be termed as a kind of "psychic income." Schell, arguing about the feminization of composition and its disproportionate number of female contingent workers, notes that ideas about psychic pay, or the emotional and spiritual satisfaction one gets from one's work, can be used to support demeaning work conditions (41). Schell points to the history of women who have taught composition part-time and/or for a fraction of the pay of their tenured male colleagues, and argues that "nineteenth century gender ideologies that advocated teaching as women's true profession" helped to cement composition courses as women's work and as less rigorous and important than the masculine realms of research and literature (36). As a woman compositionist interested in improving the labor conditions of my field, I have come to bristle at suggestions that the emotional, religious, or "psychic" rewards of teaching somehow mitigate exploitative labor practices. Such bristling is not unique to me; many women scholars have noted and bemoaned troubling ways our field equates

the feminine with the "lesser." Sharon Crowley argues that part of the move toward defining "English as a language from which its native speakers were alienated" was designed to "escape [the] aura of effeminacy" associated with English studies (*Composition* 60). And Theresa Enos has written at great length about the ways the feminization of the field has marginalized scholars (especially women) in Composition and Rhetoric (4). My discomfort with this aspect of Hopkins's identity is based on my awareness of particular scholarly conversations and my status as a woman academic in a "feminized" field. Yet, as an historical researcher, I must also be able to listen to Hopkins's reality, the position that helped to define his experience of his work and his activism for improving labor conditions, in spite of my own context—a context which encourages me to be highly suspicious of (and even hostile to) factoring "psychic income" into labor debates. By listening to experiences laid side-by-side, I can honor our differences and see connections that may otherwise be missed or over-simplified. In this moment, drawn deeply to many of Hopkins's experiences, I need to not see myself represented by or against him. Instead, I must listen attentively to the insights another history offers me—insights which I am still free, ultimately, to criticize or reject.

There is tension, for me, in this moment. I want to critique Hopkins and to argue my own point of view about the dangers of this position. I want to reject this part of his reality, to rush to judgment so that I can close off this space of discomfort. Rhetorical listening has helped me to identify and think through a moment of non-identification but strategic contemplation can help me resist the urge to come to closure too quickly. Strategic contemplation asks me to pause, to listen, and to refuse to rush to judgment. Royster and Kirsch, introducing strategic contemplation as a research method, argue

that it is a method designed to "reclaim a genre of research and a scholarship traditionally associated with the processes of mediation, introspection, and reflection" (84). Part of Royster and Kirsch's book argues that in the current publish or perish environment of academia, historians feel pushed to report findings and make arguments before they have had a chance to sit with information in order to be first to make particular claims or to meet publishing goals shaped by tenure requirements. While there is truth in this claim, I also find it difficult to process information which threatens my research goals or the trends I have already begun to trace. Because I felt immediately connected to and invested in Hopkins, moments of non-identification were uncomfortable for me. While rhetorical listening asks me to name and recognize these moments, strategic contemplation asks me to linger over them, giving myself time to process my reactions and listen for new insights.

Edwin Hopkins in Action: Teaching and Classroom Activities

Hopkins was an adherent of the New Rhetoric pedagogies for teaching rhetoric and composition, mentored by Theodore Hunt (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins" 621). These "new pedagogies" focused on composing in English and providing ample individualized written feedback to each student, as discussed at length in the previous chapter. However, this basic pedagogy could look very different in the hands of different teachers. How did it look in Hopkins's hands? At the University of Kansas archives, there are two boxes of material from Hopkins, mostly consisting of his personal journals. The brief list-like entries do not offer much insight into his daily teaching, however, among his other papers, there are some documents that give a fuller sense of

how he conducted his composition classes. For instance, he gave an address on Kansas Day in 1906, and a transcribed copy of his speech, with written corrections, reveals his use of student writing in the classroom. Hopkins served as a faculty advisor to the student newspaper, and he describes his early interest in the paper. He explains that as a composition instructor at Kansas, he was embarrassed by the errors in "style, grammar, and society" found in the paper (Hopkins, "Kansas Day" 2). He then recounts this anecdote:

> But the instructor felt [these mistakes] very deeply and when, after no long time, it seemed that friendly relations were established, he opened the campaign by bringing one day to a composition class of which the editors of both college papers were members, a copy of each of the two papers, with all the more glaring errors of each, rhetorical, grammatical, and typographical, carefully exhibited in red ink. He stated merely that it seemed to him that his own branch of teaching, if it was to have any justification whatever for recognition on continuance as a part of University training, ought to be able to find that justification in its practical results as shown in every department of the expression of student thought, and not at all in the mere passing of examinations; and particularly ought to be justified in student publications which were prepared with some care by students of some ability. Then he held up the two papers […] and intimated that as long as such things as these were a matter of course in University publications, just so long would he feel himself individually discredited as an instructor in the eyes of any friend of any public to whose attention one of these publications might unfortunately come. (Hopkins, "Kansas Day" 2)

This glimpse into Hopkins's classroom illustrates several parts of Hopkins's pedagogy. First, we see his commitment to teaching English, particularly the clear and everyday English such as would appear in newspapers. Remember that Genung, in particular, advocated teaching a diverse of array of writing styles of which newspaper articles were one example (11-12). Hopkins is also dedicated to teaching skills in English composition that do more than help students pass examinations; he wants students to see "practical result[s]" and applications from the composing skills practiced in his

class. Again, this is the direct result of new pedagogies harkening to Hill, Genung, Hunt, Wendell and others who helped transform the rhetoric course into a course in English composition. Additionally, this moment shows a use of student examples, though not from the classroom, to serve as models (in this case, negative models). Though the remainder of his address focuses primarily on his pride in the improvement of student newspaper since his first-year at the university, he does stop to discuss the ideal standards and practices of good writers. It is not a stretch to assume that this classroom example ended in a writing assignment, particularly given that Wendell's "daily theme" assignments, were in vogue at this time, on which Hopkins then provided personalized feedback.

This example from Hopkins's classroom also highlights a troubling gap in the archives. The fact that I must rely on piecing together his likely classroom activities is a direct byproduct of that fact that the archives at Kansas contain no syllabi, student papers, prompts, or direct materials about Hopkins's daily teaching. What I did not find in the archives was perhaps as interesting as what I did find. While Hopkins spent 15 years gathering and analyzing data on the labor of reading themes, none of this research or his numerous publications on the topic survive in the archives. There is *nothing* in the archives to suggest he collected empirical data or published composition-focused research. There are no lecture notes from his classes, though references in his journal suggest he did write them, and there are no syllabi, course assignments, class rosters, student papers, or any direct evidence of his teaching style. How interesting, then, that archives do contain his personal journals, a literary manuscript he was working on, addresses he delivered at chapel, and a small scattered collection of personal

correspondence. Were these the materials that Hopkins considered most pertinent to his legacy? Or were these decisions made by the English department or an archivist? Archival work will always be scattered and incomplete, but the choices that are made about what to save and what to toss are always telling. Ruth Mirtz points about that "The state of a program's archives are an indication of the value of the program to those running it" (127). Furthermore, Moon explains how absences in an archive can usefully be investigated: "when dealing with historical artifacts as fragmentary and discontinuous as those in composition's archives" historians must pay "attention to what we do not have and thus cannot read" (Moon 2). While we cannot "read" absent materials, we can note these absences, comparing them to materials present in the archive, materials in other archives, and the scholarly information about our research subject. Hopkins taught in an era in which Freshman Composition had little prestige, both in the English department and the university more widely. No wonder that whatever mix of entities that led to the current archival holdings on Hopkins saved his literary scholarship and school addresses, yet discarded whatever teaching materials were left behind as well as his extensive research on the labor of responding to student's theme writing.

Even acknowledging the gaps in the archival record, this glimpse into his teaching shows his commitment to engaging with student work while also highlighting the current-traditional aspects of his pedagogy. Following the mechanical emphasis of current-traditional pedagogy, Hopkins is not concerned with the *content* of the student newspaper; he is concerned with its expression and general correctness. As a closer look Wendell's teaching in the previous chapter demonstrated, however, our current

conception of current-traditional pedagogy is often too one-dimensional. We have Hopkins's testimony in other places that he valued student conferences—though he found them too-consuming to be practicable in all situations—and that he believed in revision—he argues that up to a third of student work should be rewritten, though it is likely that he sees rewriting more as editing than as part of the drafting processes we use today (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 24). Thinking about how Hopkins both fit into and chaffed against the current-traditional pedagogies he taught, helps us to contextualize Hopkins's pedagogy within the history of the discipline in many ways, but it also destabilizes the idea that all current-traditional teaching was uncritical and mechanical: Hopkins's was a dedicated and talented teacher. In addition, laying Hopkins's pedagogy alongside his research into the labor conditions of the profession highlights the connection between work conditions and pedagogy. Hopkins was fighting valiantly to make a pedagogy that today we find rote and mechanical bearable—how doubly impossible would a pedagogy that focused on process or the situated nature of all writing have been within Hopkins's material reality? In these conditions, how could any pedagogy not aimed at immediately reducing the workload of composition teachers succeed or flourish? By keeping his labor conditions forefront in my mind, I am impressed both by the evidence in his Kansas Day address that he, at least occasionally, used student writing in his classroom and by the fact his arguments for reform were centered not on simplifying his pedagogy to exist within the constraints of lecture-sized classes but to support his favored pedagogies with material conditions that would make enacting them possible.

The Labor of Response to Student Writing

My own labor experiences have colored how I read and react to Hopkins. Often in the midst of my research, I was reminded of the labor constraints I experienced in my first position as a full-time writing instructor. By most standards, I was lucky. There were several adjunct positions at my university but few lecturer positions. The majority of our first-year composition courses were taught by adjuncts. I occupied a Visiting Lecturer position for three years. While I could not count on my job being renewed each year, once it was, I was safe for the entire year. My co-workers, my friends—even my partner—were adjuncts. One semester they might have three classes, the next just one. They made less per class than I did, even though we held the same degrees. The unfairness of the situation, that others made less money for the same work and that so many had to deal with a permanent lack of job security, was never lost on me. In this context, I was immensely thankful for my job. But I was also tired. In the fall I applied to Ph.D. programs, in addition to my 4-4 load at my home university, I taught courses at a local community college. In my full-time position I was not only teaching; I was serving on several committees, training new faculty, and working on a major program assessment. At the same time, I was completing graduate school applications, tracking down recommendations, and working on my conference presentations. My plate was full. Alone, though, none of that bothered me. What made me sick with stress and worry was responding to student essays. With six classes, I simply had too many essays to handle. I had essays or drafts to respond to nearly every day. I was *always* responding to student work. I enjoy reading and thinking about student work. But evaluating and

responding to it—for five and six classes worth of students and four preps worth of curriculum? Instead of enthusiasm, I felt fatigue; I was so tired.

This personal context—symptomatic of labor conditions in the field more generally—is part of why I found Hopkins such a compelling figure. Separated by nearly one hundred years, descriptions of his work conditions and his fatigue resonated with my own experiences. For example, Hopkins also notes teacher fatigue and the never-ending deluge of student papers. In fact, he comes to believe that the labor conditions surrounding the teaching of composition cause teacher burnout and substandard instruction. To prove this, and to advocate for reforming those conditions, Hopkins turns to an empirical research study and he publishes the final results of his research in 1923. To compile these results, he sends two rounds of surveys to all colleges in the United States (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 22). For the first survey, collected in the years 1909-1913, his goal is to "determine the labor necessary to meet current standards of English composition teaching." He reports receiving responses from faculty at approximately one fifth of colleges, representing 33 states, 96 colleges, and 345 teachers (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 22). For his second survey, collected from 1913-1915, his goal is to "make a comparative study of cost." In this survey, he tries to find out how much it costs to staff English sections compared to other subjects, factoring in everything from equipment and classroom space to instructors and assistants. He reports that approximately ten percent of colleges responded (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 22). Hopkins's finds that "the theme reading labor expected of a college freshman composition instructor is more than double (250 per cent) that which can be carried without undue physical strain" (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 20). To

support this, he explains that the average student writes 650 words a week, that teachers can read student writing at an average rate of 2,200 words an hour, that instructors can read for up to two hours a day (or ten hours a week) without "loss of efficiency," and finally that the average instructor teaches 105 students a semester (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 20). Ultimately, he argues that these work conditions are the direct cause of two problems: that the "results of the work are unsatisfactory"[18] and that "conscientious and efficient teachers are brought to actual physical collapse and driven from the profession" (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 21). These dramatic findings underscore what a pivotal moment this was in the history of the field; it documents the severity and the scope of the extreme labor conditions that followed adopting a personalized pedagogy without creating material conditions to support that pedagogy.

In my research process, part of enacting rhetorical listening involved charting my own emotional reactions—the moments where I felt drawn in or cut off from—my research on Hopkins on his work. This was particularly fruitful in reviewing Hopkins's report. In a sub-section entitled "Detailed Results of the College Survey," Hopkins stops to elaborate on several points. In addition to detailing his methods for determining the speed and efficiency at which instructors could reasonably be expected to work, he also makes some interesting arguments. For example, he writes that "All replies practically agree that not to give attention to all the written work that a pupil has done destroys his interest; that every written exercise should be carefully read; that in addition to such

[18] Interestingly, Hopkins takes for granted that the labor conditions surrounding the teaching of writing are the sole reason students made disappointing progress. Nowhere in his research does he consider that his favored pedagogies may be contributing to the lack of success composition classes had in producing mature writers (or that expecting mature writers from a single semester of instruction might be unrealistic).

discussion as is possible in class there should be individual criticism of every exercise" (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 24). My immediate reaction to these lines is identification; I see many of my own values represented here. But in creating space, in working to non-identify, I am able to see other things as well. This is a moment when Hopkins moves away from statistical representations and quantitative findings. His voice becomes a synthesizing agent ("all replies practically agree"), but in doing so some perspectives are notably erased. Who were the outliers? What were their beliefs? In this moment, hidden within his other more straightforward numerical findings, Hopkins breaks into the report to assert his pedagogical values and concerns. By downplaying, mentioning but not elaborating on other viewpoints, Hopkins keeps the focus of his report on labor and presents his own pedagogic commitments as essentially unchallenged.[19]

In addition to this raw data, Hopkins also synthesizes portions of his results. For example, he discusses the different ways that manuscripts were read, beginning by listing the "rosy" conditions of oral response in conferences (a method he claims is "satisfactory" but too time-consuming), followed by explaining the dedication of some instructors who pushed themselves to respond to all student work—sometimes working fifty hours a week on reading themes alone— and contrasts this with those who respond only partially, destroying or returning "credited, but unread," the remaining papers. He argues, however, that most instructors fall somewhere in the middle of these extremes

[19] This mirrors a tendency in our histories generally which, at least in their earliest iterations, tended to downplay or ignore minority and women's educational institutions, pedagogies at non-research schools, and rhetorical education not taking place in formal educational settings. As revisionists historians have documented, in all these locations alternative pedagogies often flourished (Moon 5; Mendenhall 26; Thomas Miller 3-4; Ferganchick-Neufang 21)

(Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 24-5). Here I am struck by the omission of numbers. Though Hopkins was summarizing his survey results, results which may not be easy to categorize and sort, I wonder that he could not turn his summaries into a percentage. This moment alerts me to his actual work conditions. Popken reports that Hopkins was acutely aware of his three spheres of responsibility: teaching, working as an administrator, and doing his own research. According to Popken, Hopkins "regret[ted] deeply the fact that, of the three responsibility areas, research always had to come last" ("WPA" 15). Popken also documents Hopkins's attempts to get course releases and administrative help for his research, attempts which never succeeded fully and seldom succeeded at all ("WPA" 15-17). I cannot know if Hopkins would have rendered this section differently given more resources, but I do know that his labor conditions were significant material constraints. Reading the report more critically, I see new weaknesses in his interpretations of his empirical data.

Having just managed to distance myself from the report and to imagine the conditions in which it was written, I again feel the pull of identification. Here Hopkins notes the difficulty of retaining English composition instructors and notes "reports [that] certify to wearing out, suffering from indigestion and nervous exhaustion, loss of efficiency, impaired eyesight, shattered nerves, and in certain instances, to complete nervous collapse—all as the result of attempting to carry a 'killing' overload of pupils in composition" (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 25). My initial reaction, again, is to see my struggle and the struggle of so many contemporary composition teachers represented by Hopkins research. At the same time, in this section, reading carefully and trying to create space, I see troubling blind spots and assumptions. In detailing his

methods for determining the current workloads of composition instructors, Hopkins assumes full-time workers ("The Cost and Labor" 26). He also envisions teachers as male and working at four-year colleges and universities ("The Cost and Labor" 28-9). Given his historical context, these assumptions make more sense than they would today. However, women *were* teaching[20] and, at least in theme readers and graduate students, part-time workers were a part of the university, though not to the extent they are now.

It is important to note here that Hopkins was not the only composition teacher in his era writing about labor, but the fact that composition was not recognized as a field hampered efforts at systematic or permanent reform. For example, in 1918 Frank W. Scott, Joseph M. Thomas, and Frederick A. Manchester, in the "Preliminary Report of the Special Committee on Freshman English" for *The English Journal* discuss critical issues facing composition instruction. They note that "the supply of competent teachers must be increased" (593) and that "if we sincerely desire to improve the quality of the teaching in Freshman English […] we shall do whatever is practicable to lighten the burdens and increase the opportunities of the teacher of the Freshman English and other similar courses in composition" (594). However, Composition and Rhetoric was not yet a generally recognized discipline and teaching writing was widely considered to be the commonsensical application of grammar rules which any competent writer could drill into a student's head. It is also important to note that while Scott et. al's research does mention labor conditions, it does so briefly and without elaborating on the kind of steps that could be taken to "lighten the burdens and increase the opportunities" of composition instructors. This is in direct contrast to Hopkins, who makes several

[20] For instance, Gertrude Buck and the lowly comp-only women teachers that Schell argues began to redefine composition as women's work (Schell, *Gypsy Academics* 29).

specific recommendations for addressing the overwork he reports on, from determining teaching loads based on student numbers rather than number of courses and weighing composition sections like laboratory sections (Hopkins, *The Labor* 36). Concrete recommendations or not, without a dedicated field of fellow-scholars, support for research, and recognition that the labor of composition teachers was both specialized and important, Hopkins and the few others who did write about pedagogy and labor as they related to Freshman English, had no professional identity to take up their findings, theorize ways to practicably apply them, or advocate effectively for change. Hopkins, in carrying out and publicizing his findings, is impressive in what he was able to accomplish, and the fact his findings failed to permanently alter the labor landscape of composition instructors is at least in part due to the field's lack of disciplinary legitimacy.

Identification and Distance: The Physical Limits of Labor

My struggle with the labor demands of responding to student writing did not disappear when I entered a PhD program. As a graduate teaching assistant (GTA), I taught two sections of composition as I took two graduate courses. At the same time, I tutored between twenty and thirty Chinese students applying to American colleges and I worked for Educational Testing Services as an Advanced Placement Exam grader. Often I felt beaten down by my workload; my health suffered. I wondered, with true panic: How can I do everything? How can I respond to my students the way I believe in responding to them—carefully, thoughtfully, fully? I've graded through migraines, tears in my eyes. I think that I'm almost through the busy part of my schedule, that I'm

managing things well. Then my body reminds me of the truth: my psoriasis flares up, my TMJ locks my jaw in place, my weight balloons, and I get strange headaches that last for days. When I "met" Hopkins, I immediately identified with his "nervous energy" and history of breakdowns brought on, in large part, due to his scrupulous responses to student writing. Popken, in a section detailing with both the emotional and physical effects of Hopkins's workload, explains how Hopkins's health was adversely affected ("Edwin Hopkins" 629). Popken notes general nervousness, insomnia, eye strain, and depression in the years from 1890 to 1919 ("Edwin Hopkins" 629-30). The stress culminated in 1919, four years before Hopkins finished his fifteen years of labor documenting the work conditions of composition instructors around the country, when Hopkins was hospitalized for "increasing nervous exhaustion with dental infection added" (Hopkins, qtd in Popken "Edwin Hopkins" 630). Hopkins would spend the entire 1919-1920 school year recuperating, receiving a paid leave of absence. Though Hopkins returned to the University of Kansas the following year, he continued to struggle with the physical effects of the demands of his job (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins" 630-31).

I could hear Hopkins because I could identify with him. As I pushed myself to non-identify, I was still struck by the pathos of his situation. Even working not to see Hopkins as a representation of my own exhaustion, I sympathize with his situation. Thus, while in Hopkins's history I find many meaningful connections, I also find these connections troubling. Hopkins dedicated much of his professional energy to preventing just the kind of exhaustion and overwork that I identify with my own work life, a century later. Despite a tireless devotion to improving the labor conditions of

composition teachers, Hopkins had extremely limited success. It is true that even with hostile administration Hopkins was able to make clear improvements during his tenure on his own campus, reducing the student load per faculty member in composition from 177 in 1909 to 49 in 1925 (Popken, "The WPA" 18). Hopkins's larger goal, however, of national improvement, was not realized: in 1929 the average student load for composition was still 93 (Taylor 20).[21] John Heyda points out that "[Hopkins's] study did not succeed […] in redefining definitions of load. Nor did it give rise to alternative models for organizing composition's delivery systems" (247). Again, this lack of success was at least partially due to the loftiness of Hopkins's goals and the fact that there was no established disciplinary field to support and act on his findings. Yet Heyda, looking at other writing roughly contemporaneous to Hopkins about trends in Freshman English notes "how little impact Hopkins's study had on administrators' thinking in the decade following his report's appearance" (248). Why was Hopkins unsuccessful? Given my shared values and history with Hopkins, what can I learn from him? More important, given the enduring nature of labor problems in teaching writing, what can our field learn from him?

Analyzing Hopkins's Arguments for Change

Understanding Hopkins's attempts to educate and persuade his readers can offer both models and cautionary tales for Composition and Rhetoric scholars attempting to tackle labor in its most recent permutations in our field. In order to better understand how Hopkins's work failed to reform labor in composition, especially through gaining

[21] Warner Taylor's survey, published in 1929, looked into the "conditions in Freshman English" on a nationwide scale. One of the conditions he surveyed was class size.

allies in other departments and in university administration, I returned to his body of work and tracked the different arguments he made for addressing his concerns. When Hopkins first begins to advocate for better labor conditions for composition teachers in 1909 on his own campus, he focuses his arguments on the quality of work teachers were able to do, arguing "that large student loads diminish the quality of composition teaching" (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins" 625). This argument, that current labor conditions were linked to unsatisfactory teaching results, remains throughout Hopkins's work. In his final presentation of his research data in 1923, for example, he argues that:

> If the public now pays large and growing sums for Bad English and then complains of the badness of that English rather than of the cost, it is at least possible that the same public may eventually […] be willing to make the necessary and reasonable addition to its present ineffective outline for the teaching of English expression, if thereby it may ensure the desired return. (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 37)

The underlying claim is that the reason the public is receiving "Bad English" is because teachers are not able to give good instruction given their current work conditions. This argument for improving the work conditions of composition instruction is based on Hopkins's pedagogic commitments: instruction is failing because instructors are unable to effectively carry out the personalized pedagogy Hopkins's supports. While this argument never entirely disappears from his work, he realizes early on that this argument alone is insufficient, as can be seen in the increasing complexity of his arguments detailed below.

When appealing to the needs of students and teachers fails, Hopkins devotes much of his argumentative energies to a scientific approach, both as an intrinsic good—a way at getting at the truth—and as a way to solve the problem. In presenting the findings of his nationwide study, Hopkins writes "For two and half years an

investigation has been in progress to ascertain what are the proper laboratory requirements for the efficient teaching of English expression" (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 747). This line both highlights the scientific value of his study and one of his main arguments in campaigning for better labor conditions for composition instructors: teaching writing is a laboratory subject.[22] Indeed, in his final 1923 report Hopkins claims that "although not in agreement with tradition, it is now commonly even if reluctantly admitted that English composition is a laboratory subject" ("The Labor and Cost" 36). Hopkins, looking at composition classes through the lens of laboratory classes, makes it clear that **"**the system of determining teaching loads is wholly unjust," but then uses scientific methods and calculations to allow him to offer a solution by inventing "a formula for determining faculty load that counts 'theme and exercising correcting' on same level [sic] as 'conducting recitations'" (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins" 626). By applying scientific arguments, Hopkins is able to argue for and eventually carry out research into composition instructors' work conditions while also suggesting solutions to alleviate the burden, solutions he positions as fair and unbiased. Another benefit of his scientific arguments is that they allow him to present his arguments as factual and, therefore, unassailable by those of goodwill and good understanding. He complains that, before his recourse to a scientific study of labor problems faced by composition instructors:

> [W]hen English teachers have stated these facts to educational authorities, they have not infrequently been called incompetent, ignorant, or even untruthful; while more often and perhaps more recently they have been assured that these matters, while possibly true, are after all

[22] If you'll recall from the previous chapter, Hopkins argues that the personalized requirements of individualized current-traditional pedagogies made the course more analogous to the small laboratory classes where scientific knowledge was tested and enacted by students than to the large lecture courses currently housing composition classes.

> unimportant and irrelevant; that they have no bearing upon the situation, or that they have nothing to do with the real problems of English teaching. (Hopkins, "Can Good Composition" 5)

Hopkins believed that his scientific study would silence these kinds of responses. In relying on science for authority, Hopkins could quiet his opponents by representing them as unwilling to see reality. After arguing, for instance, about the maximum amount of student work an instructor could read in a day, Hopkins wrote "Some, who perhaps do not wish to admit the truth, dispute this statement, but it can be disputed only by refusing to consider facts and figures" (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 747). Positioning his research as scientific, he worked hard to present his findings as objectively and obviously (based on the data) true.

Finally, Hopkins also tried to co-opt the language of business to reframe better labor conditions for teachers as commonsensical. Hopkins summarizes the current situation in terms pointing to its absurdity: "Much money is spent, valuable teachers are worn out at an inhumanly rapid rate, and results are inadequate or wholly lacking. From any point of view—that of taxpayer, teacher, or pupil—such a situation is intolerable" (Hopkins, "Can Good Composition" 1). In this assessment of the problem, Hopkins argues not that the public is getting affordable education and exploiting teachers, he argues that they are getting ineffective instruction *because* they are exploiting teachers. Although Hopkins's work is motivated by his pedagogical concerns, this framing of the situation implicitly reorients his argument in terms of profitable business practices. Is it worthwhile to expend more money for better results? Following this line of logic, Hopkins makes the case that, according to business values of costs and benefits, it is worthwhile to hire more English teachers. He asks why "if there is more English work

than English teachers can do, there should not be more English teachers" and argues that before hiring more instructors can be dismissed as too expensive, administrators and the public must know "just what does English cost now, and what is the actual value of it, in relation to other subjects and the number of pupils concerned" (Hopkins, "The Labor and Cost" 750). Hopkins works hard to argue that any additional costs associated with his suggested reforms will result in worthwhile benefits. Taken together, we can see that Hopkins makes many purposeful arguments—focusing on the pedagogical justifications for his preferred "laboratory"-style instruction, on the scientifically demonstrable need for improving labor conditions, and on the argument that additional costs would be justified by improvements in the writing skills of students—all designed to sway his audience. These techniques supported his deeply held pedagogic beliefs, lobbied for the truth and objectivity of his resulting claims, and attempted to appeal to a cost-minded public and administrators. How is it that these arguments failed to lead to long-term, nationwide reform?

Insights from Strategic Contemplation

After writing an early draft of this chapter, I had the opportunity to get feedback from a writing group. As I always do with such feedback, I read the essay start to finish, reacting to comments as they appeared in the text. I had several rounds of feedback, so I ended up reading through my work three times. The comments were insightful and gave me useful ideas. But in the back of my mind I felt uncomfortable. I had "heard" something. This something was not written down, at least not explicitly. But I felt it. I made notes about avenues to explore. I got good ideas, made good plans. I went back to

that uncomfortable feeling. I circled passages which badly needed editing and sat for a few minutes, thinking in an undirected kind of way. It didn't come to me, so I packed up, filed the feeling away in my brain, and went home. I asked myself to sit with the feeling, hoping it would germinate. In other words, I consciously made space for strategic contemplation. Three or four nights later, as I was getting ready for bed it came to me: I found the "problem" with my draft. Hopkins and I are *annoying* in our valorization of suffering. We take perverse pride in a work ethic that is physically exhausting, perhaps damaging. I have good defenses to this accusation. I do suffer, at times, from the physical effects of my labor but I work hard because I believe in this work. However, if I listen, especially to my own story in this narrative, the things that drew me to Hopkins and the ways that I read him, I can hear pride in my willingness to go above and beyond, enjoyment in the struggle to do the impossible. I critiqued Hopkins for the spiritual dimension of his work. I worried that his religiosity allowed him to romanticize his debilitating overwork as a sign of "goodness." I said, *not me*. And yet. Me. Absolutely me. That is part of my connection to him. Whether or not Hopkins himself would own or articulate a tendency to romanticize damaging work conditions, I have to own it. I hear it when I my lay my experience alongside his, when I give myself time to reflect and withhold judgment.

This insight opens a new window into my analysis of Hopkins's argumentative choices. Hopkins tried to appropriate scientific and business arguments to be persuasive. But, perhaps, these arguments were undermined by his representation of the punishing nature of his labor. Like me, he probably did not intend to valorize his painful labor moments. However, how might these representations of suffering have been read

by faculty in other disciplines? By administrators? In the afternoon that I read a shorter version of this essay three times, though I couldn't immediately identify it, I was bothered by the dramatic rendering of the personal costs of such labor. That does not mean that I think these descriptions of my work conditions are inaccurate. But I felt annoyed by my *own* descriptions of a struggle between an ideal pedagogy and the material conditions that make this pedagogy either impossible or painful to enact. I can only imagine the reactions of a less sympathetic or invested reader. Isn't there a simpler way to teach effectively, to leave quality feedback? Is such a detailed level of response really necessary? Do I really grade through tears? In Colin Charlton et al.'s *GenAdmin*, they critique the trope of the suffering WPA noting that "images of suffering can be overwhelming" in the literature on WPAs. They argue tropes of suffering create a victim/hero dichotomy that downplays the evolution of Composition and Rhetoric—particularly related to issues of writing program administration—as a dynamic and evolving field with engaged and empowered actors (55). Hopkins cannot be critiqued for following this trend so much as insights from later scholars like Charlton et al., who have the benefit of a discipline and history to analyze, can help us see the limits of this approach. Hopkins—and to a large extent myself in parts of this essay—frames himself and other composition teachers as victims unable to enact change without outside intervention. Hopkins is right that without help from his administration and the general public his grandest vision could not be realized. However, he does not account for what he could and even did accomplish. Teaching loads at Kansas were reduced under this tenure. He did carry out and publish his research. And while I am frustrated by my own and my colleagues' labor conditions, this awareness was the part of my impetus for

pursing my PhD and working as a WPA, where I have more (though by no means total) power to affect the labor conditions of composition instructors at my university. By downplaying his and other composition instructors' agency, Hopkins's depiction of the extreme suffering and physical costs of the labor required to teach composition likely worked against him because its impassioned nature allowed readers to focus on the emotional tone of his findings and not the scientific data he worked so hard to gather. For instance, when Hopkins's proposal for research into the work conditions of composition instructors was rejected in 1909 by both his dean and chancellor, Popken notes that "The proposal even got Hopkins in conflict with faculty members who believed he was trying to get special favors for his program" ("WPA" 17-18). This reaction by other faculty suggests that rather than being moved by his descriptions of the labor conditions surrounding teaching writing, they may have been alienated by the dramatic rendering of those descriptions.

Many of Hopkins's choices make sense to me. Employ arguments that matter to your audience in order to persuade them, get data to support your position. In fact, I find Hopkins's decision to research and document the labor conditions he sought to improve a canny move. And using the values of your audience—in this case scientific data and economically justifiable recommendations—is rooted in a rhetorical awareness I find compelling. Even these moves, however, may not have been as effective as Hopkins (and Composition and Rhetoric scholars today) assumes. Bousquet, in his essay "Composition as Management Science" traces several of the ways composition has tried to deal with its labor problems in the recent past. He cites several "trends in the discourse," one of which he identifies as particularly problematic. He describes this as a

move “away from critical theory toward institutionally focused pragmatism, toward acceptance of market logic, and toward increasing collaboration with a vocational and technical model of education” (Bousquet 13). Bousquet explains that while the adoption of these kinds of arguments may feel pragmatic or persuasive, the end goal is counter-productive; we end up indirectly validating the values that produced the damaging work conditions. In effect, arguments for reform remaining dedicated to fixing a broken or exploitative system have already, by legitimizing that system, failed. This critique can apply to Hopkins. When Hopkins appeals to the economic values of reorganizing labor in composition classes, he assumes that economic arguments are valid educational arguments. And by trying to reclassify composition as a laboratory subject, Hopkins assumes that laboratory loads were fairer and more manageable loads. Christopher Carter argues that “good bureaucrats” like Hopkins “in appearing to patiently work within [bureaucratic boundaries], sustain as reality political limits that are neither honest nor natural but simply the limit—ideas most useful to hierarchies of decision making and money-gathering” (*Bureaucratic* 188). In effect, Hopkins’s close attention to the material conditions of English compositionists blinded him to solutions that assumed different material conditions. And by focusing exclusively on trying to prove that composition instructors had a unique teaching burden in responding to themes, Hopkins fails to consider or imagine different material realities faced by other faculty in other departments. Just because an instructor was not grading themes does not mean her labor conditions were reasonable or humane. By failing to consider how his arguments validated the current system or reflected the labor realities of other faculty, he risked making enemies where he may, by employing more inclusive labor arguments, have

made allies. What do Hopkins's strategies, as well as they were interpreted by his contemporaries, mean for composition teachers working toward labor reform in our discipline today?

Concluding Connections: Today's Changing Labor Conditions

Today the labor conditions of teaching writing are very different from the conditions that Hopkins studied. Teaching writing has its own discipline and is a legitimate career for scholars on the tenure track. Lecture sized classes are seldom the norm and most first-year composition programs carefully guard their course caps. However, over-reliance on poorly paid contingent workers has emerged as a new major labor issue. Yet, as contingent workers make up an ever-larger portion of composition teachers, Composition and Rhetoric PhDs enjoy a more robust job market than many other humanities doctorates. On many campuses, the result has been a tiered labor structure where a few enjoy the protections of tenure and a living wage while a majority languish in contingent positions that often require cobbling together classes from two and three universities and colleges to make ends meet. The initial labor conditions described in my first few chapters led some to believe that composition itself would die out on college campuses and/or that it would never achieve discipline legitimacy within the academy:

> Sharon Crowley […] predicated that composition would fail to achieve disciplinarity as long as the universal requirement of first-year composition (FYC) was so embroiled in unfair labor practices. The numbers, however, suggest precisely the opposite of Crowley's prediction for composition—that the discipline's growth historically (measured in term of TT faculty lines) occurred even as reliance on contingent labor worsened." (Mendenhall 11)

While the field itself is, in many ways stronger than ever, over the past two to three decades there has been growing awareness surrounding the ethics of contingent labor as well as various ideas for reforming our contemporary labor conditions as a field. Schell, in her 1998 book, categorizes four major approaches within the field for addressing contingent labor and tiered labor structures. The "conversionist solution" suggests converting contingent positions into tenure positions, the "reformist solution" recommends professionalizing the working conditions of writing instructors, the "union/collectivist solutions" advocates unionization, and finally the "abolitionist solution" supports replacing first-year composition courses entirely with vertical writing curricula (taught by tenured faculty) (Schell 90-115). Schell acknowledges that no single solution is likely to work on every campus or in every context. In terms of this chapter, my goal is to infuse conversations like this—conversations attempting to chart a best path forward—with the historical knowledge learned from cases studies like this one. Given Hopkins's experiences unintentionally alienating other faculty, does this bode well for the "collectivist solution" (building partnerships across campus) or should it give us pause (perhaps suggesting that shared needs and demands may be difficult to reach)?

While rhetorical listening helped me think about Hopkins's and his (dis)connections to my own experiences more critically, strategic contemplation gave me the space to generate insights about what Hopkins's history offers today's compositionists interested in reforming our labor conditions. Articulating my responses to my research on Hopkins—and then resting with and investigating those responses—helped me to see and imagine others ways to respond to Hopkins's work, ways that

helped me imagine why he had such limited long-term, nationwide success. The most enduring lesson from Hopkins may be that he failed to achieve lasting reform. Hopkins relied on three argumentative strategies: pedagogical justifications, authority garnered from scientific research, and costs and benefits analysis. These moves, however, were undermined by the valorization of suffering seen in his descriptions of dedicated teachers of writing and his commitment to working with the systems that produced the hellish labor conditions he describes. Today, arguments that accept unchallenged the values that have allowed contingent labor to be increasingly exploited in American universities or which pragmatically attempt to work within or alongside structures of exploitation are likely doomed to fail. Likewise, solutions that improve the working conditions of one small segment teachers within the university (or within a department) are likely to encounter unexpected adversaries. Histories like Hopkins's cannot be mapped easily onto today's landscape, but they can inform the decisions we make and warn us about potential pitfalls as we attempt to reimagine labor conditions in composition so that our material work conditions support our best practices and ideal pedagogies.

In looking at Hopkins, his labor conditions, and his research I do not mean to blame him for his failures. It is unlikely that any arguments would have led to the kind of change Hopkins envisions, especially so early in the history of the field. But today, as our modern labor issues—mostly pressingly an over-reliance on contingent labor—and possible solutions are debated in the field the value of revisiting Hopkins cannot be overstated. Hopkins offers a glimpse into how our arguments are or might be structured and the possible outcomes of such decisions. Analyzing Hopkins's failures, particularly

to convince other stakeholders to invest in improving labor conditions for composition teachers, is important to us today, particularly when we consider reforms like unionization which depend on coalitions across departments in the university. Few attempts at labor reform look to the history of composition or the specific histories of individuals or departments attempting to reform labor in the field. Hopkins demonstrates why this kind of historical work is vital—not just for understanding the labor history of our discipline but also for effectively strategizing labor reform efforts today.

Chapter 4: George Wykoff, Academic Mobility, Professionalization: The Limits of a Winning Strategy

"Whatever the immediate objectives of freshman composition, their successful achievement both primarily and in the last analysis depends upon the milieu of climate or environment in which the composition teacher works." – George Wykoff ("Toward Achieving" 319)

Professionalizing the Discipline

George Wykoff, Director of Composition at Purdue University from 1933 to 1967, saw, again and again, labor conditions that worked against effective writing instruction in universities: he was criticized by other departments for his curriculum, he saw colleagues yearning to teach literature and ashamed of toiling in composition classrooms, he faced exploding enrollments and shortages of teachers, and he complained that the rewards for excelling as a composition teacher were poverty and overwork. But in spite of this, he believed composition courses were vitally important and that the intellectual questions surrounding how to teach writing were serious concerns worthy of scholarly research. Sustained by these beliefs, Wykoff directly confronted the obstacles to teaching writing in his path: he mounted passionate defenses of his focus on correctness in the face of criticism from other units in the University; he did research on writing and writing programs and helped found scholarly communities dedicated to that work; and, most important given the goals of this project, he worked hard to create a work environment that would reward and sustain teachers of composition. Given the university system and its emphasis on scholarship, Wykoff's most significant contribution to the field of Composition and Rhetoric was his focus on professionalizing the discipline. But he also articulated and brainstormed ways to

address other labor conditions he believed impeded effective writing instruction—such as admitting more students than the writing program could handle or cutting basic writing classes. And unlike Wendell and Hopkins, Wykoff's strategies effectively improved labor conditions for a least a segment of writing teachers. Thanks to the professionalization of Composition and Rhetoric that Wykoff helped ignite, Composition and Rhetoric scholars today have research opportunities and tenure track positions. At the same time, the benefits of professionalization have not been unambiguously good and writing teachers—those in the trenches and who teach the majority of first-year composition classes but do little research or administrative work—have been increasingly marginalized by demands for professionalization that have not been supported with adequate resources.

By the time Wykoff began work at Purdue in 1923,[23] current-traditionalism had been the dominant writing pedagogy throughout the roughly fifty-year existence of the first-year composition course; the low prestige and grueling labor conditions associated with first-year composition courses, revealed in Wendell and Hopkins's histories, were also largely professionalized by this time. While Wykoff's writing pedagogy appears to have been quite traditional (that is, current-traditional[24]), he is well-known in the field today as an early advocate for research into the most effective ways to teach writing and for arguing that teaching writing should be a legitimate career path within English departments instead of a dreaded service undertaken on the way to teaching literature

[23] Wykoff began teaching at Purdue in 1923, as an Assistant Professor with a specialization in 18th and 19th century American literature. He eventually focused his research and professional work on teaching composition, as he served as Chair of English 1, what today we would call Composition Director, from 1933 to 1967 (Rose 223).

[24] As will be explored later in this chapter, though elements of his pedagogy were undeniably current-traditional, many of his rationales reveal complex rhetorical considerations that complicate knee-jerk negative associations of current-traditional pedagogy as emerging from rhetorically barren impulses.

or, for those who remained in the composition classroom, the sign of a "failed" career. Even though his mark on the field is generally appreciated and much of his scholarship on Composition and Rhetoric survives, there are few archival sources for reconstructing his personal labor conditions. For instance, while it is possible to tell what courses he taught before 1943 by looking through Purdue's course catalogs, it is not possible to tell how many sections he taught or how many students were in each section. None of his personal papers survive beyond his published articles. Compared to my other research subjects in this project, he remains more mysterious and less accessible. Though the sparse holdings in the archives were a challenge, Wykoff's vital role in the professionalize of Composition and Rhetoric made me reluctant to abandon him as a research subject. Therefore, in this chapter I utilize previously mentioned research methodologies (like rhetorical listening and strategic contemplation) alongside the methodologies of a zamani perspective, critical imagination, and collage (designed to analyze gaps in the archival records) to complicate understandings of Wykoff by looking at his likely labor conditions, the general labor conditions for English faculty at this time, and the legacy of his arguments for the professionalization of teaching writing on the labor conditions of the field today. The methodologies introduced in this chapter focus on effectively reading gaps in archival sources and constructing a historical, communal perspective in order to develop productive, critically imagined possibilities. With these tools, I am able to cobble together a useful framework for examining Wykoff's contribution to the discipline through the lens of labor. Ultimately I argue that professionalization—by which I mean expecting and requiring research and service on writing (versus literature)— has been useful by validating the scholarly rigor of

studying and teaching writing. At the same time, the growing divide between writing researchers and writing teachers has obscured some areas of labor in Composition and Rhetoric (namely teaching and service) while elevating others (primarily research). Additionally, the term "professionalization" itself masks increased labor expectations (research, writing, attending conferences) by representing these new demands as the natural consequence of scholarly-rigorous work (which is true, but doesn't consider the labor conditions necessary to supporting this new labor). The result has been an unproductive divide between writing researchers and administrators and writing teachers, which has exacerbated uneven working conditions that disproportionately hurt writing teachers.

A Zamani Perspective, Critical Imagination, Collage: Methods for Access

Of my research subjects in this project, Wykoff proved particularly difficult to "re-see." While Wykoff comes alive in his published writing, I found notably fewer official archival traces, meaning I encountered more gaps and silences in trying to reconstruct his labor conditions. To address this, in addition to the strategies of rhetorical listening, strategic contemplation, and naming and interrogating my own position in this research, I applied a zamani perspective, critical imagination, and collage-based composing and research strategies to fill out, complicate, and make meaningful the evidence I was able to collect. In this section, I elaborate on the methodological choices that shape the rest of this chapter. By outlining my process and goals, I make obvious the motivations for my structural and research choices. In this chapter, I gather archival traces, gaps, personal reactions, critically imagined scenarios,

and historical context in order to shape and reshape these bits into a collage I read as a possible history.

When accessing buried histories, Royster's "zamani perspective" is valuable because it encourages researchers to contextualize their research by relying on collective knowledge or experience to supplement incomplete historical details on individuals. Royster explains the African concepts of *sasa* time (roughly the present) and *zamani* time (roughly the past) by equating sasa time with personal experiences of time—our lifetimes and when we are personally remembered by the living—and zamani time with a collective and communal past—the sum of personal and group experiences (Royster 79). According to Royster, using a zamani mindset, we can make claims about moments in which traces of individuals are lost by looking "more carefully at evidence, even trace evidence, from 'collective' experiences, from the 'facts' and artifacts that whisper rather than scream, in order to see how else we might still come to historical consciousness and thereby to other renderings of this collective body of lived experiences" (Royster 80). Traditional and individual histories of Composition and Rhetoric provide this kind of context, allowing me to reconstruct historical moments in the field when examining gaps surrounding the individual circumstances and experiences of Wykoff. Royster argues these moves are crucial for historians struggling to locate official archival sources. For example, when researching African American women's rhetorical history before the Civil War, Royster found traditional archival research challenging because of the few archival traces left behind. Since these women were marginalized by both their gender and race, whatever artifacts they may have left were often not valued or saved. Royster is adamant in refusing to read this gap in

traditional archival sources uncritically, a move she equates with re-erasing the marginalized. A zamani perspective empowers her to look for information in other places, to interrogate the significance of gaps, and to use critical imagination to link together the traces she finds. In this way, critical imagination functions as a crucial companion step to a zamani perspective. After widening the scope of inquiry and gathering contextual detail, the researcher then *imagines* the impact of her research on the gap that originally began the exploration. Royster and Kirsch outline the process of critical imagination, explaining that it both accounts "for what we 'know' by gathering whatever evidence can be gathered and ordering it in a configuration that is reasonable and justifiable in accord with basic scholarly methodologies" and encourages thinking "between, above, around, and beyond this evidence to speculate methodically about probabilities, that is, what might likely be true based on what we have in hand" (71). When Royster and Kirsch discuss "ordering [evidence] in a configuration that is reasonable and justifiable" they are talking about a kind of collage-making. Chris Gallagher writes about collage as an authorial choice, one that "[calls] on taken-for-granted formal structures" and "[uses] the familiar tools of [one's] trade to chisel a logical-seeming argument" by requiring readers to ask "Why did he put this here? How does this speak to that? What effect does this have in light of the rest? Do I accept that effect, or reject it?" (Gallagher 36-7). Next to Royster and Kirsch's description of critical imagination and the role that arrangement plays in understanding broken and missing, but also layered, bits of evidence, I argue that collage is more than a composing strategy. It is a meaning-making strategy well suited to archival work, particularly to understanding and complicating gaps or incomplete evidence.

Gallagher's article is about academic composing. He argues that collage is a genre that produces academic arguments that are different from, but equal in value to, traditional academic writing. Reading him from my positionality, as a feminist historian of Composition and Rhetoric, I see a methodological description that is valuable in historical work. Gallagher poses the following question to illustrate his ideas about collage:

> Say some postmodern trickster publishes a 'novel' that consists of a bunch of sentences on individual pieces of paper thrown in a bucket […] You need to arrange the sentences to make a story. So you do.
> Question: Has the 'novelist' written a collage?
> Answer: No, you have. (38-9)

Gallagher's hypothetical situation concerns a novel. But what if we change "sentences on individual pieces of paper" to "archival research, published works, personal reactions to historical research, and interrogations of absent evidence," "novelist" to "historian," and "collage" to "history?" In other words, and this is at the heart of much revisionist feminist historiography, it is the historian's *arrangement* of history that creates history. There is, certainly, a past that happened. And histories are "better" or "worse" depending on the quality and quantity of research they do. But given the exact same evidence to start with, different historians will follow different trails of research and arrange their evidence in different ways. Their personal experiences will encourage them to focus on one historical actor or agent over another. Even similar findings have different flavors with different historians. Thus, using collage, or arranging and rearranging bits of evidence to build a zamani perspective that inspires critical imagination can be a productive methodology for understanding how historians navigate evidence and build compelling, ethical, and believable narratives. It is also a

generative method for beginning to trace connections and contradictions in one's research, jumpstarting further inquiry by revealing interpretations in one arrangement of the evidence not visible in different arrangements.

The zamani perspective and collage-based invention strategies are tools that enable and support critical imagination. In other words, the researcher must still collect evidence, document findings, recursively widen and refine her search terms and locations—but once all of this available evidence is gathered, critical imagination traces likely conclusions that, in turn, support more research and build off not just the knowledge around an individual research subject but the communal knowledge and values surrounding that subject. Royster and Kirsch explain, "Embracing this type of inquiry framework for exercising the critical imagination, we focus on: listening deeply, reflexively, and multisensibly; grounding inquiries in historical evidence with regard to both texts and contexts; creating schemata for engaging critical attention; and disrupting our assumptions regularly through reflective and reflexive questions" (21).[25] In this way, critical imagination allows Royster to read her zamani evidence (and me to interpret my collage of historical sources, personal reactions, and documented gaps) in order to reconstruct an otherwise lost history. However, my research project is importantly different from Royster's pre-Civil War African American Women. In addition to infusing my application of critical imagination with collage strategies, Wykoff is a known historical figure and has an official archival presence, scant and

[25] This quote, taken with my discussion of rhetorical listening in the previous chapter, highlights how the methodologies explored in this project are never wholly separate, but dovetail and overlap. While Royster and Kirsch are not explicitly drawing on the methodology for rhetorical listening I describe, their attention to listening and reflection invite the "laying alongside" of personal experience and layers of evidence crucial to rhetorical listening.

incomplete though it may be (this is largely untrue for Royster's research subjects). This is a significant distinction: Royster provides methodological tools to access a particularly hidden history and I do not mean to suggest my research was as difficult to access or represent as hers. Nevertheless, the tools she offers are flexible enough to be useful in numerous research contexts, as my project and application of her methodologies illustrates. Whatever the research subject, gathering evidence using a zamani perspective and organizing it with collage principles provide useful steps for supporting critical imagination. Critical imagination, much like the rhetorical listening I document in the previous chapter, takes time and strategic contemplation to fully embrace. As Royster and Kirsch explain, "critical imagination centers on enabling and enhancing the quality of thinking processes, and strategic contemplation centers on being willing to go a step farther to use a fuller spectrum of these critical resources in the scholarly production process" (87). Royster's zamani perspective and critical imagination inspire me to approach Wykoff's archive in specific ways: I read absences as carefully as presences, I collect and add to my consideration of the archives some counter-intuitive or surprising sources that represent Wykoff's communal moment, and I allow myself to construct probable narratives from these connections. Though "imagined," these narratives are supported by wide-ranging and contextualized critical interpretations of available evidence. In the spirit of collage, I also encourage readers to consider the placement of sections and the implications of my arrangement of evidence. While my chapters employ a less extreme version of collage than Gallagher models, the collage writing process he describes mirrors many of my own concerns when arranging not only my evidence, but also my final presentation of it. Gallagher reminds us that

"Collages […] require patient readers. And patient writers. Both need to learn how to listen and how to form; collages require mutual construction" (Gallagher 43). Like Gallagher, I want to honor the "mutual constructions[s]" of writing, in this case historical academic writing. History is documented mutually—through artifacts and researchers who interpret them—and it is understood mutually as well—by reader and by writer. Mutual meaning making is a necessary, though often invisible, element of any history.

Reading the Wykoff Archive: When Institutional and Field-Specific Significance Collide

Though the archives on Wykoff are sparse, his general contribution to the field, through his published work, is well-documented. I begin my reading of his archives with this statement because the state of Wykoff's archives is so different from his significance to the field. Wykoff's arguments for the professionalization of composition teaching had earth-shattering effects on what, eventually, became its own field. He argued that writing should be taken seriously both as a research area and as a pedagogical puzzle. By championing professionalization, Wykoff helped to set up the conditions that allowed Composition and Rhetoric to both establish a core investment in teaching writing and claim its disciplinary legitimacy. Donna Strickland, for example, notes "Wykoff and others like him […] sought to professionalize […] teachers, to shift their devotion from scholarship in literary studies to the teaching and researching of composition" (55).[26] While Wykoff probably did not fully foresee the outcomes of

[26] It is also worth noting that Strickland and others who note Wykoff's value in professionalizing the field also fail to consider how this move changed the *labor* required teachers.

advocating for research into teaching writing, this research would eventually complicate and then reject the idea that writing is a mere mechanical skill that students should master before college. Additionally, Wykoff's push toward professionalization helped the field to define itself through research and created pathways of academic mobility for many who might otherwise have been trapped in the endless cycle of teaching current-traditional pedagogies to large numbers of students, largely shut out from research and promotion. It is because of his work that a project like this one is even possible. By linking scholarship to the writing classroom, writing teachers were both able to link their daily teaching to their research and were encouraged to conceptualize their teaching as academically valid and important work. The fact that class sizes began to fall around this time was also helpful, giving some writing teachers time to invest in new demands of professionalization.[27] Understanding Wykoff's contribution to field is crucial background information to how I confront the gaps I found in his official archive.

Despite his influence on the field, Wykoff's archives consist almost solely of copies of his scholarly publications. Even worse—the essays that have been saved all relate to his *literary* research and interests. There are no artifacts related to his classroom, his teaching, or examples of his feedback to students. While Moon explains

[27] Sometime after Warner Taylor's 1929 study, class sizes in composition courses finally began to fall across the country. By 1944, Arthur M. Coon's "The Freshman English Situation at Utopia College" bemoans class sizes of 35, which is a clear improvement from Wendell and Hopkin's class sizes (283). While there is no definitive consensus about why this was, Ryan Skinnell's historical work on the evolution of composition at Arizona State University links falling class sizes to the requirements of accreditation: "In short, NCA [National Commission on Accrediting] accredited secondary scholars would only hire teachers educated at regionally accredited colleges and universities. The teachers' college in Tempe therefore had little choice but to seek NCA accreditation [which included] significantly reducing class sizes across the institution" (Skinnell 85-6). Thus, while the work of scholars like Hopkins and Warner may not have convinced university administrations to lower classes, by influencing the standards of accrediting institutions, they may have contributed to this improvement.

that "Among the artifacts that memorialize a college's life, teachers' assignments and students' writing are strangely rare [and…] college archives still have little interest in preserving boxes of student writing that will be reproduced annually" (7-8), I am still disappointed by how little is in the archives. True, there are no lesson plans or student papers. But there is also very little of Wykoff's scholarly work and almost no trace of his administrative labor. Again, there are good reasons for this: "Administrative work is not always easy to find within archival documents; its traces are often destroyed or hidden in a multitude of files within the archives or a professor's files—unlike the more easily accessible and recognizable students' papers and textbooks" (L'Eplattenier and Mastrangelo xx). Nevertheless, I had hoped that between looking through Wykoff's papers, English department archives, and course catalogs I would be able to find more traces of his work shaping the composition program at Purdue or even this own classroom practices. That information, however, was simply not there.

Still, I did locate many poignant gaps. Before coming to the archives, I had identified nine of Wykoff's best-known publications. In the archives, I found none of those. Instead, I found the following, all ostensibly on literary criticism or teaching literature: *"*The English Teacher and His Reading*"* (1928), "'A Possible Source of Browning's Saul' in Brief Articles and Notes" (1928), "Problems Concerning Franklin's 'A Dialog Between Britain, France, Spain, Holland, Saxony, and America'" (1940), and "Introduction to Freshman Prose Annual" (1940). Anyone coming to this archive without prior knowledge of Wykoff (an unlikely audience, I admit) would assume that Wykoff was a literary specialist with little direct contact with or interest in first-year composition. While I had been hoping for course syllabi or lecture notes or

any traces of his presence in the classroom, I was careful to push myself past my disappointment and force myself to document the gap. I noted what I didn't find, as well as what I did.

While I was disheartened by the slim pickings in the archives, I read what I found carefully. My favorite find came from the article "The English Teacher and His Reading," which was superficially about compiling reading lists for English courses. Wykoff begins the essay by talking about teaching reading in literature classes, but about halfway through his commitment to teaching composition and his frustration with its status become apparent:

> [The professor's] means of livelihood is the teaching of composition, varying from three to five classes per week. He can have little hope of advancing very high—either professionally or financially—by being just a good composition teacher. There is no opportunity—indeed, no need—for graduate study in this field, and so most of our graduate universities offer few course in advanced composition; few, if any, grant doctorate degrees in this subject […] It is little wonder that these teachers look upon their composition teaching as a period of apprenticeship and make every effort to advance to teachers of literature. Probably their attitude will not change until some method is devised whereby composition teachers can advance—again, financially and professionally—on their merits as teachers of composition. Perhaps this time will never come, for instruction in methods is usually dry and unstimulating while literature, according to its broadest definition, is life." (Wykoff "The English," 221)

Wykoff's ideas about training composition instructors changed drastically over the years (so much so that the first time I read this I wondered if he were being sarcastic, though the larger context of the article makes this unlikely) and eventually he sees training in composition teaching as an important resource for instructors. What I find most interesting about this text, however, is how it represents the tension surrounding composition's place in English departments that understand literary research as their

primary intellectual mission. Wykoff articulates the ways that the labor of teaching composition is devalued and how this affects the attitudes of composition teachers toward the class. I also noted how Wykoff slips an aside about teaching composition into an article about teaching literature, a move I initially found confusing. Kelly Ritter's article, examining the role of the editors for the journals *College English* (CE) and *CCC* played surrounding the creation and early years of the field of Composition and Rhetoric, helped me understand this move. She explains how in the early years the boundaries between what counted as literary work and what counted as composition work were less clear: "Certainly *CE* privileged literary scholarship in its pages, but its mission trajectory as articulated by its various editors between 1954 and 1979 also indicates that with *CCC* in existence, *CE*'s identity was both further conscripted and more capacious in term of identifying what English teaching meant—and to whom" (Ritter 100-01). In 2015, when I visited the archives and first read Wykoff's article, I was struck by what I saw as the subversive bubbling up of issues surrounding composition's place in the academy in what was, ostensibly, a piece about literary pedagogy. That divide, however, was not yet clearly codified; under the general heading of "English" and "English teaching" as it was understood at the time, there was actually unity in Wykoff's article tracking the development of a literature professor—for whom teaching composition was a necessary "hurdle" to real classes, real research, and real professional value. What is unique about Wykoff is that he eventually embraces that hurdle as an end in itself.

In addition to the slim folder on Wykoff, I requested documents from the English department during Wykoff's tenure. The boxes of material span the years 1960

to 70, the tail end of Wykoff's time in the English department at Purdue (English Departmental Records)—nothing before that had been saved. Here I found syllabi and course prompts, but not from Wykoff's classes. There were some literature assignments and notes from literature professors, as well a random scattering of Department Meeting Minutes (tellingly, none focusing on composition courses). I found my frustration growing. The one place in the archives where Wykoff's career-long engagement with teaching first-year writers is clear is in Purdue's catalog of courses for each semester. Until 1943 the teachers for each course are listed alongside the offerings. While it is not possible to tell how many sections an instructor taught, it is at least possible to see the classes he or she taught. In his first-year at Purdue in 1923-24, Wykoff taught English Composition A (Purdue's non-credit basic writing class) as well Argumentation (Purdue University, *Fiftieth Annual Catalog*). The next year he taught Composition A, English Composition 1 and 2, and a survey course of English Literature (Purdue University, *Fifty-First Annual Catalog*). Nearly every semester thereafter Wykoff teaches English Composition 1 and 2, occasionally varying his schedule with English 31 (an advanced composition course), Types of English Literature, Introduction to Drama, and a Composition course for international students that first appears in 1927 (Purdue University, *Fifty-Third Annual Catalog*). While Wykoff is able to teach the literature survey course intermittently, the classes he teaches virtually every semester are Composition 1 and 2. Wykoff is certainly not the only professor—especially in their assistant days—to routinely teach composition. But a handful of professors never taught it (the chair, for instance) and others taught it only early in their career. For example,

Professor Babcock, a Shakespearean, taught Composition 1 and 2 through the mid-1930s but after that he only taught literature courses.

Thus far I have been reading available archival traces. This reading is greatly complicated, though, using the zamani perspective and critical imagination to identify gaps and work to understand those gaps by complicating the archival materials on Wykoff with other historical information. Of the articles saved in Wykoff's faculty folder, each bears a handwritten note on the top of the first page, "With the compliments of the author" written in ink. None of these articles, however, were identified by me as representing Wykoff's contributions to Composition and Rhetoric. Thus, Wykoff's vital contributions to the professionalization of Composition and Rhetoric as a discipline are invisible from an archival point of view. Every article saved was about literature or literature pedagogy (even if, as in my earlier example, issues of composition did occasionally slip in). I wondered, why were these essays saved? Why were none of his even more numerous scholarly publications on composition in this archive?

At first, I thought just noticing this gap might be sufficient, but as I worked to apply critical imagination I found that there were conflicting likely scenarios. Arranged one way, the gap suggested a departmental aversion to composition scholarship. Arranged another way, the gap suggested a more general disregard for the institutional history of the English department. Did archivists decide what articles to include? Did Wykoff? The English department? Using the archival data on Wykoff alone, I could not make solid critical claims. Luckily for me, many of the scenarios I considered could be further investigated by looking at the communal picture. For example, one of my

hypotheses was that the English department did not value or count toward tenure and promotion any non-literary scholarship. It seemed plausible, but where else could I look to find support for this interpretation? The zamani collective, which Royster used to string much more partial and fragmented bits of evidences than I have here together, inspired her to consider community and communal evidence. Thus, nearly a year after my visit, I was viewing my research notes from the archive and trying to find patterns that might reveal something about the values of the English department at Purdue during Wykoff's tenure. In addition to examining Wykoff's archives, I returned to copies I had made of the University Course Catalog English Department offerings from the years 1923 to 1945. As I rifled through the years, along with information about Wykoff, I began to recognize other names and was able to pretty well predict their course assignments each semester. One of the professors that worked with Wykoff the longest was Robert W. Babcock. While Wykoff taught at Purdue from 1923 to 1967, Babcock taught at Purdue from 1920 to 1961 (Babcock). Babcock was a Shakespeare scholar; I wondered—were his archives similarly barren? Were the majority of his scholarly works preserved or, like Wykoff, were only a strange smattering saved?

With the help of archivist Carly Dearborn, I found that Babcock's archives contain: a biography written by archival staff; a box of lecture notes on *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Othello*, and *Hamlet*; and another box of material including more lecture notes and six publications (some with editor's marks suggesting they were working drafts of later published works) (Babcock). I did a thorough electronic search on Babcock, where I found dozens of published articles. The articles kept in the archive were available electronically (unlike those in Wykoff's archive), but so too were thirty-three additional

articles or books, excluding book reviews. Like Wykoff's archive, only a random collection of Babcock's published work was saved. However, unlike Wykoff's archive, the scholarship that was preserved appears to match his significance to the field and while there is not an abundance of archival materials, there are notably more: Babcock's archives contain traces of his teaching as well his editing process and an official biography written by archivists, suggesting he was seen as a more important faculty member than Wykoff. I also asked the archivist about how the information in each archive was collected. Did professors choose works from their publications to include? Was this decision made by the English department? What role, if any, did archivists play in what was saved? After conferring with some older archivists who had been at Purdue longer, Dearborn explained:

> I looked for a collection file to help explain the provenance and selection process for the Wykoff papers but unfortunately a collection file doesn't exist. I talked to some of the other archivists who have been here longer and they were also unclear about the history of this collection. As far as we know, the Libraries used to collect any articles by Purdue faculty – mostly articles or reprints. We believe they were collection [sic] prior to Special Collections being a unit within the Libraries so we don't have the provenance information that archivists like to keep. We do know that in 1913 University Librarian, William Hepburn, solicited publications from the faculty with the intent to start a university archive so that might explain the large number of small faculty publication 'collections' we have similar to the Wykoff papers. I'm sorry this isn't much of an answer but it is all any of us here know. (Dearborn)

I've chosen to quote her response in its entirety because it details the many actors at play here—Wykoff, the English Department, archivists, and Hepburn. In my communication with Dearborn, she also explained that Babcock's archive was enriched by a donation of his papers by his family after his death (Dearborn).

After all this, I am left with the same gap to read. However, I can place that gap in conversation with what I know about the larger national context surrounding composition programs and teaching at this time and with more information about how the Purdue English department and those tasked with documenting its history made their decisions. Wykoff's important publications in Composition and Rhetoric are not recorded in the archives and nothing remains of his lecture notes or classroom pedagogy. Because I have also amassed supplemental information, I can read Wykoff's archive against the archive of one his peers and in relation to our grand narratives of the field. I can think about why the articles were likely originally saved and I have examined his other published works located in various journals. All of this, combined with an insistence that archival absence is not proof a thing did not exist or an insurmountable dead-end to analysis, encourages me to read this gap with a zamani perspective and to use critical imagination to construct a likely narrative. Wykoff's saved works likely reflect the values of his department: his composition research was not seen as sufficiently "scholarly" and thus was probably less important when counting toward tenure. Wykoff also appears to have been generally understood by his department and Purdue archivists as a less significant professor. Without Hepburn's request to collect faculty publications, there would likely be no archive on Wykoff at all.

The Research-Identified WPA: Wykoff's Pedagogical Labor

As discussed above, Wykoff's significance to the field is belied by the condition of his official archive. Luckily, because Wykoff published widely on his

teaching, the labor involved in his classroom and curricular work can largely be pieced together. While Wykoff's ideas about teaching writing are current-traditional (he focuses on exterminating "error" more than content) his arguments about composition classrooms reveal both the labor involved in overseeing a "service" course and the labor of designing and defending a curriculum based on carefully considered rhetorical principles. Examining his published work, I reconstruct many of his pedagogical values (though, as my work with Hopkins and Wendell suggests, analyzing published accounts without actual classroom complications is necessarily incomplete), track the development of his calls for professionalization, and document his arguments that the teaching of writing should be a separate, viable, and respected career path in English departments—all with eye toward the labor involved in this work.

Rooted in the current-traditional pedagogies established at the turn of the century, Wykoff's assessment of his assigned writing was dominated by a focus on finding and punishing "errors" and bolstered by his underlying assumption that composition classes were about teaching students, first and foremost, to write "correctly." As with earlier writing teachers, this was a time-intensive approach and one that was often frustrating. As I read his description of a pedagogy organized around error, I found myself struggling to look past his current-traditional attitudes to focus on his teaching labor. For example, in one article Wykoff includes samples of student writing that illustrate the kind of errors students make. While Wykoff is unclear as to whether or not these are actual student samples, he assumes that they demonstrate errors offensive enough to prove his point that grammar instruction is absolutely essential ("An Open" 140-43). To my surprise, the errors themselves (such as spelling errors, a

tense error or two, and some inelegant—but still easy to understand—sentences) are notably inconsequential. In fact, reading the student writing and Wykoff's assessment of it from a twenty-first century perspective, I am put off by the lack of content, both in what the students write about (take for example, "What I Like and Dislike About Teachers," which includes fairly shallow observations about things like a teacher's outfit) and even more in Wykoff's responses to student writing, which never consider any element beyond its mechanical traits. Nevertheless, Wykoff's description of his teaching reminds me that even though I disagree with his teaching approach, it was not an easy or simple one. He explains that student grades are "determined by the presence or absence of the following errors […]: faulty organization; illogical paragraphing; misspelled words; serious grammatical errors; and serious faults in punctuation" (Wykoff, "The Eleventh" 138). He also notes that in his feedback students will find all their errors noted with symbols or directions to specific grammar book pages. From the class's most popular errors, after the eleventh theme he devises about twenty grammar exercises for the class to complete, using sample mistakes from student themes (Wykoff, "The Eleventh" 137-39). In other words, Wykoff grades on the presence or lack of "error," not on content. At the same time, he carefully analyzes and studies those errors (after the initial labor of marking them) so he can respond to what he deems the needs of his students.

Wykoff's pedagogy also required labor outside the classroom: as a WPA during the general education movement, he found himself defending and explaining the composition program across the university. In fact, I found his defenses of and rationales for his pedagogy more complicated and rhetorically reasoned than I expected.

Wykoff believes in a "correct" style of writing, that practice can help students achieve this correctness, and that students are best motivated by considering the utilitarian value of "correct" writing. We can see these values in his arguments with the Education Department which represented, at Purdue, the burgeoning general education movement. Berlin explains that "The most significant curricular development in American colleges between 1940 and 1960 was the mushrooming of the general education movement" (*Rhetoric* 93). The general education movement was devoted to a liberal arts curriculum that prepared students to be well-rounded citizens; as such, it resisted both mere vocational training and esoteric scholarship divorced from students' lives (McGrath). Crowley explains that "The influence of progressivism on Freshman English was first felt on a wide scale during the 1940s, by which time some of its principles had made their way into talk about general education. Its advocates agreed that a primary point of general education was to develop the relationship of the individual to the culture in which she lives" (*Composition* 164-65). With these goals in mind, proponents of the general education movement criticized composition courses that failed to produce flexible writers and appeared to function as a gatekeeper to college rather than as a class providing students with useful ways to think about citizenship or prepare them for their future roles in society (this, in fact, is one of Crowley's well-known critiques of FYC courses). In his published work, Wykoff makes it clear that he resents pedagogical theories from other disciplines that suggest his methods, particularly his focus on grammar, are counterproductive. He argues, "You have been telling us from time to time that a knowledge of grammar has little, if any, relation to writing and that the content of a written paper is far more important that its composition" and he then uses

student error to refute this claim, suggesting the errors are egregious enough to make the content unimportant (Wykoff, "An Open" 140). From my position, this debate feels depressingly familiar (though myself and most trained in Composition and Rhetoric today are on the opposite side of Wykoff, valuing content at the very least on par with matters of grammar and style). Yet, Wykoff himself clearly sees learning to writing "correctly" as *the* purpose for composition classes: "If we are not to teach grammar, what are we to teach, and just how are we to teach students to write correctly?" ("An Open" 144). But it is important to remember that this debate also represents labor: in addition to using scholarly publications to articulate and defend his position, Wykoff is clearly involved in conversations with administrators and other departments at Purdue about the appropriate pedagogy for a composition classroom.

Furthermore, Wykoff's defenses of his pedagogy in his publications demonstrate that his teaching was not uncritical: it was the result of careful scholarly and rhetorical deliberation—he thought hard about what he taught and why he taught it. For instance, though Wykoff's pedagogical stance is problematic to me, he grounds his defenses of that pedagogy in meeting student needs. Along these lines, Wykoff argues that writing assignments should reflect the utilitarian uses of writing to students. Arguing for writing focusing on "utilitarian rather the self-expressional" writing he recommends writing teachers to "prepare […] students for writing they will actually do: business letters, elementary journals […], and, above all, a much-neglected literary form—neglected, that is, from the of view of supervision and instruction—the friendly letter" ("Practical Helps" 311). While my initial reading of Wykoff's pedagogy saw it as devoid of much true rhetorical content, by focusing on "writing they will actually do," Wykoff

introduces students to the concept of audience awareness. Though his obsession with "correctness" might over-rely on pinpointing errors, he also uses the focus on real-life writing situations to teach rhetorical concepts like imagining the audience and considering carefully the purpose of any writing: "We shall teach better, I believe, if we teaching writing as communication; that is, for every paper the student should indicate a specific reader or group of readers to whom he is directing his writing" (Wykoff, "Practical Helps" 311). This complicated thinking about audience and purpose, even when combined with a focus on hunting out and correcting a very narrow definition of error, encourages students to see writing as accomplishing goals and speaking to specific people. This value makes it clear that Wykoff cares about preparing his students to accomplish action in the world through writing. Even if today we might use different methods to get there, understanding how he thinks about writing and what he wants students to be able to accomplish complicates an understanding of his pedagogy as uncritical. In terms of my specific interest, in other words the labor behind Wykoff's pedagogy, that Wykoff engaged in professional debates and carefully explained and defended his position, makes it clear that his pedagogical choices are thoughtful and deliberate, not uncritical applications of the work of earlier pedagogues like Wendell. In other words, his pedagogy reflects his intellectual labor—labor which included considering and then responding to the pedagogical ideas of others. This is the kind of labor that exemplifies what it means for Composition and Rhetoric to be professionalized and it is vital to remember that this labor is not automatic—it takes time, effort, and (in most cases) training.

Rhetorical Listening: An Interlude

When I finally had a chance to carefully read my collection of Wykoff's scholarly writing —the articles, all neatly filed, were already added to my research notes with complete citations—I was in Kansas City, MO working as an Advanced Placement (AP) grader for Educational Testing Services. Grading AP exams was a Godsend financially; I made almost as much as I would for teaching a summer class in a single week. But it was also exhausting work. For seven straight days I sat at a table in an auditorium, reading handwritten essays from 8 am to 5 pm, with lunch and several stretch breaks peppering the days.

After the first day of reading, I came back to my hotel room and settled down to look at Wykoff's published work. Almost immediately I was concerned. This is not what I expected to find. Current-traditional teaching values are obvious in his writing and his tone is sometimes defensive. More than even Barrett Wendell, so linked in our field's history to current-traditional pedagogy, the attitudes and recommendations in Wykoff's writing struck me as very—and confidently—current-traditional. While I did eventually find moments of complication, the first read through left me deeply discouraged. Though I hadn't voiced the expectation to myself, I realized that I had been expecting that each of my historical subjects—if I only looked closely enough—would complicate in some way the current-traditional lens that relegates so many early teachers of composition to footnote status in our histories. Wendell was a much more careful and thoughtful teacher than is generally recognized. And while Hopkins probably had a current-traditional classroom in many respects, I was able to find engagement with student texts and teaching values that I could relate to in my research.

Perhaps I was helped along in this by the fact that Hopkins actually wrote very little about his day-to-day teaching and none of his responses to student writing have survived. Still, given my good fortune with Wendell and Hopkins, I wasn't sure what to make of the stark nature of Wykoff's current-traditional approach to and defense of teaching writing. On some level, I was resistant to naming and valuing the labor of his pedagogy. How was I going to understand and reconstruct his labor if I was resentful of that labor?

But even when I was most frustrated with Wykoff's current-traditional bent, I could not help but be charmed by his humor. Often when I found myself disagreeing with what he had to say, I also often found myself smiling wryly. Consider the following passage. Here, Wykoff bemoans that students appear to retain little of what they learn once class ends. Rather than wondering what this might suggest about the efficacy of his pedagogy, he voices his frustration that writing teachers are blamed. Here he argues that it cannot be *his* fault if students fail to apply themselves seriously enough to receive long-term benefits from the class:

> Let us grant that, of our freshmen, an X percentage work just hard enough to pass the course; grant also that an X percentage of those even above minimum passing will gladly forget what they learned after a period varying from two weeks to three years. Can we fail these students on that expectation? Or should we have special grade-recording cards in freshman English bearing for students the warning: 'This product is guaranteed to speak and write adequately for a period of ninety days. Any defect appearing in the product after that date is not the responsibility of the teacher.' Whether the training is obtained in the traditional freshman composition course or in the courses in communication, the problem of retention will remain. (Wykoff, "Toward Achieving" 323)

There is a defensive strand to this argument, especially when connected to his insistence that grammar instruction ought to be the main work of writing courses and his

resistance to the ideas about learning represented by his foes in the Education Department. Yet, I smiled while I read these lines, remembering complaints I had fielded in the composition office from angry professors who demanded to know how such-and-such a student had passed composition and suggesting, quite seriously, that the student's instructor was criminally negligent because the student had turned in a poor essay or struggled to understand the nuance of a particular assignment. In short, I found myself enjoying reading his work, even when it contradicted my values and my expectations about Wykoff. But this enjoyment, based in values I deeply disagreed with, was very uncomfortable. If he was going to express teaching values that made me squirm, the least he could do was not be likable while doing so! After the first day of reading his published works, exhausted from exam reading and annoyed that I been seduced by his humor, I stopped working an hour early and seriously considered finding a new research subject.

By day four of grading AP exams my wrists were sore and I was thoroughly sick of the essay topic. Graders are normed on a specific essay, so I was spending eight hours a day reading hundreds of essays responding to the same essay prompt. No matter how fast or slow I went, the essays just kept coming. Small and ultimately insignificant errors began to bother me more and more. I actually began to get angry when words that appeared in the prompt were misspelled in student essays or when common literary terms were misused. Slight misreadings of the prompt that were funny the first time I encountered them became despicable oversights. I had to refer back to the rubric more often, forcing myself to be fair. All that was naturally generous and optimistic about students in my nature shriveled. The deluge of papers, particularly the overwhelming

number and constant around the clock scoring—began to make reading in my "normal" frame of mind impossible. Generosity toward intended meaning, appreciation of the difficulty of the task, an eye to strengths students could build on—as the work wore on those became less and less visible to me.

Each evening after dinner I came back to my hotel room and settled in for two good hours of work on Wykoff. As I continued reading, reviewing, and annotating Wykoff's work throughout the week I wondered if there were parallels between my AP experience and the experiences of composition teachers teaching large sections based around frequent writing and teacher response. Wykoff would leave regular feedback throughout the semester on fifteen themes per student, not counting revisions ("The Eleventh" 137-38). Response to student writing no doubt took up a staggering amount of his time (if Hopkins and Taylor, and their research findings, are to be believed). And, as Wykoff is candid about in his writing on teaching composition, there was as of yet scant research done on teaching writing to guide him to any other kind of pedagogy. His calls for research assumed that his views of writing would be validated (as we shall see), but he was honest enough to admit that there was still little else to go on besides a teacher's instinct and the early work of pedagogues like Wendell. Under such a deadening crush of papers, was it any wonder he confined feedback to matters of style and correctness? To errors that are easy to identify and that can grate on even the most well-rested and well-trained writing teachers? That he resented arguments that he ought to be focusing, instead, on content—something that would surely take more time and mental investment?

By the end of my time scoring essays for AP, I was less annoyed by Wykoff's current-traditional bent and I was more sympathetic to his workload, particularly as it related to responding to and reading a great deal of student writing. In short, I was in a frame of mind to look at his current-traditional values as understandable given his context (and, of course, I had found some interesting moments and complications). I also had a new interest in his approach to bettering the conditions of writing teachers and the quality of instruction in the field through professionalization and research into the teaching of writing. After all, by publishing on his pedagogy and defending his curriculum he made visible work that, prior to his push for the professionalization of teaching writing, had no official existence in the eyes of the university's carefully policed ideas of scholarly, or intellectual, labor.

Defining the Field: Researching the Teaching of Writing

Wykoff's pedagogical practices and values were a mixed bag but, after all, that is not why he is remembered in the field today: he is remembered for his arguments in support of researching the teaching of writing, training teachers of composition, and arguing teaching writing ought to be a legitimate career path in English departments. In this section, I examine Wykoff's explicit calls for research in writing and the professionalization of teaching writing. Some of Wykoff's early suggestions for research mirror Hopkins's impulses: how much work can composition teachers actually do? To this end, he argues that the Indiana's Teachers' Association should form a committee to "discover how much teaching of written composition, if it is done satisfactorily and adequately, a teacher can do: to how many students, in how many

teaching and post-teaching hours" (Wykoff, "Practical Helps" 312). While this is not the thread of scholarship that Wykoff himself ultimately pursues, it suggests that labor and the contradictions between what teachers *could* do and what they *wanted* to do was an ongoing issue. More innovatively, he pinpoints some assumptions about teaching writing that, he argues, ought to be corroborated by research: "A […] major purpose of reading, one which might well be considered the most important in a composition course, is reading to write better […] This major purpose is based on an assumption which may or may not be true—we like to believe that is it—namely, that the more effectively a student reads the more effectively he writes" (Wykoff, "Reading" 248). Wykoff notes that most suggestions for dealing with reading deficiencies assume a strong relationship between reading and writing; in keeping with his focus on improving the research into composition he argues that it would be "a certain intellectual curiosity [and] great satisfaction in finding out the truth of the assumption that the more effectively a student reads, the more effectively he writes" (Wykoff, "Reading" 254). While this move may feel obvious today, the suggestion that research could be done on the teaching of writing, and that such research might disprove deeply held assumptions about writing, was new. Wykoff's arguments about doing research into the relationship between reading and writing are also about more than satisfying intellectual curiosity: he sees such research as tied to changing student needs and effective teaching. In fact, he argues that given the increasing numbers of remedial students across college campuses and that preliminary research suggests a great number of remedial reading and writing classes are needed, "it is not unlikely that in the near future a growing number of English teachers will be assuming the responsibility of helping students with

serious reading disabilities" (Wykoff, "Reading" 249). In other words, the research he proposing is directly related to solving pedagogical problems and meeting students' needs. This kind of research would be new, and it would transform the field. While Hopkins enacted the kind of research Wykoff is calling for, he failed to articulate how this step (researching the teaching of writing) was crucial to the very endeavor of teaching writing, instead presenting specific research to solve a particular problem. Part of the reason that Wykoff was such an important figure in the creation of the field was that he called for research not just into specific issues, he also advocated research as a crucial process for learning about and teaching writing.

Eventually Wykoff goes beyond suggesting research topics, conducting his own research. His 1961 research project measures how many students who take Purdue's non-credit basic writing course go on to take the first and second semesters of the regular freshman composition, how those students do during those semesters, and how much basic writing courses cost—all in order to determine the value in offering remedial composition.[28] The study follows 2461 "subfreshman" (what we today call basic writers) for 11 semesters (Wykoff, "Results" 217). He finds that of the 15% of students who took the basic course, 69% passed. Of those who passed, 32% never took English 101 but of those that did 79% passed. 68% of those eligible to enroll in English 202 did and of those 96% passed (Wykoff, "Results" 218-19). Additionally, "Of the 2461 students who began their college work with subfreshman English, 886, or 36%, persisted through English 1, 101, 202, and other necessary courses for graduation" (Wykoff, "Results" 220). Wykoff explains that the results can be read in two different

[28] The growth of basic writing classes as more students gained access to college will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter.

ways: that the course is clearly valuable because it helped 36% of remedial students eventually graduate or that is a waste of money because the difference in percentage of students who graduate with English 1 and the percentage who graduate without the course (meaning they did not test into the class) is similar, ergo the course makes no difference. Wykoff argues because "there have been no studies involving experimental and control groups" it is impossible to say for certain which interpretation of the data is more accurate ("Results" 222). What I find striking about this research is that it both enacts the principles for research that Wykoff lays out earlier in his career—using research to help answer pedagogical questions tied to teaching writing, in this case whether basic writing courses are having positive effects—and that in his summary of his findings he calls for additional research by pointing out the ways in which the newness of this approach makes using his data to make definitive claims difficult. He is now armed with data, but rather than focusing on using the data from his study to suggest a round of reform that would "fix" the problem, he offers his findings as a starting place for additional research. Furthermore, though not the focus of this study, issues of labor do emerge. He notes that in 1958 the subfreshman course was abolished at Purdue and, initially, students formerly placed into English 1 were "virtually required" to attend a Writing Laboratory 2 hours a week. However, due to a shortage of teachers, this was abandoned in 1960 (Wykoff, "Results" 223). Thus, even before he is able to publish his research on the efficacy of remedial composition, curricular changes were adopted (and thus did not have the benefit of considering his findings) *and* those changes were eventually undone due to a shortage of teachers.

In addition to arguing writing pedagogy should be researched, Wykoff became an avid supporter of building an intellectual community to discuss and study the teaching of writing as well as formalized training for teachers of composition.[29] Wykoff complains that "Without any preparatory training, composition teachers learn what composition teaching is, its problems, and their possible solution, by haphazard methods, imitating the composition teachers of their own undergraduate courses and querying colleagues who may be getting satisfactory results from their own experimental methods" (Wykoff, "Teaching Composition" 430). This system, haphazard and relying on untested insights, highlights the dangers of expecting new teachers to "figure out" how to teach and of the absence of an intellectual community to review and share best practices and research results. By building a community of researchers in composition, Wykoff believes writing teachers could increase the quality of teaching and develop a professional identity grounded in teaching and teaching research. This attitude led Wykoff to become involved in the creation of College Communication and Composition (CCC): "It was George Wykoff who, at a session of the 1948 NCTE convention, issued the 'clarion call to the profession to alter itself to 'improve the climate' for the teaching of Freshman English' that led to the creation of the CCCC" (Rose 224). By creating a research agenda, tied to teaching writing and not literature, writing teachers could engage in research directly related to their classroom practices. As Wykoff argued that teaching writing required professional expertise, he became more convinced that teachers needed training in teaching writing. In fact, he

[29] Connors examples that "By 1930, many college sections and all remedial sections were taught almost completely by the use of handbooks and workbooks" because writing teachers had no other training (Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric* 131).

hoped that such training would enable teachers to be researchers as well as teachers, imagining departments where "There should be included among [composition teachers], both as individuals and as groups, 'pioneers'" who would test and teach new strategies, disseminating their findings first throughout their departments and eventually throughout the field (Wykoff, "Toward Achieving" 320). This line is important: Wykoff is advocating for a conception of writing that required scholarly work in the application, testing, and dissemination of new pedagogical approaches. In these ways, Wykoff helped set the research agenda for the emerging discipline of Composition and Rhetoric.

Wykoff's arguments for professionalizing the field are also striking for the ways in which they explicitly consider labor. Part of this awareness was contextual, arising from institutional numbers he could not ignore: "During his tenure as WPA, the Purdue student body went from 3,600 to 20,176" (Rose 223). Purdue was not alone in terms of surging enrollments: "By 1950, almost 60 percent of seventeen-year-olds were graduating from high school, and in 1965, over 40 percent of eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds were in college" (T. Miller 173-74). Even with surging enrollments, first-year composition course caps were lower than in previous decades. During Wykoff's tenure at Purdue, composition classrooms averaged 30 students, with most composition teachers teaching several sections at once; however, a full-time faculty member might teach up to four sections (Wykoff, "Teaching Composition" 427). Wykoff was also acutely aware of how labor and departmental politics had created the current unprofitable arrangement where teaching writing was overwhelmingly drudgery devoid of intellectual curiosity and resultant research: "Wykoff accounted for the relative lack of contemporary knowledge about composition by locating it in institutional labor

issues and the politics of promotion, asserting that the successful achievement of the objectives of freshman composition 'depends upon the milieu or climate or environment in which the composition teacher works'" (Rose 227). For instance, he links substandard teaching to lack of professional recognition that comes with teaching composition courses: "[One reason] for the present unsatisfactory results in composition-teaching is the motives that impel the teacher to do good work. Beyond feeding his body, there are none" (Wykoff, "Teaching Composition" 430). In addition to a lack of professional mobility tied to teaching composition, the labor conditions support haphazard teaching: "[N]othing will kill interest in a teacher faster or cause him of necessity, to do shoddy teaching or make him more eagerly desire to escape from this phase of English than oversized and/or too many composition classes" (Wykoff, "Toward Achieving" 322). Wykoff points these details out not to blame composition courses or denigrate writing teachers. He states them because he believes, deeply, that "Whoever [composition teachers are] and however long they have freshman composition to teach, they should be persuaded to realize that this course is worth as much time, effort, and energy as any course in literature" (Wykoff, "Toward Achieving" 321). To achieve this goal, he recognizes that labor conditions are a crucial component. In fact, in one article he outlines his ideal labor conditions for teaching composition, as they would exist in "Utopia University:" Teachers would teach nine hours a week (three sections), leaving them time to give substantial feedback and conduct conferences; they would devote time teach week to reading recent research on composition and working on their own research; they would have time to tweak their courses to reflect student needs and feedback; they would cooperate with local high

schools and free themselves of interference with departments of Education; and they would have the support of time and money to attend conferences. Importantly, Wykoff estimates that this could done by working 40 to 48 hours a week, leaving composition teachers time and energy for a life outside of their teaching (Wykoff, "Teaching Composition" 433-36). In this vision for the ideal conditions to teach writing Wykoff factors in time for the labor of reading and producing scholarship related to teaching writing. In effect, he makes explicit that professionalization requires support, at the bare minimum in terms of dedicated time.

In fact, most of Wykoff's professional writing deals with concrete suggestions for action that routinely take labor into consideration. Wykoff's ideal writing teacher is both a consumer and producer of scholarly work on teaching writing. I cannot overstate how different, and important, this model was from how teaching writing had been understood—as obvious, remedial work that needed no sustaining intellectual investment. Wykoff was deeply invested in reimagining the labor of teaching writing to include scholarship. For example, when brainstorming ways to deal with surging enrollments he suggests using the relatively new technology of television to give several classes worth of the students the same lecture, supplemented with smaller discussion sections ("Current Solutions" 77). He also floats solutions as diverse as using an Edison Electronic Disc Voice-writer to leave verbal comments, grouping students into peer review groups to handle initial rounds of feedback, and creating a writing lab component for composition courses with smaller sections broken away from larger sections to save time and get as much out of composition teachers as possible (Wykoff, "Current Solutions" 78-9). His recommendations also consider the role of professional

organizations in addressing labor: he suggests that handbooks and other correction systems could be used more effectively, especially "If we the CCCC could agree upon and complete what should have been done years ago, we could save still more time and energy. I mean a uniform, universal system of grading symbols and of numbered references to writing principles" (Wykoff, "Current Solutions" 77-8). Wykoff's final solution is his simplest and most subversive: he suggests that universities not enroll more students than they can handle. He admits, however, that while the plan is simple, a director of composition who tried to stick to this plan "would promptly be fired" (Wykoff, "Current Solutions" 80). In his frustration with rising enrollments that over-extend the resources of composition programs he even suggests (though satirically, to highlight the absurdity of the situation) that "Except for its economic implications, [the composition teacher] welcomes the startling proposal that colleges ignore the fact that many students need training in everyday writing, abolish courses in composition altogether, and let the poor students solve their own difficulties" (Wykoff, "Teaching Composition" 428). Again, while this moment is satirical and not a good faith argument for abolishing composition,[30] he presents this position as a logical result of the poor treatment of composition teachers, blamed for anything and everything even as they are required to reach more and more students without increasing resources proportionally.

Professionalization: Immediate and Long Term Effects

[30] In *Composition in the University: Historic and Polemical* Essays, Sharon Crowley makes this argument in good faith. Part of her argument is in response to labor conditions like those Wykoff discusses: according to Crowley exploitative labor practices are so tied to FYC courses that only abolishing the course can end these practices (233).

While Wykoff represented the labor required by professionalization (even if he didn't explicitly demand support for it), as Composition and Rhetoric became an established field support for professionalization has largely been limited to tenure-track faculty, even as it is increasingly required for full-time non-tenure track appointments or to break into tenure track employment. Though there is debate about the exact year that launched Composition and Rhetoric as a discipline, it is usually regarded as emerging as a field in the late 1960s and early 1970s.[31] Wykoff was an early advocate for the kind of research that helped define the field: "Two essays by Wykoff, published in *College English* in 1939 and 1940, simultaneously argued for making college composition teaching a respectable professional alternative, rather than keeping it an apprenticeship program for literature teachers" (Berlin, *Rhetoric* 105-6). Even though Wykoff called for research into teaching writing in the late 1930s and early 1940s, it took time to lay the groundwork for the emergence of the field: "Before 1950, the teaching of rhetoric and writing in American colleges went forward with very little influence from journals at all" (Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric* 69). In the 1950s, as the field moved toward articulating a research agenda, there was early-on, according to Connors, a sense that the Freshman Composition course was problematic and ripe for revision. He notes, for instance, that from 1955 to 1960 journals "were filled with proposals linking composition with grammar, logic, language, speaking, research, teacher training—[and] with a sense that, as Albert Kitzhaber put it, 'freshman English courses as they exist now are not something to be content with, much less proud of'"

[31] Crowley, for example, identifies of the birth of modern iteration of the discipline in the 1970s (*Composition* 253) while Skinnell argues that general consensus begins the discipline in 1963 or, more generally, the 1960s (135; 138).

(*Composition-Rhetoric* 205).Though the deficiencies of Freshman Composition were uncomfortable to confront, doing so through research proved to be a particularly valuable approach.

Before research into teaching writing was normalized, "real" scholarship in English departments was equated with literature. Wykoff addresses this when he paints composition teachers as pining for the greener pastures of literature. Even as this was true "[After the Great-Depression] English was making its long march from literary to composition studies. Only a relatively small proportion of graduate students attached to well-known national figures could expect to obtain a research university job, and even then they were often hired, not to teach literature, but to direct composition programs" (Aronowitz 71). This created a situation in which English faculty were trained to be literary scholars, but increasingly found themselves doing the work of teaching writing. And most, unlike Wykoff, did not see writing as legitimate area of study. By generating real and meaningful research activities connected to the work that literature PhDs were more and more actually doing (this was when there were few Composition and Rhetoric PhD programs producing scholars explicitly trained for this work), those formerly relegated to teaching a curriculum that was unverified and (it would turn out) ineffective now had the opportunity research their teaching, develop new curricula, and amass a publication record in respected journals that might lead to promotion. While this was not easy or unproblematic (even today those working in English departments primarily composed of literary scholars must often educate their colleagues about their research in Composition and Rhetoric and overcome prejudices about "real" scholarly output), new pathways for academic success and mobility were created. A crucial part

of this mobility came from the creation of CCC, which John Gerber and Wykoff are credited with spearheading. In 1950 Gerber, the first chair of the organization, explains the reasons for developing the CCC: "We have had no systematic way of exchanging views and information quickly. Certainly we have had no means of developing a coordinated research program" (Gerber 12). Additionally, he points out that the kind of professionalization supported by CCC (which publishes a journal and hosts an annual conference) will improve the lots of writing teachers: "We believe that the activities of this new organization are aimed at practical needs in the profession, that standards of the profession will be raised because of them" (Gerber 12). In fact, Thomas Miller explains that "The founding of CCCC was an important step toward gaining professional recognition for those who published on composition […] the organization and its journal were instrumental in building a research mission upon the teaching of composition" (T. Miller 183). The calls for professionalization that Wykoff made in the late 1930s and early 1940s helped lead to the creation of the *CCC* and the eventual explosion of research into teaching writing that launched the discipline in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Even early in the professionalization of Composition and Rhetoric, professionalization was not an unmitigated good. As some literature PhDs turned to research in Composition and Rhetoric, English faculty with more traditional research interests sometimes reacted with hostility. As Susan Miller explains, historically English housed the "high" subject of literature and the "low" subject of composition. Research into Composition and Rhetoric began early on to trouble this distinction (53). With literature and literary research as the "high" labor of English departments,

research on literary topics was seen as the "real" work done by English faculty even after legitimate research opportunities arose for Compositionists. Thomas Miller argues that "By denying that they taught for a living, professors could treat teaching as an informal process that required no professional expertise—unlike research, which was upheld as the guiding purpose of the profession" (126-27). Composition and Rhetoric, however, emerged as a field dedicated to *studying* the teaching of writing. In this way teaching, pedagogy, and curricula are key interests of the field. For the literary scholar invested in the idea of scholarship as focused on the "more complex" topic of literature, this was seen as deeply suspect. How could "real" scholarship be about teaching, "an informal process that required no professional expertise?" This helps to explain how Wykoff's department and home institution could have failed to see his significance as a scholar and intellectual. Because he wasn't producing literary scholarship (like his colleague Professor Babcock) and because he focuses on the "low" labor of teaching, he was not seen as significant enough of a figure to merit a more complex archival presence. Indeed, this discomfort with the scholarly identity of Composition and Rhetoric as it emerged as field was common and it exacerbated the divisions between literature faculty and writing program faculty in English departments. Even though "Writing programs came to be seen as separate from the rest of the English department […] the administrator of composition would have been seen himself or herself as producing knowledge that could be subsumed under the larger category of 'English'" (Strickland 57). This was an often unhappy balance, where writing teachers and program administrators, even those with PhDs or tenure, struggled to defend their work as scholarly and important.

Professionalization as embodied by legitimizing scholarship on rhetoric and teaching writing has had long-term consequences on the field as well. Wykoff is an example of an early scholar who made a name for himself by publishing on Composition and Rhetoric. Today, research into writing, rhetoric, and related fields can be found in dozens of field-specific journals. Virtually all English departments either include at least one Composition and Rhetoric specialist or, increasingly, have a separate track (and sometimes department) devoted to writing or Composition and Rhetoric. These are all evidence of new pathways of academic mobility for Composition and Rhetoric scholars that did not exist before legitimization of the field. While Compositionists can feel like second-class citizens in English departments that remain skeptical of the scholarly value of reach into writing, Strickland reminds us that the discipline is actually a relatively successful one:

> It is important to acknowledge the material success of composition studies as a discipline in order to get beyond the deeply felt sense […] that composition specialists represent an underclass in English departments. […] Composition professionals—tenured faculty who teach undergraduate and graduate courses in rhetoric and composition and who more often than not function as administrators—are firmly ensconced in the central work that fiscally sustains English departments. (99)

Strickland is also careful to point out, however, that this success and mobility does not extend to all writing teachers: "While the discourse of professionalism has produced an impressive body of knowledge about writing and the teaching of writing, it has also tended to subordinate the needs of teachers to the needs to writing programs" (64). In other words, the field has done a good job of arguing why we need composition directors and supporting them but not consistently supporting writing teachers. One of Wykoff's primary goals in professionalizing the field, supporting writing teachers in

reading and participating in writing research, has not been fully realized: in practice, only tenured compositionists and WPAs enjoy vastly improved access to research. Agreeing with Strickland's assessment, Christopher Carter explains "Even as compositionists try to counteract a history of under appreciation and inadequate funding, the development of the discipline has done more to improve conditions for writing program administrators than for contingent educators" (*Rhetoric* 68). While tenured compositionists and administrators have more opportunities than ever before, there are large numbers of writing teachers who do not have access to those opportunities. And while teaching writing is still a major scholarly preoccupation in the field of Composition and Rhetoric, within higher education scholarship still trumps teaching. Aronowitz admits "I know of no major school that has, or would, award tenure to a brilliant teacher unless the candidate has accumulated the necessary publications. On the other hand, abysmal teachers routinely win tenure if they produce useful knowledge or deliver elegant scholarship" (51). Thus, compositionists who identify primarily as scholars are well-poised to take advantage of the opportunities that have emerged with the legitimization of the discipline but many teachers of writing, particularly those who identify more as teachers than scholars or who work in positions or institutions that privilege teaching over research, have not enjoyed the benefits that came with professionalization and the emergence of the field of Composition and Rhetoric. Yet even teaching-identified scholars are increasingly expected to demonstrate professionalization—either through producing scholarship, attending or presenting at conferences, or staying up-to-date on emerging pedagogies. For example, The University of Oklahoma recently added renewable-term teaching positions. While

these faculty are expected to be primarily teachers (and have a 4-4 load), both the job ad and professional development requirements make it clear that these teachers are expected to be at least somewhat professionalized. As the graduate student representative on the hiring committee, I also saw that applicants with research on teaching writing or who had attended professional development conferences or workshops in composition teaching were given precedence. This absolutely makes sense, but since they are off the tenure track, they don't have the same resources for professionalization as other scholars. While applicants coming directly from graduate programs often had attended conferences, for example, many of the applicants who were current adjuncts had not. Since none of the institutions I have ever worked at guarantee funding for professional development of adjuncts, it wasn't difficult for me to imagine why this might be. Let me be clear: I think writing teachers are professionals and should be expected to contribute to their profession, but they need *resources* for doing so. When demands for professionalization increase without resources, the distance between writing scholars grows and those already marginalized by the low wages and lack of job security endemic to contingent position fall farther behind.

The uneven access to academic mobility promised by professionalization is deeply connected to the labor conditions surrounding the teaching of writing. Of course, professionalization has also provided venues for bringing labor issues to light (in addition to field specific journals and organizations focused on academic labor, major publications like *CCC* also produce scholarship and calls for action about the labor of teaching writing). Professionalization itself is not the problem, but labor conditions that demand, and then don't support, professionalization *are* a problem. In both Hopkins and

Wykoff's histories, the effect of their own labor conditions on their desire to change the field is clear. But while the changes that eventually emerge—smaller class sizes, more publishing opportunities, administrative positions, etc.—may have bettered Hopkins and Wykoff's individual conditions (as white male tenure track professors), those changes have not uniformly improved the working conditions of teachers of writing. Part of this is due to new labor conditions in higher education and especially first-year composition courses. In the past several decades, first-year composition courses have been increasingly by staffed with contingent labor. Adjuncts and graduate students often make up the majority of writing teachers. Adjuncts, given temporary contracts and paid much less per course than faculty, have no job security and are not paid for scholarship or professional development. In addition, "Adjuncts are, in the main, not paid for holding office hours, although many feel ethically compelled to advise students and do hold them [….] They have no sense of place, so their lives are not stable enough to provide the mental conditions for performing intellectual work. As a result, they can never step off [the treadmill] to seek other options" (Aronowitz 75). While not all adjuncts would prefer full-time employment, there are far more adjunct and part-time positions than full-time positions for teaching writing. Helen O'Grady talks about "freeway flyers," or adjuncts cobbling together part time employment at several universities to earn living wage. For a freeway flyer, though composition class sizes have decreased dramatically from the days of Wendell, the actually number of students a teacher responds to may not have fallen. For example, in 1890 Hopkins taught 119 composition students, divided between two composition sections (in addition to teaching three literature classes) (Popken, "Edwin Hopkins" 623). Today, a freeway

flyer might have 30 students in a section at one school (where they teach three sections), 25 at another (where they teach 1 section), and 20 at a third school (where they teach two sections). While the class sizes themselves are notably smaller than Hopkins', which averaged between 50 and 60, the hypothetical teacher in question would still have 155 students. Given the labor of responding to student writing, how would such a teacher keep up with the research in the field or, more daunting still, participate in that research? For a real-life example, during my second year of PhD coursework, my partner worked as a full time adjunct teaching four classes at one University and part time adjunct teaching two classes for another division of the university. That semester he had 116 composition students and made just over 2600 dollars a month take home pay. O'Grady reminds us both that "Limiting the number of writing students per teacher establishes a condition crucial to providing teachers the time and energy to teach effectively" and that class size alone does not determine the number of students a teacher works with (137). Thus, while class sizes today appear to have been largely remedied from the era of Wendell of Hopkins, the move to contingent labor, low pay for writing teachers, and the attendant necessity that some teachers spread their labor over several institutions to make ends meets erases that apparent gain. Writing teachers are still teaching too many students for too little pay, now, however, they doing so by taking on more classes at more institutions instead of by teaching one or two large lecture sized courses. Added to this are increasing demands for professionalization, often self-funded.

This shift in how writing courses are staffed means that fewer writing teachers enjoy the protections of tenure, opportunities and funding for research, or access to

professional development resources. Bill Hendricks notes that Composition and Rhetoric as a field has been both attuned to labor (in terms of writing about the academic workplace) and unsuccessful in improving labor conditions for writing teachers. He complicates this claim by explaining that certain types of labor are still ignored, noting that "proposals for reform are often propounded with a seeming blindness to human activity—who will do what, how, under what conditions, and with what negotiations among students, teachers, and other actors" and "blindness to organized labor" (84). Hendricks notes an important trend: while compositionists often write about labor and our workplaces, that work is typically done by scholars, those on tenure track, and not by writing teachers, those either working as lecturers or contingent laborers (this is not to say that scholars are not teachers or teaching identified and vice versa but to highlight that *most* writing teachers are not tenured scholars). While one reason for this is surely the differing values of many who see themselves as scholar vs teacher-identified, an important complication is labor conditions that under-pay, over-work, and inadequately support writing teachers. Without resources for engaging in scholarship and activism surrounding their labor, many tiered and contingent laborers do not have the time or resources to participate in these debates. Carter argues that real, radical changes in labor conditions surrounding first-year composition classes and higher education in general must include the voices of the actual writing teachers whose labor conditions we seek to improve: "Radical change can and probably must be theorized and implemented by academic workers themselves: The full-time, contingent, and student laborers whose social and intellectual futures are interdependent" (*Bureaucratic* 191). Yet the professionalization that Wykoff helped to cement has not

extended to most writing teachers, the un-tenured and under-paid. While the voices of all kinds of writing teachers are necessary to improving labor conditions, the truth is that the demands of professionalization (to be a successful Composition and Rhetoric scholar on the tenure track, the standards for publication are only rising) exclude those who are teaching identified, like lecturers and adjuncts, by leaving them struggling to make a living and not providing institutional or monetary support for taking part in scholarly, professional, or activist conversations.

Professionalization in the Future

In a move pivotal to the development of Rhetoric and Composition as we understand the field today, Wykoff (working with others like John Gerber) laid the blueprints for establishing writing as a specialization requiring research and, at least initially, locating the scholarly identity of the discipline in writing pedagogy. In his own professional life, Wykoff appears to have both reaped the rewards of increased academic mobility and struggled to have his scholarly work in Composition and Rhetoric recognized by literary colleagues; Wykoff found both professional success as a tenured professor, early Writing Program Administrator (WPA), and published writing scholar and worked in a department with very specific ideas about counted as "proper" English scholarship. Indeed, Wykoff's experiences foreshadow a bias against teaching and teaching-focused scholarship that helped create the necessary conditions for a growing fracture in Composition and Rhetoric between researchers who enjoy the benefits of professionalization and disciplinary legitimacy and a labor force primarily made up of graduate students, contingent, and tiered laborers who have largely been

unable to enjoy those professional benefits. Examining Wykoff's own labor history, laid alongside contemporary struggles to extend improved labor conditions to teachers as well as researchers of writing, illustrates the practical benefits of professionalization, as well as its limits, and encourages contemporary efforts at labor reform to take seriously issues such as professional development requirements, support for research and other professional development opportunities for adjuncts and tiered laborers (such as non-tenure track lecturers), and extending other benefits typically only offered to researchers to writing teachers alongside improving their pay and classroom conditions.

Wykoff was able to create not only a scholarly identity for himself from this composition research, he was able to help create a professional community, and eventually a discipline, around that identity. While this labor conditions were improved by this professionalization, for example the generally smaller composition class sizes compared to when Wendell and Hopkins experiences as well as his improved professional mobility (directing the FYC program), he still had a high teaching load that included labor-intensive response to student writing and his scholarly work bears out the labor tensions (still) impeding the effective teaching of composition and the difficulty of getting departments and administrations to value that work. Wykoff's history bears out the power of professionalization to empower academic workers, but also the limits of that power—especially when the labor conditions of teachers make meeting the demands of professionalization increasingly difficult. Moving forward, the challenge of professionalization and labor conditions must be explored. How many students can a writing teacher have and still participate in professional development, scholarship, or activism? How much professionalization should be required of those

hired primarily to teach and how can we support them? Must writing teachers professionalize and, if so, what does that mean for adjuncts, contingent laborers, and teaching faculty? What about adjuncts, perhaps working at multiple institutions? How can the field support their professional development? Attempts to reform the labor conditions of regular writing teachers much include access to the professionalization that has so effective improve the labor conditions of tenure-track compositions: access to funding for research and scholarship, even if only in funds to attend conferences and the (very) occasional release for promising research projects.

Chapter 5: Mina Shaughnessy: "Stickiness," the Feminization of the Field, and Open Admissions

"Wherever the new students have arrived in substantial numbers, English teachers have begun to realize that little in their background has prepared them to teach writing to someone who has not already learned how to do it. Confident in the past that students who could not master certain 'simple' features of English usage were probably not 'bright' enough (a much-used term) to stay in college, they now begin to wonder, when large numbers of intelligent young men and women fail to learn a simple lesson, whether the lesson is indeed so simple. And once having asked this fruitful question, their own revolution as teachers of English usually begins" – Mina Shaughnessy (*Errors* 121**)**

A Lasting Legacy

Mina Shaughnessy's legacy hangs like a gauzy veil over my internalized sense of what it is we can and should do as teachers of writing. Even before I was familiar with her ideas, her pedagogy, or her personality I had the deeply felt sense that she was more than important; she was revolutionary. There are a handful of reasons for this—her timing, appearing on the scene just as the discipline was taking off as a legitimate area of study, as well as the radical shift in how she thought and talked about students, especially basic writers—but the reason that probably influenced my sense of her importance the most (before I was intimately acquainted with her work) was how her memory lived on in those who knew her. Even mentees of Shaughnessy's colleagues—twice removed from Shaughnessy herself—could not stop themselves from talking about her personal charisma and warm personality as though they had personally known her. In short, there was something about Shaughnessy, both as a person and as a pedagogue that "stuck"[32] with people. Even writing about Shaughnessy today —at least compared to my other subjects—is a more difficult proposition because it is impossible

[32] I will return to the idea of "stickiness" in the following pages.

to avoid the fact that people *love* her.[33] This includes those who knew her personally as well as those who were so moved by her ideas and approaches that her ideas have helped to influence their professional identities. Added to this is her significance to many women scholars in the field. While by no means the first important female thinker in Composition and Rhetoric,[34] she was one of the first of legions of lowly female writing teachers to break into scholarship and make the field her own. What's more, she did this with a voice and a style, a gentleness and humanity that embraced her femininity rather than attempted to hide from or mask it. As the opening quote highlights, Shaughnessy was deeply identified with teaching and was proudly committed to some of academia's least "bright" students. In a field that is still trying to make sense of its "feminized" identity and the labor implications of that identity, Shaughnessy modeled an academic identity that was enriched by traditionally feminine values such as compassion and gentleness while also rooted in scholarly rigor and a breath-taking publication record.

Mina Shaughnessy began teaching at City University New York (CUNY) in 1967 where she was hired to teach basic writers and was soon running the SEEK program (Maher 89). SEEK (or Search for Education, Elevation, and Knowledge) was designed to support underprepared students admitted under the new open enrollment policy (Maher 89). While Shaughnessy had spent the past two years teaching at Hunter

[33] Janet Emig's 1979 eulogy in *CCC* is one particularly moving example of the impression Shaughnessy left on her colleague's and how deeply they felt her passing.

[34] Using a long view of the history of rhetoric we might start with Aspasia; meanwhile, even before Composition and Rhetoric's contemporary re-birth women like Gertrude Buck were working hard to contribute to the field. There were also many women scholars working roughly contemporaneously to Shaughnessy, from Flower (discussed in this chapter) to Crowley, Bizzell, and many others. Shaughnessy did not herald a new era of women's participation in the theorizing of Composition and Rhetoric so much as she participated in it.

College and had a Master's degree in literature, she did not have official training in either teaching writing or administration. Despite these apparent drawback backs, she was immediately recognized as a talented teacher, fearless administrator, and powerful supporter of the Open-Admissions movement. Yet ultimately, the most lasting part of her impact came from her contact with basic writers. As she began teaching basic writers, she quickly realized that traditional pedagogy was inadequate and she started developing a pedagogy designed specifically for adult basic writers. Following in the footsteps of scholars like Wykoff, who in the previous decades had begun to normalize the idea that writing and writing pedagogy could be areas of scholarly inquiry, she wrote about pedagogy and did research on basic writers. Her pedagogy is marked by a deep respect for basic writers, noting both their intelligence (she notices, for example, that student errors are not random but are in fact often orderly and predictable)[35] and their ability to be taught. For example, in her article "Some Needed Research on Writing," she calls for creating a pedagogy that "respects, in its goals and methods, the maturity of the adult, beginning writer" rather than assuming that adult beginning writers are analogous to children (Shaughnessy 318). From 1973 to just after her death in 1978, she published her seminal book *Error and Expectations,* outlining her basic writing pedagogy and scholarly approach to basic writers, as well as several important articles. Her research was prodigious, especially considering her relatively short career, and ushered in basic writing as an important, and rich, area of scholarly focus. Shaughnessy's impact on the field—both through her early research, which helped to

[35] Shaughnessy describes basic writers as "beginners" who have complex ideas, but often "mismanage" that complexity (*Errors and Expectations* 5; 73). This is a vastly different conception from others who, when confronted with basic writers, labeled them hopeless or "ineducable [sic]" (1).

set the stage for the kinds of questions the field could tackle, and her deep commitment to students, especially under-prepared students, cannot be overstated: she embodies the professional ethos of a generation and directed the attention of the field to basic writers and the power of rethinking pedagogy.

In my opening paragraph, I claim that Shaughnessy and her influence in the field "stuck" with me in a special way. Micciche writes about "stickiness" as a way to describe the emotional impact of some research on researchers. Rather than ignoring, masking, or even feeling guilty for emotional responses to the topics or people we research, Micciche argues that such emotions can be research tools precisely *because* of their stickiness, or the tendency of certain pieces of evidence to resonate, or stick like "bits of glue," with a researcher. She explains:

> Stickiness is a useful concept for me because it helps explain how emotion rides in neither persons/objects nor the social world exclusively. Rather, emotion is dynamic and relational, taking form through collisions of contact between people as well as between people and the objects, narratives, beliefs, and so forth that we encounter in the world. (Micciche 28)

In other words, Micciche argues that emotional responses are both personal (and therefore to some degree unique) and affected by our larger contexts (and therefore to some degree related to current trends, conversations, and challenges facing the field). A researcher's gender, teaching experiences, administrative struggles, and/or identification with a topic might predispose her to be struck by different elements of her research subject. At the same time, larger contextual issues also influence "stickiness"—for instance, recent trends in scholarship or reforms/administrative decrees sweeping the country. Connecting stickiness to other calls for feminist researchers to embrace their

emotional responses to research,[36] I argue that by naming and identifying our strong emotional reactions to our research—the moments that "stick" with us— and by complicating those moments by looking for the personal and larger contextual reasons that explain many of those emotions, we can start asking important questions. In the case of my research on Shaughnessy, for example, why did a handful of memos detailing a pay dispute that was settled forty years ago make me so angry? Were Shaughnessy and the other original participants angry? Does my anger come from a purely personal place or from ongoing obstacles rooted in professional dysfunction? Resting with moments of stickiness—using strategic contemplation, rhetorical listening, and other research methodologies—becomes a productive technique for understanding both why I, as an individual, am drawn to particular bits of the archival record and whether or not those moments can be productively linked to ongoing professional debates. Stickiness is therefore a useful tool for all research, but in this chapter, I argue it is especially helpful for dealing with a figure like Shaughnessy, whose emotional resonance in the field has been so significant. By trying to appreciate where her ideas have been the stickiest, as well as what other values and emotions have been picked up by residual "bits of glue" and become part of her legacy, we can unpack her contributions, her labor situation and incredible work ethic, as well as consider principles related to labor to be gleaned from her experience. Using stickiness, this

[36] Stickiness is closely related to many of Royster's methodologies. For example, Royster's delineation between sasa time (roughly the present) and zamani time (roughly the past) can be seen as a method for beginning to understand the differences between personal and professional reactions (though, of course, the differences between sasa and zamani need not automatically be separated in this way). Micciche, however, adds the idea of stickiness to empower researchers to begin—with a strong methodological justification instead of just the reality of research—with evidence or questions that draw and hold their attention. Researchers already do this (how else would research get done?), but by naming and theorizing the experience Micciche asks us to be *conscious* of our "sticky" moments and to interrogate them critically.

chapter ultimately argues that Shaughnessy managed to embrace a feminized persona, in both her writing style and approaches toward teaching, in fruitful ways that can be extended in the field today. At the same time, her tireless work ethic and early death serve as emotional triggers for the stakes of exploitative labor practices, turning her into a martyr representing a very real and damaging tension in the field—the desire and willingness to work extremely hard for students, especially marginalized students, and the physical limits of such labor.

Because "stickiness" is particularly intertwined with context—in so far as context, both personal and professional, can help us understand what "bits of glue" are at work in drawing my attention to particular archival and textual records—this chapter weaves areas of contextual background (the history of the "feminization" of Composition and Rhetoric and the relationship of this feminization to both the kinds of labor associated with the field and how that labor is valued as well as a closer look at the historical moment of Shaughnessy's employment of CUNY, focusing specifically on the open-enrollment movement which both exploded enrollments and ushered in students with lower levels of academic preparation) into discussions of the archival and scholarly texts surrounding Shaughnessy in order to understand her as an administrator and as a pedagogue (a term I chose carefully because it encompasses both her teaching and her research, rather than splitting these two closely related parts of Shaughnessy's scholarly identity into discrete sections). From here, I draw conclusions about how better understanding Shaughnessy's legacy through the lens of labor is necessary both for effectively supporting underprepared students and for protecting the physical and emotional health of writing teachers. These suggestions, however, are threaded through the eye of the needle of a

"feminized" field. In other words, I both recognize the liberatory possibilities of feminine-identified values and approaches and caution against implementing those values without careful attention to the labor conditions surrounding such work.

Context the First: A "Feminized" Field

Today, there is general agreement that Composition and Rhetoric is a "feminized" field. For example, Schell notes that "Women writing instructors continue to outnumber male writing instructors in most English departments, and the labor of composition […] is still considered suitable for graduate students, for people at lesser institutions, and for 'paraprofessionals—and for women'" (Schell 33). As Schell's quote demonstrates, this is problematic because the simple fact women are associated with teaching writing—in the context of a patriarchal academy and culture—devalues the work that writing teachers do; hence, Schell's connection between the high percentage of women writing teachers and "paraprofessional" teachers like graduate students and adjuncts. Even Shaughnessy, who proved to be a highly competent teacher and innovative teacher, was only able to break into higher education through the "service course" of composition (Maher 38). This trend is nothing new; Robert Connors notes that this tendency began early in the twentieth century, as current-traditional pedagogy labeled writing instruction not only "remedial" but promoted a pedagogy akin to "mental drudgery" (Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric* 200). Since the work of teaching writing was not seen as a difficult or desirable labor, women were eventually allowed into higher education through teaching writing courses. Even though Connors is not questioning the talent or dedication of early women writing teachers, he recognizes the

fact that by populating composition courses with women teachers, the prestige of the field suffered. Because women were gaining access to higher education classrooms, often for the first time, they were willing to work for less money and unlikely to ask for professional development support or even job security: "Who were these permanent members of the freshman composition staff, and why were they willing to remain in the overworked underclass? The answer to that question is complex […] A part of the answer can be found in gender studies; it seems inescapably true that a disproportionate percentage of the instructor corps in composition has been made up of women" (Connors, *Composition-Rhetoric* 200). The feminization of teaching writing is also linked to the rising professional demands described in the previous chapter. With scholarship narrowly defined (at first, limited to literature, and only in the years immediately preceding Shaughnessy's teaching, linked to writing or writing pedagogy) and open to only certain types of teachers (typically white, male writing teachers with degrees in literature), women made up a greater part of the workforce of writing teachers, yet they also did not have equal access to professional development opportunities. Schell supports this view, pointing out that "As women struggled to educate themselves and took tentative steps to enter the profession of college teaching, many private colleges and elite coeducational institutions were becoming increasingly professionalized, a shift which eventually paved the way for women's work as writing instructors" (Schell 29). Rising demands of professionalism (without considering how to support such professionalism among all levels of writing teachers), thus, served to solidify the gap between "researchers" and "teachers" and, in the context of rising numbers of women hired specifically to teach writing, men and women in the field.

Added to this, because women and paraprofessional's teaching was entirely limited to composition classes, the damaging workloads associated with those classes affected them even more (a tenure track writing teacher could expect to teach some literature classes and often had smaller teaching loads). Even Shaughnessy, who quickly became famous for her work on basic writers after *Errors and Expectations* was published, taught only composition courses at CUNY (in addition to her administrative work). The end result is that, over time, the *teaching* aspect of Composition and Rhetoric has been increasingly identified with women writing teachers, or feminized.

Unfortunately, this feminized identity is problematic, not because it is inherently negative (as this section will explore later, there are powerful benefits to this orientation), but as vulnerable to patriarchal ideals and, through those associations, holding back the entire field in terms of prestige, access to resources, and labor conditions. Once composition became seen as women's work—less difficult, less scholarly, more remedial—it could be ignored by serious scholars. Enos writes:

> The division of work by gender is apparent both between and within fields, and the marking of work as 'women's' or 'men's' is based on social concepts of gender […] 'women's work' is characterized by a disproportionate number of women workers (as in academe's writing programs); it is service-oriented (like classroom teaching); it pays less than 'men's work' (traditional forms of scholarship); it is devalued (females get fewer promotions and less pay). (4)

The divide between "women's work" and "men's work" (teaching and research) continues today, with those hired solely to teach writing (whether as GTAs, adjuncts, or lecturers) almost universally making less money than their research counterparts, even at teaching institutions. While some have argued that women consciously chose

positions with fewer research demands or that are more "flexible,"[37] Schell complicates this brilliantly. She concedes that "that women are present in higher numbers in teaching-oriented institutions" but, rather than concluding that teaching-orientated careers are simply chosen by more women, she explains that "such a claim implies that individual will and choice are the sole determinants—not sex-role socialization, market demands, hiring practices, and sex discrimination—in determining women's career patterns" (Schell 49). According to Schell, such numbers are the results of training, advising, and gender stereotypes, which she calls the "marriage plot:" "In the academic world, the marriage plot manifests itself in the practice whereby women are advised, both subtly and overtly, to pursue careers in the so-called 'feminine' disciplines and encouraged to devote more time to teaching and service than research" (Schell 8). The argument here is not that women do not enjoy teaching or that no women would willingly choose to work at teaching-oriented institutions or as an adjunct: the point is that women are advised and generally *expected* to do and enjoy one aspect of professorial work—teaching—and they are punished; with fewer opportunities, smaller paychecks, less mobility, and great employment insecurity; when they work in teaching-oriented jobs. In this respect, Shaughnessy is unique in that she was able to be appropriately feminine (she was an engaged and committed teacher) *and* impressively masculine (producing important scholarship).

[37] I find this claim to be particularly ludicrous. While adjuncts have some level of flexibility in terms of how many courses they teach a semester, anyone who been an adjunct knows they have little say over when, where, or how much they teach from semester to semester (often not getting assigned to sections until the day before classes begin). The idea that this "flexibility" benefits the adjunct and not the institution is fanciful. I'm sure that somewhere there exist adjuncts who can easily afford to teach two to four classes and don't mind filling in where needed or taking an unexpected semester off. However, since most adjuncts are trying to cobble together a living from poverty wages, arguing that this "flexibility" is, generally speaking, a draw, is disingenuous and best and a willful lie at worst.

Because the feminization of the field is tied to such practical drawbacks—especially in terms of the labor and compensation of that labor in the field—one reaction has been to attempt and reverse the effects of feminization by proving the field's value in traditional ways (for instance, through empirical scholarship and a focus on theories removed from direct pedagogical concerns). For instance, one way that women scholars have fought against the marginalizing aspects of working within Composition and Rhetoric has been to produce empirical, read "masculine," scholarship. Shaughnessy's own research in *Errors*, making extensive use of student examples, trends in this direction. Indeed, her later calls for research into questions such how students demonstrate writing development seem suited to primarily empirical work (Shaughnessy, "Some Needed" 318). And while the field today enjoys particularly rich feminist methodologies and approaches, early scholars in the field (in the 70s and 80s) tended to produce more traditionally masculine empirical work. For example, Linda Flower is an incredibly important Composition and Rhetoric scholar whose early research focused on process pedagogy and recording, coding, and numerically analyzing student writers during the writing process (Flower and Hayes). I am not arguing that Flower consciously chose to use empirical methods in an attempt to raise the prestige of the field: my argument is that "research" was conceptualized so thoroughly in empirical terms that Flower naturally designed her early research in this way. Additionally, I am not arguing that Flower's researcher was not important, well-done, or useful: she is an important researcher in the field; empirical research is absolutely valuable and often necessary; and her choice of subject matter, in particular, is inspiring to me because of its focus on pedagogy and how writers actually work (this

element of her research is an example of bringing some of the "feminized" status of Composition and Rhetoric, explicitly caring and thinking about students, into her research). The reason I bring up the heavily empirical nature of her early research in Composition and Rhetoric is to note the obvious ways in which it worked to identify itself with scientific (again "male") fields. Indeed, the early focus on empirical methods of much Composition and Rhetoric scholarship did help to make the case that Composition and Rhetoric was a serious discipline with a serious research agenda to those outside the field.

There is, however, a real danger to jettisoning feminized aspects of the field in a bid to raise its status or even to improve the labor conditions of writing teachers: feminization not only denotes a vitally important focus on students but also the opportunity to develop research methodologies that complicate, improve, and supplement traditional conceptions of research. Shaughnessy herself writes at length about the danger of purely empirical encapsulations of teaching, particularly in the realm of assessment. She writes:

> Unfortunately, the debate about Open Admission has been and is being carried on in the language of those who oppose it: in the alphabet of numbers, the syntax of print-outs, the transformations of graphs and tables […] Let me comment upon the disadvantage an Open Admission writing teacher feels in the fact of this arsenal. There is the feeling of disadvantage itself, the contamination from being perceived as in some way inferior. Thus, too often, writing teachers, sensing that their students' growth as writers cannot be quantified […] speak timidly of what is accomplished, or bow to the crude measure of attrition rates, grade-point averages, or objective tests. Unable to describe in the language of the scientists what went on, they often abandon the effort to do so in any language, even the one they have loved enough to study and teach. (Shaughnessy, "Open Admissions" 401-02)

Like Shaughnessy, many in Composition and Rhetoric have resisted the idea empirical data is the only kind of data. For instance, Composition and Rhetoric has demonstrated again and again the value of recognizing alternative or unstated research processes that reject ideas of research as clean, uncomplicated, or impersonal. Ferganchick-Nuefang also notes the dangers that come along with adopting dominant, masculine views of knowledge-production: "As we align ourselves with science in order to gain status, we also align ourselves with 'scientism' and 'objectivism,' importing methodologies from the sciences and the oppressive baggage that accompanies them, such as the silencing of the personal, of multicultural perspectives, and of women's concerns" (Ferganchick-Neufang 19). Recent decades have seen a reaction against this, with feminist scholars insisting on making use of feminine ways of knowing as well as traditional, empirical research methods. This project, for example, demonstrates the rich feminist methodologies that exist—and flourish—in historical work in Composition and Rhetoric, from Royster and Kirsch to feminist theories in other areas of the field that can be usefully imported (for example, Ratcliffe's development of rhetorical listening as a pedagogical tool). The feminist rhetorical practices that ground this research project are just one of several examples that demonstrate how the field has recently worked to resist the impulse to downplay the value of the feminized identity of the field by naming and describing methods that function differently that "scientific" and "objective" ones, even as they work alongside and with them.

In addition to demonstrating again and again the value of recognizing alternative or unstated research processes, Composition and Rhetoric has maintained an important focus on students and teaching (concerns too often lost in higher education). This is

arguably the most "feminized" aspect of Shaughnessy's research methodology. In her articles, students are respected and teachers are challenged to do the self-work necessary to meeting the needs of diverse students. Shaughnessy, writing to other writer teachers, warns:

> We have fallen into prescriptive habits over the years that inhibit us as observers […] We have been trained to notice what students learn, not how they learn it, to observe what they do to writing, not what writing does to them. But until we can describe more precisely than we have the process whereby our students move toward maturity as readers and writers, we cannot challenge those critics who claim that students do not move at all. ("Open Admissions" 403)

At no point does Shaughnessy lose her laser-like focus on students, her deep respect for their effort and intelligence, or her insistence that writer teachers act as advocates for their students. Today these attitudes have become largely normalized in Composition and Rhetoric. For example, Neal Lerner researches writing conferences as a tool for fostering pedagogical intimacy, arguing they are a chance for teachers to make one on one connections with students and improve student writing. This is fascinating example of Composition and Rhetoric's embrace of its feminine roots in several ways. Lerner, a male researcher, is comfortable advocating for "intimacy" in the classroom,[38] a stance that both explicitly focuses on the needs of students and names those needs in feminized terms (Lerner could easily, for example, have focused on the benefits of "one on one attention" versus the gendered term "intimacy"). Interestingly, Lerner's analysis of student conferences also pays specific attention to some of the labor conditions that

[38] While even noting that a male researcher supports intimate teaching feels odd (or unnecessary) in today's Composition and Rhetoric environment, it is worth noting that if Wendell, Hopkins, or even Wykoff had advocated connecting to students in these terms it would have been bizarre, out of character, and at odds with their scholarly ethea. The past several decades and the embrace of our feminized identity as a field have made important, obvious differences in how we talk about students and our responsibilities to them.

have supported the rise and fall of the popularity of student conferences over the years: this focus on human needs, in terms of what writing teachers can and cannot do, also taps into the "caring" ethos of Composition and Rhetoric connected to its feminization. While Lerner notes that conferences periodically fall out of favor as "burdensome, time-consuming, and, simply, impossible," he also notes they always return as labor conditions improve (for instance, alongside falling class sizes) (Lerner 191). In fact, Lerner links the 1970's, Shaughnessy's heyday, to a period of renewed investment in teacher-student relationships and a focus on student needs over institutional or teacher needs:

> At long last, the focus was on students' needs, and an emphasis on student-centered learning followed larger efforts to respond to the unrest over the general political, cultural, and educational state of affairs. However, unlike that earlier era's faith in the power of teaching, mistrust of authority led compositionists to offer a radically reduced role for teachers." (Lerner 200)

Lerner's use of language like "emphasis on student-centered learning," builds on the deep investment of Composition and Rhetoric, as a feminized discipline, about caring for and supporting students. Thus, while there are many negative ways that a feminized identity has affected the field, it has also led to pedagogies and teaching techniques that place their emphasis on student needs over institutional desires for prestige or "intellectual rigor" (read, "weeding out" underprepared students).

Feminization has not only enriched the field's research and teaching practices; feminization has also influenced the development of our managerial ethos: in other words, how the field conceptualizes and theorizes about Writing Program Administration (WPA). WPA work has a close connection with the feminized identity of the field because of its often invisible nature and the tendency for the difficult work

of WPAs to be devalued. L'Eplattentier and Mastrangelo highlight this, noting that though WPAs have been named and valued since the 1970s, they have existed for much longer: "Recognized or ignored, titled or untitled, appreciated or unappreciated, paid or unpaid—someone classified students, assigned teachers, worried about standards, and did all the other administrative tasks inherent to writing programs. Someone, much earlier than 1976, functioned as a WPA" (xviii-xix). In fact, though Shaughnessy is famous for abilities as an administrator within the field, most of the research on her looks at her teaching practices and research. Similarly, both Hopkins and Wykoff worked as WPAs, though only Wykoff was directly hired to do this work and neither of them were titled WPAs and they are known in the field for their research contributions, not their work as administrators. L'Eplattenier also highlights the quest for legitimacy that motivates much WPA scholarship, explaining that "Issues of legitimacy are of particular interest to WPAs, whose work is often viewed by English departments and academic administrations as non-intellectual service work or, more commonly, as invisible, nonexistent work" (136). Definitions of scholarship focused on theories divorced from practical application in the classroom (a type of scholarship popular in literature and, thus, in English departments led by literature scholars uneducated about or hostile to Composition and Rhetoric scholarship), plagued many WPAs as they attempted tenure or promotion (Ferganchick-Neufang 21). WPAs, historically, have been particularly vulnerable to the demands of traditionalist views of scholarship: "for WPAs [an] 'appropriate' research agenda, as defined by scholarly trends in the field, [is] often divorced from the practical needs and concerns of administration" (Ferganchick-Neufang 21). Thus, much WPA research has focused on creating a

scholarly identity for WPAs that names and embraces both feminized values like care for students and a commitment to pedagogy, as well as clear articulations of their identity within the large academic community (Heckathorn 195; Charlton et al 47). The formation of this identity has explicitly wrestled with the results of the field's embrace of our feminized identity. For example, Charlton et al argue for the value of personalized narratives of WPA experiences in order to highlight and deeply consider the diverse positionalities in WPA work, using this knowledge to construct better and more inclusive identities: "The WPAs of such historicized narratives embody conflicts on behalf of larger groups and make them visible to others, and they provide the opportunity for WPAs to reshape the field, or […] to 'reflect, rethink, and revise the stories that create who we are'" (Charlton et al 54). Today, scholarly work on WPA issues expresses a feminized identity through commitment to pedagogy, student-centered writing programs, and theorizing identity on personal and institutional levels.

In this section, I have explained the role of a feminized identity in Composition and Rhetoric, both as a practical problem that explains some of the field's struggle for status and resources with academia as well as the ways the field has recently embraced feminization as a useful part of our identity. My reading of Shaughnessy—herself an example of a scholar wrestling with the problematic and productive tensions surrounding the feminization of Composition and Rhetoric—is deeply influenced by my awareness of this history.

Shaughnessy as Pedagogue

I have used the term "pedagogue" before in this dissertation to describe the contributions of my research subjects. Writing this chapter, however, I chose the term with more care. Originally, I had planned to organize my archival inquiry into Shaughnessy around three threads: her teaching, her research, and her work as an administrator. As I worked, however, this organization became impossible to maintain. Shaughnessy's research was on pedagogy and the close connections between her publications and her experiences and experiments as a teacher are impossible to ignore or neatly divide. Therefore, I have decided to write about her research and teaching as the related and intertwined entities that they are, a technique the term pedagogue—which denotes both teaching and the dissemination of teaching methods (in Shaughnessy's case through research)[39]—highlights. Additionally, because Shaughnessy's pedagogy has been studied thoroughly by many (Allen; Brereton; Horning; Mcalexander; etc.), and because the focus of my inquiry on Shaughnessy is labor, my consideration of her research, her teaching, and the inter-play between them will focus more on the relationship between these issues and her labor practices and conditions than her pedagogy itself.

Shaughnessy conceptualized English instruction as tied to its relationships across campus, a view partially inspired by her commitment to working with the students admitted under the open admission movement. These students were not

[39] Pedagogues influence, design, and promote pedagogies but that work is not necessarily related to research (especially in the field's early history). Wendell, for example, is a pedagogue because of the popularity and influence of his book *English Composition*; however, the pedagogy described in his book is not the result of research into teaching writing in the way that Shaughnessy's is. Wendell read other books on pedagogy and borrowed some of their ideas to intersperse with his own, but he did not test the efficacy of his recommended pedagogy or analyze the work produced from it.

succeeding within the traditional curriculum at CUNY (Mendenhall 20). As we've seen described in various ways in earlier chapters, that traditional writing pedagogy (current-traditional pedagogy) viewed writing as a transactional skill to be independently developed and then applied across the university—writing was not meaningfully context dependent and "good" writers were good writers in all situations. But Shaughnessy believed that students needed specific skills to succeed in specific classes. To get a fuller idea of what this meant (one of Shaughnessy's great strengths was that she never assumed she already had the answers), Shaughnessy built relationships across campus to learn about the writing students were expected to do: she "believed that one way to discover what the students should be taught in the SEEK program was to discover what they would be expected to know when they took courses in other disciplines. She encouraged the basic writing faculty to audit these courses" (Maher 100). In effect, Shaughnessy worked to create conversations between writing teachers and other faculty when designing her curriculum. Here is moment that demonstrates a productive application of a feminized identity. Charlton et al., theorizing the curricular work that WPAs do, explain "Changing curriculum isn't just about getting a program up to speed; it also supports collaboration and dialogue among stakeholders, emphasizing if not highlighting the mediation that is always going on in programs" (Charlton et al 122). This kind of mediation, which was a hallmark of Shaughnessy's work on creating pedagogy, was labor intensive. It required meeting other faculty, having long discussions on writing, and sometimes sitting in on classes. Taking into account that Shaughnessy's program, SEEK, engendered more and more hostility across campus as it became larger and served more students (and consumed more university resources),

developing these resources also required finesse and patience. Though vital to her pedagogical approach, it was by no means easy work *or* work that was easily categorized, tracked, compensated, or rewarded.

In addition to believing writing teachers should be aware of the kind of writing students would actually be required to do, Shaughnessy believed student writing—even "bad" student writing—was a valuable tool for creating effective pedagogy. Shaughnessy believed that student errors were not random and, as such, student writing was a powerful research tool for uncovering how basic writers thought about and used language. She argues "the keys to [basic writer's] development as writers often lie hidden in the very features of their writing that English teachers have been trained to brush aside with a marginal code letter or a scribbled injunction to 'Proofread!'" (Shaughnessy, *Errors* 5). Like Flower, Shaughnessy's deep commitment to students can be read as an embrace of feminized values. Over and over as I read through Shaughnessy's work, I was struck by (or perhaps "stuck" in) her generous attitude toward students and her genuine interest in their writing. For example, rather than feeling frustrated or dismissive of basic writers, she honors both the knowledge they bring to the classroom and the complexity of their struggle with academic English: "Young men and women who have spoken years of sentences cannot be said to be ignorant of sentences. [However] when academically ill-prepared young adults write, which they rarely do except in an academic situation, they often mismanage complexity" (Shaughnessy, *Errors* 73). My immersion in my previous subjects—Wendell, Hopkins, and Wykoff—also many have contributed to my reaction to her

descriptions of her students' work. After "decades"[40] of frustrated complaints about students, here was a sensitive, thoughtful appreciation of the work students were doing and how writing teachers could productively improve that work. Susan Miller describes this approach as seeing writing as "a product of students' minds:" "In Shaughnessy's work, student biography was taken to be the precedent for examining 'the text itself' as a product of the student's mind that could be illuminated by linguistic, grammatical, and symbolic systems uncovered by 'close reading.' Composition research to examine 'the writing (process) itself' followed this lead" (115). While Shaughnessy's attitude toward students, both in using them as subjects of her research and respecting their contributions, draws on feminized values, her research also analyzed student writing to better understand the patterns found within it in more empirical terms.[41] In fact, Miller argues that Shaughnessy's approach directly influenced the work of scholars like Flower, which I described previously as highly empirical, by opening up student writing as a worthy of analysis:

> Shaughnessy's clearly literary approach to student texts did attract the support of the literary establishment as it had not been attracted since the earliest MLA meetings. But the definition of the field's research as 'interdisciplinary' that followed her call for further investigations of students' processes and the use of quantitative methods from fields outside the settings where composition was almost exclusively taught have associated composition with another sort of credibility altogether. (S. Miller 116-17).

[40] While for me these decades are metaphoric, representing my time with my previous subjects, for initial readers of Shaughnessy's scholarship they were likely not. Hers was a new voice, both in the lively naturalness of her writing and in her obvious, deep respect for students and even their "weakest" work.
[41] For instance, while *Errors and Expectations* does not include statistical analyses of student work, she does provide dozens of student examples for every concept she discusses. Furthermore, her later research, for example the *CCC* article "Some Needed Research on Writing," calls for empirical research into basic writers' prose.

While Shaughnessy's humanistic approach was initially highly attractive (and familiar) to literature faculty, Miller argues that its long term effects—by introducing a rich source of empirical research—eventually widened the divide between literature and composition faculty. In terms of my research however, this shift aligns with Wykoff's previous call that research into teaching was legitimate and important. Shaughnessy, by using student writing as her research material, was able to blend her pedagogical and research labor. Her research helped her design her classes: her classes helped her complete her research. Given my own deep identification with a teacher-scholar identity and sensitivity to research that appears unproductively critical of students, it is easy to see why Shaughnessy was such an inspiring research topic for me.

Linking her scholarship and teaching both consolidated Shaughnessy's labor in useful ways and encouraged her tendency to overcommit and overwork. By combining her pedagogy with research, Shaughnessy was often able to do double, and even triple, duty. For example, in a letter from Frank O'Hare in 1976, O'Hare writes in support of funding for a project on sentence-combining requiring video-taping students by Shaughnessy and professor Alice Trillin. In describing his support, he cites the benefit to students by testing new approaches to teaching grammar and the value of the research to the field (O'Hare). So far Shaughnessy's project supports her teaching and her research, but in potentially bringing resources to the SEEK program, it also supports her department and administrative labor. This just one example of how Shaughnessy's feminized research orientation usefully consolidated her labor and this letter from her colleague demonstrates that this was obvious to her colleagues as well. While the ability to fulfil several layers of responsibility at once is valuable, it also presented a specific

challenge: because Shaughnessy's research was so closely implicated with pedagogy, it was incredibly difficult for her—even with research grants and sabbaticals—to pull away from the classroom. Maher, who interviewed her close friend and assistant, captures this tension:

> Under the terms of the Carnegie Foundation grant, [Shaughnessy] would be released from her teaching and administrative duties for the 1972-73 academic year, but [her assistant] recalls that [Shaughnessy] worked even longer hours than she had before; given her growing reputation in the field of basic writing and as a proponent of Open Admissions, it was impossible for her to concentrate exclusively on her research and writing. (Maher 124)

This quote from Maher, rightly, locates some of her inability to focus solely on research on her growing national reputation. But given Shaughnessy's deep commitment to students and their crucial role in her own research, another contributing factor to her ever-lengthening work hours was her desire to stay committed to and connected with pedagogy. While Shaughnessy was not teaching herself during this year (thanks to her Carnegie Foundation grant for her research into basic writing), she still worked closely with other writing teachers and immersed herself in student work.

Here, for me, is a moment of swamp-like stickiness. Like a bog that sucks you down faster the harder you struggle, while I worked hard to pay attention to many different aspects of Shaughnessy's work, it was her obvious commitment to students and willingness to work super-humanly hard for them that continually arrested my attention and directed my thoughts. Shaughnessy was a popular, well-respected teacher. In a teaching observation from 1971, Theodore Gross writes "Professor Shaughnessy knows her subject thoroughly and communicates it well. She is a superb teacher." I am proud to associate her with my field, not just because she respected students, but

because she proudly enacted pedagogies that valued students. Shaughnessy was a true teacher-scholar: Maher notes that "By the end of 1975, [Shaughnessy] had not taught basic writing for more than two years because of the Carnegie Foundation grant and her subsequent yearlong sabbatical. She began to fear that she would lose her sense of the capabilities the students possessed and the challenges they faced; in short, she was afraid she would become a typical administrator" (179). I am drawn to these lines, in part, because I hope they are lines that my colleagues will one day use to describe me: Shaughnessy embodies a scholar who locates her professional raison d'etre in students. But, much like in my identification with Hopkins, this awareness of my relationship to her is troubling because of the shadow of unsustainable labor on her career. Many speculated that Shaughnessy's death from cancer was either hastened or, at least in part, caused by her stressful, difficult work. Shaughnessy was lauded for the astounding amount of work she was able to do, and do well: "Everyone who met or worked with her expressed amazement at her ability to work so hard, with such dedication and without the least resentment of the time and energy she devoted, until she completed a particular assignment or project" (Maher 75). But a deeper look into her personal life reveals the all too familiar costs of such labor. For instance, a friend "remembers that [beginning to teach at the college level] was the beginning of 'Mina's blue period,' because 'she would arrive each weekend at our house in Connecticut and spend hours and hours grading the stacks of essays written in those ubiquitous blue books" (Maher 76). In a letter to another friend, Shaughnessy writes: "I am writing from under water—way down deep in a churning, murky, frenzied world full of sentence fragments, and sweet, betrayed students, and memos and suspicious colleagues […] It is midnight and I

have a stack of papers. Let me know when I can see you" (qtd. in Maher 104-5). This might be the line from all of Shaughnessy's writing that most moves me—the generous attitude toward her students, maintained the face of "midnight," "suspicious colleagues" and "a stack of papers." I both aspire to reach her confident, compassionate orientation toward students in the face of difficult labor and rebel; teaching should be difficult work, I wouldn't love it if it weren't, but must it be *this* difficult? Must it, when my life nears its ends, make me wonder if perhaps my passion has killed me? These are grandiose words, but they are also Shaughnessy's experience. A close friend, Ed Quinn "remembers that Mina speculated over the cause of her cancer. 'She […] theorized that the summer before Open Admissions was the most stressful period of her life. Preparing for thousands of incoming students had been such a burden that she actually felt that the stress had made her vulnerable to the disease" (Maher 224).

Context the Second: Surging Enrollments and a New Kind of Student

Another of the significant factors affecting Shaughnessy's labor, and the labor of writing teachers in general during her tenure, was exploding student enrollments. Shaughnessy taught during the open admissions movement, a period of time when the social upheaval and liberal values of the 1960s, coupled with returning veterans attending college funded by the GI Bill (Berlin, *Rhetoric* 120), led to steep inclines in student enrollment. Rising enrollments obviously place a burden on university structures but the open admissions movement is unique in that the needs of many of the students admitted at this time did more than burden those structures, they required *new* structures if students were to be successful. Universities are famous for their penchant

for slow, incremental change; thus, the fact that many of the students gaining access to higher education would be not successful without institutional change led to intense disagreement about the appropriate way to respond to the enrollment increases. Are universities ethically required to meet students where they are, and therefore mandated to make significant changes, or should universities simply not admit students who are unlikely to succeed, thus saving such students time, effort, and money? These are tensions that persist today, particularly as federal funding has been linked to retention.[42]

There were several factors driving up enrollment in the 1960s and 1970s. Some of these pressures were extensions of the causes of earlier enrollment booms. Lerner notes that since the 1890s sharp increases in enrollment have occurred following "shift[s] away from" a view of education as solely "the province of the elite" and the expansion of who could attend college, pointing out new sections of the population gaining access to education in the 1890s, 1920s and 1930s, and in the 1940s and 1950s[43]. He explains that this occurred "once again the late 1960s and 1970s, when the open admissions movement made higher education available to largely poor, largely urban students who had been denied the opportunity previously" (Lerner 188). Mendenhall emphasizes the magnitude of these increases, reporting that in the twenty years following the end of the WWII, undergraduate enrollment increased by 500 percent (16). While the effects of increasing enrollment reverberated through the entire university structure, Crowley points out that writing teachers not only feel this burden

[42] A 2013 *Chronicle of Higher Education* notes that Obama's push to link federal funding to retention and graduation rate disproportionately hurts community colleges and others serving traditional underprepared populations (Fields).

[43] It appears worth pointing that the pivotal moments in this project mirror moments of increased enrollment, particularly as this section notes the immediate effects of increasingly student enrollment on composition classrooms.

immediately, they often must respond it before university resources can be mobilized to support the labor of writing teachers:

> Since composition is universally required of entering students, its teachers feel the burden of enrollment increases as soon as they occur—sometimes long before administrators become aware of their impact on university resources. Composition's vulnerability to increased enrollment is compounded by the fact that composition teachers grade student papers […] each additional student means additional papers to grade. (Crowley, *Composition* 193)

Writing teachers, thus, are vulnerable to even minor spikes in enrollment in unique ways: the sustained and enormous growth of enrollment that continued throughout the open admissions movement (but actually began post-WWII) posed a true labor crisis, a pivotal moment, for writing teachers and administrators. Shaughnessy became famous because of her generous reaction to this crisis.

Compounding this crisis were the new needs of many of the students admitted. While "literacy crises" are a common form of hysteria following the admission of new kinds of students to higher education, the open admissions movement invited students from diverse, often under-prepared backgrounds whose writing was so far behind usual standards they were considered by some college faculty to be illiterate, unteachable, and simply not cut out for college. Writing teachers were immediately tasked with either "fixing" these students—if not in a single semester of composition, then with the help of an additional semester of Basic Writing—or admitting that these students were incapable to learning to write "correctly" and demonstrating to administration and the general public their appalling unpreparedness with moving examples. The expectation from some that Composition ought to serve as a tool for weeding-out those destined to fail is an extension of the attitudes that Crowley argues helped to create the modern

composition classroom in the first place: "If students' performance […] reveals that they somehow do not 'measure up' to a disciplinary standard, they are to be subjected to repeated exercises in the very deficiency they displayed. The function of the course that followed […] then, was to establish a site in which students might undergo the repeated and continuous punishment earned by their failure on the exam" (Crowley, *Composition* 74). In these lines Crowley is describing the situation in the 1880s, but those attitudes and expectations were still very much in play and, during the open admissions movement, were vociferously voiced in composition classes, departments, and universities across the nation. Shaughnessy is significant for suggesting an alternative conception of Basic Writing students and the role of the university in supporting their success.

These trends played out across most of the country, but they were particularly intense at CUNY, where Shaughnessy was working when she became a "household name" in Composition and Rhetoric. Consider the growth the remedial Pre-Baccalaureate Program (which became SEEK) described in the introduction the 1967-1968 Annual Report: Pre-Baccalaureate Program at CUNY. Here, the intensity of CUNY's growing enrollment, and the challenges attending that enrollment, are made explicit:

> From the Fall of 1966 to the Spring of 1968, the program grew from a total enrollment of 450, with an additional 750 non-matriculated evening session students, to an overall enrollment of 1807, including 262 of the original evening session students. The staff increased from a few dozen teachers, counselors and administrative personnel to approximately 300 […] In many ways, the story of SEEK can be considered a success story. One should, however, also recognize that the phenomenal rate of growth has created problems in staff development and program coordination in relationship to the colleges and faculties. It cannot be ignored that while some faculty members and administrators in the colleges are enthusiastic

> supporters of SEEK, when a program changes from a token program to a program which encompasses a sizable proportion of a campus's population, there may be an increased anxiety about and reaction against the program on the part of the faculty of the college. (Ballard)

Ballard's summary of the SEEK program highlights not only how quickly it was growing, but how strong the sentiment against the program was in some places. Notably Ballard's explanation for this tension is related to labor conditions (larger classes, new teachers) and struggles over access to funding. Thus, some of the hysterical responses to the SEEK program that emerge in the Shaughnessy archives were often motivated by access to limited budgetary resources: "The precipitous growth in the number of students admitted to the SEEK program exacerbated ever further the strain being placed on City's budget and caused those who were opposed to the SEEK program [a contingent that included faculty from departments across the university and several administrators] to fight even more vociferously for its removal" (Maher 114). At CUNY, Shaughnessy was not only dealing with the incredible labor challenges represented by large and steady enrollment growth, she was fighting to re-conceptualize the role of Basic Writing and how writing teachers understood basic writers. The conflation of these forces at her institution, as well her leading role in creating pedagogies aimed at basic writers, make her a perfect representative for studying this pivotal moment in the history of Composition and Rhetoric.

Shaughnessy as WPA

As an administrator, Shaughnessy is impressive: she began by running the wildly expanding SEEK program. She also ran the Writing Center as it grew from one location to two and began training and mobilizing graduate students, became director of

the Writing Program and the director of the Instructional Resource Center, and she was appointed an associate dean of CUNY (Maher 153). In all of these roles she was recognized as someone who got things done, as a generous colleague, and as an effective advocate for students. And yet, even in the face of mushrooming administrative duties, her research agenda and service to her to field was also multiplying:

> In 1972, she coordinated the Open Admissions Seminar at the 4C's in Boston; in 1973 she became a member of the Executive Committee of NCTE and chaired an NCTE pre-Conference in Philadelphia on Growth in Writing. In 1974, she was appointed chair of the Research Committee on Reading Problems of High School Graduates, a committee convened by the National Institute of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. (Maher 144-45)

This was also the period when she was finishing her book and beginning new research projects. The fact that she was able to balance and blend these duties contributed to her success, but also her overwork. As I pointed out when linking her research and her teaching, she also linked her research to her administrative work. Thus her research, while also serving her mission of effectively teaching basic writers, also helped to establish WPA work as legitimate and important. Heckathorn explains the balancing that encompasses WPA work and research. On the one hand "The work of WPAs [grows] out of departmental need;" on the other hand, "The ability to successfully address these needs [… relies] in great part on a WPA's ability to craft a professional identity and have that identity recognized by others" (Heckathorn 195). Research is how Shaughnessy made her work visible beyond her immediate colleagues. For example, in *Errors and Expectations*, Shaughnessy is careful to present her recommended

curriculum as a starting place for the difficult, highly situated, work of designing curriculum for a specific context:

> This book is concerned with the orientations and perceptions of teachers in relationship to a specific population of student writers. It assumes that programs are not the answer to the learning problems of students but that teachers are and that, indeed, good teachers create good programs, that the best programs are developed *in situ*, in response to the needs of individual student populations and as reflections of the particular histories and resources of individual colleges." (Shaughnessy, *Errors* 6)

By producing publishable, highly-popular research that built on her role as a teacher and administrator, she helped to make the visible the *intellectual* work of administration.

Shaughnessy's ability to do incredible and effective work as administrator without sacrificing teaching or research came at a cost. Earlier, painting WPA work as aligned with the feminized tension surrounding Composition and Rhetoric, I left out one important expression of this connection: WPA work is often understood and represented as uniquely painful, burdensome, and health wrecking. There is a long history (at least, considering the short history of recognition of this professional orientation within Composition and Rhetoric) of narratives linking personal suffering and immensely difficult, martyr-like labor with effective WPA labor, which Charlton et al. usefully summarize: "The images of suffering can be overwhelming; likewise, the conclusions put forward by 'advice narratives' that are built on the perilous premises of the victim and hero narratives establish generalized knowledge that we find too limited in their assumptions about what WPA work is and who should do it" (55). Charlton et al. work hard to put forth new narratives, but looking at the labor of early WPAs like Shaughnessy, the overwhelming layers of responsibility without adequate resources, helps explain how the original narratives of WPA suffering became so ubiquitous: "In

addition to her official title of director of the Instructional Resource Center, she would also be appointed an associate dean of CUNY. In the meanwhile, despite the fact that she had to attend meetings and form committees in anticipation of the resource center's opening, she was determined to continue her work on *Errors and Expectations*" (Maher 153). Even so, Shaughnessy's suffering as a WPA can only be constructed secondhand. Shaughnessy herself appears eternally optimistic and capable of every challenge. It is not my wish to super-impose my understanding of WPA work as vulnerable to extreme working conditions on Shaughnessy (though, mentioned in the previous section, she did link the stress of her job to her cancer diagnosis when talking with friends). Instead, I chart the work that she was asked to do, and then did, to let it speak for itself. And the archival documents do reveal that, troublingly, even basic support—for instance meeting the promises of her negotiated promotion—was not consistently provided. We don't need Shaughnessy to tell us that these conditions were exploitative; the record speaks for itself.

We can see how Shaughnessy's ability to juggle teaching, research and administrative duties put pressure on her labor; however, the archives reveal just how complex and complicated that administrative work was on its own. When Shaughnessy inherited the SEEK program, her first major administrative appointment at CUNY, she oversaw 10 full-time and 1 part-time academic counselor as well as 20 full-time and 26 part-time SEEK teachers (Ballard 38). As complicated as stepping into that project was, she was a smashing success. In Ballard's report on the SEEK program during Shaughnessy's first-year, he writes "The English Staff is blessed both with fine teachers and a splendidly innovative supervisor in the person of Mrs. Shaughnessy. The proof of

this competence is the success of our students in regular college English courses" (5). Later, her administrative responsibilities become much more complex. For example, when she was promoted to director of the Writing Program in 1973, Shaughnessy outlines the responsibilities of her new positions to Dr. Saul Touster in a letter summarizing her appointment. Her responsibilities include coordinating ESL, Basic Writing, SEEK, and the Writing Center as well as their research activities; reporting to the English Department chair on "all matters requiring departmental action or coordination;" coordinating with SEEK by working with a SEEK coordinator and the SEEK chairman for the English department; overseeing the promotion and evaluation of SEEK and Writing Program teachers; coordinating with the Dean of Open Admissions, the Dean of Humanities, and the SEEK Director on Writing Program projects; and remaining "flexible." At the end of the memo she explains, "despite these formal-sounding arrangements […] we have to keep in mind that our problem is not how to carve up a pie but how to get it baked" (Shaughnessy, Letter to Touster). While academic appointments and duties can sometimes sound more time-consuming and complex than they actual are (say, in the hands of a disinterest or reluctant administrator), Shaughnessy was famous for getting things done. The archives burst with memos and plans, references to projects and new under-takings, and—most significantly—clear evidence that Shaughnessy herself was actually working on every one of the projects listed above.

As we can see, the expectations surrounding Shaughnessy's role as a WPA were vast and varied: but what did that labor look like in practice? Bok, writing about composition instruction in higher education, explains the difficulty of WPA work:

"most directors have to cope with constant staff turnover, low morale, sudden, unpredictable fluctuations in student numbers, insufficient resources, and an abiding sense of being marginalized by the faculty and administration despite performing functions that are both demanding and essential" (Bok 87). Shaughnessy was affected by similar challenges. For instance, the archives attest to struggles over disciplinary knowledge. A memo from Mary Lea to Shaughnessy summarizes a meeting with Allan Danzig, who was in charge of the Basic Writing Placement test. Even though Shaughnessy oversaw the program administering basic writing classes and devised the basic writing curriculum, she found her department arguing "sometimes very heatedly" over which students should take the basic writing test and when, the role of an instructor in determining test preparedness, the "training" required for the placement test, whether students should be allowed to take the test as practice, moving exam dates, and the relationship between the test and basic writing curriculum (Lea). While Lea and Danzig were able to have a civil, if heated, meeting, it is clear the Writing Program struggled to convince other units in the University, even those that ostensibly were directly related to Shaughnessy's research, to adopt approaches compatible with the Writing Program. The difficulty of translating the results of writing research to colleagues and programs across the university is ongoing challenge for WPAs, even today.

Shaughnessy also struggled with staffing, especially as full-time non-tenured instructors made up a large portion of her staff. For instance, CUNY instructors belonged to a union, but the logistics and funding structure of SEEK made it difficult to meet terms outlined in writing teachers' contracts. When Shaughnessy was SEEK writing director in 1969 the following memo was distributed by Dean Mirian Gilbert:

> Under the new UFCT contract, departmental policy is to inform full time non-tenured staff members by December 1 of the availability of positions for the next academic year whenever the budget and departmental course loads are sufficiently stable to permit us to plan so far in advance. In the SEEK program, however, because its budget is allocated separately and because its continuation remains subject to annual legislative decision, it is impossible for us to make commitments for the academic year 1970-71 at this time. (Gilbert)

This meant that the teachers Shaughnessy supervised, trained, and hired were unable to set up their schedules in advance or verify their employment. As a WPA, given the enrollment situation at CUNY, I imagine the biggest hurdle of this predicament was not even holding writing teachers in suspense (she could be reasonably confident that teaching positions would be available) but, instead, was trying to staff sections and provide training in such an unstable employment environment. The struggle to staff courses and communicate value for instructors who cannot be promised stable employment is, in some degree, an unavoidable problem of staffing first-year classes dependent on enrollments which can only be estimated in advanced. These kinds of disputes and challenges are simply part of the nature of the WPA work; Shaughnessy knew what she was getting into and she was an effective administrator. Yet, it is still valuable to describe the kind of labor that went into Shaughnessy's successful stint as a WPA. This labor did not happen in a vacuum: it took place as she was teaching, conducting research, training teachers, and writing. It was slow moving; it required building relationships; it included problems that necessitated long-term planning to even begin address.

While the kind of labor Shaughnessy did as WPA was not necessarily unique, part of what contributed to her success was the deployment of "feminized" values that focused on relationships and the people involved. A letter from English Department

Chair Edmond Volpe to Shaughnessy in 1967, during her first-year as SEEK director, outlines a dispute and that illustrates Shaughnessy's focus on her staff as people and professionals. The letter appears to be a response, from Volpe, to criticism from SEEK (formerly Pre-Baccalaureate) staff feeling isolated and left out of the English department proper. Knowing this, Volpe expresses his disappointment that none of the SEEK teachers have come to several recent English department events to which everyone was invited:

> Now, I want to make clear that I have never pressed anyone in the department to participate in any function, and I do not intend to do so. But, I have been conscious of the strong feelings expressed last year by the pre-bac instructors concerning their sense of isolation, and I had hoped to remedy the problem this year by making very clear that I want the staff to participation in all departmental activities. (Volpe)

While Shaughnessy's response to this exact letter does not survive, a subsequent letter, dated a few months after Volpe's, does. In it, Shaughnessy obviously continues an ongoing discussion with Volpe about how to effectively integrate the SEEK writing instructors into the department. After referencing attempts such as encouraging SEEK faculty to attend English Department events, she launches into a careful explanation of what she identifies as a key component of the feelings of isolation and undervaluation of SEEK writing teachers: office space. She writes:

> I must again bring up the subject of office space. Everyone is aware of the space problem; the disgruntlement rises more directly from the fact that every teacher in the regular English program has some kind office space whereas not one teacher in the Pre-bac program has any office space. The counseling time that is worked into the teachers' schedules is not an adequate substitute: no one can reach the teachers by telephone except in the evenings, and the teachers, in turn, run up their telephone bills at home; they have no place to 'land' when they get to campus; they cannot meet student requests for appointments; and most important, their contention that they are invisible is seriously reinforced by the failure of

> anyone to allot them space. Is there nothing we can do and no one we can bother about this? (Shaughnessy, *Letter to Volpe*)

Shaughnessy, smartly, locates the "disgruntlement" of SEEK writing teachers in their labor conditions. Those conditions are not comparable to other faculty, thus the source of their frustration. In advocating for teachers, Shaughnessy highlights the burdens placed on her teachers (both financially in their phone bills and emotionally in their lack of place to "land") and notes the effect on students (who do not have adequate access to their writing teachers). Reading this memo as feminized does not downplay its directness; instead, I want to call attention to her focus on the people, both students and teachers, that it is her job oversee and on her clear commitment to addressing labor conditions in ways that support teachers and students. This is also an example of a moment in the archives that "stuck" with me. Personally, I worked with adjuncts crowded ten to an office and, at Ivy Tech where I worked as an adjunct, had no office space at all. And I have seen the toll uneven access to resources has on instructors, embittering and demoralizing teachers who see no departmental evidence that their work has even minimal value.

Despite clear evidence that Shaughnessy excelled at all areas of her administrative responsibility and that those responsibilities were complex and difficult, the archives also preserve her struggles for fair compensation of that labor. J. F. Keilt, in 1973, initiates a swarm of correspondence, when he attempts to better align Shaughnessy's pay with her growing labor and responsibilities as the administration negotiates with Shaughnessy about stepping into the Writing Program director position. He lays out a convincing case, explaining that before being appointed Director of the Writing Program, Shaughnessy was in charge of the writing center and received one

course remission (Keilt). He explains that under her leadership the writing center has grown into "has grown two writing centers, a research office on student writing and a graduate level course for teachers. The writing center now has a staff of 105 people all under the Director Professor Shaughnessy" (Keilt). Yet despite not only Shaughnessy's growing responsibilities in her current appointments, her promotion to Writing Program director initially offered only one more course release (Keilt). Keilt's appeal appears to have been effective: her promotion was negotiated not only to include a higher rank but two increases in the level of her pay. However, Gross, in Dec. 12 1973 references clear promises that have not been fulfilled: "This administration simply has no right to make pledges to administrators which cannot be sustained. Professor Shaughnessy remained at City College under the clear understanding that she would be recommended for associate professor, which has occurred, and that she would receive a double increment, which has not." The dispute about her pay pings back and forth between several administrators, most of whom feign surprise and ignorance and some of whom agree this is a problem but claim policy makes honoring this agreement impossible.

Again, this was a moment that disproportionately drew my attention. I was angry and dismayed that Shaughnessy—so talented and so hard working—was taken advantage of in this way. The matter was eventually resolved and there is no direct evidence in the archives that Shaughnessy herself was incensed (though I was grateful to see how passionately she was defended by her colleagues). But I could not help but remember my own difficulties in securing money I or my partner had earned: months long delays in receiving payment for summer work, finding out labor could not be compensated until *after* completing that work, having to borrow money from my

parents because my partner and I weren't told that his August paycheck (as an adjunct) would be half of his usual pay even though mine (as a graduate student) would be the full stipend. The idea that someone as effective, respected, and influential as Shaughnessy also struggled to be fairly compensated was disheartening. Experiences like this also likely affected Shaughnessy's careful awareness of the complex actors affecting a writing teacher's ability to do her job. Near the end of *Errors and Expectations* she writes:

> Most of what has been written in this book has been intended for teachers, particularly for teachers who are only beginning, or are about to begin, their work with BW students. But BW teachers are far from autonomous beings in their departments and divisions and colleges. It is not usually they who set limits on class size or teaching load or the numbers of semesters granted to writing instruction. They do not control the extent to which writing permeates a college curriculum and therefore reinforces their work, nor can they rearrange the reward system in such a way as to encourage teachers to concentrate their scholarly energies in the sorts of questions that arise in basic writing. Such matters are in the hands of administrators, whose perceptions of the so-called remedial problem largely determine whether basic writing is to be viewed as a college contagion ward staffed by teachers are who brought in for the emergency and expect to perform miracles (even though they are at the same time restricted from having a professional future there) or whether it is to be viewed as a frontier in higher education which, while it may send some hurrying back to the safety and familiarity of the past, ought to draw many others of talent into its challenge. (Shaughnessy, 290-91)

Shaughnessy's work as an administrator made her acutely aware of both of the pressures complicating the labor of the writing teachers and how of writing teachers often felt isolated and under-valued as they worked hard to accomplish very difficult tasks.

Takeaways: Martyrdom and Student-Center Pedagogy

The very things that I most admire about Shaughnessy—her clear respect for her students, her research into challenging dismissive ideas about basic writers, her effective administrative abilities and focus on people—also play into a problematic aspects of the mythology surrounding Shaughnessy. As a field we love her, we mourn her early loss, and we see her as a kind of sacrifice to turning our field toward students. She shone brightly and, when extinguished by her early death, the sense that her health was affected by her labor made her almost a cautionary tale. For people like me, with a penchant toward martyrdom on the behalf of students, she also became a problematic role-model. Rather than internalizing the expectation that great teacher-scholars must sacrifice themselves to their profession, the goal ought to be finding ways to support the kind of work she did with labor conditions that *also* support mentally and physically heathy teachers.

Even as the mythos of Shaughnessy glamorizes martyrdom, her experiences offer many productive models for ethical labor in the teaching of the writing (as well as areas of caution). Supporting under-prepared students is difficult, inherently political work. But Shaughnessy approached this labor in two vital ways: she built relationships across the campus and she took advantage of her work with those students to produce scholarship that demonstrated and explained the intellectual value of this work. Today, Writing Across the Curriculum initiatives build on Shaughnessy's early impulse but one area within those studies can could be productively extended is link basic writing instruction to those conversations.[44] Additionally, the importance of maintaining the

[44] While Basic Writing scholarship approaches basic writing curricula from various perspective, few theorize a basic writing curriculum that functions explicitly as part of a WAC orientation. With Samuel

visibility of Basic Writing is vital, especially in light of recent trends away from open admissions and toward regulating basic writing to Community Colleges (Tuberville). Since Shaughnessy there has been an explosion of important research into basic writing but as the political winds have shifted and basic writing has become more of a niche specialization; Shaughnessy's success demonstrates that scholarship on basic writing must continue to represent both the complexity and validity of this work.

At the same time, Shaughnessy also embodies the core tensions of a feminized identity. As a field we are proud of our student orientation, the contributions of our feminized research methodologies, and work to recognize the human element of labor that makes up our field. At the same time, our deep investment in these aspects of the field have so energized and motivated many women (and men) to accept labor conditions that overtax and overburden us, actually normalizing unrealistic and unhealthy labor conditions. Shaughnessy is a prime example of this, both demonstrating the value in building relationships with the people around her and focusing closely on student needs while serving as a warning that pushing oneself to do the seemingly impossible, while making it possible to achieve much in a short amount of time, can also normalize such expectations. Shaughnessy was amazing and I am inspired by her but it is important to articulate the costs of her labor. I want to be inspired by her to not only care for and respect my students, but also to refuse to perpetuate labor conditions that demand more than one person can healthily accomplish. Her experience and the experience of people like Hopkins offers a lesson: martyrdom, in the form of meeting

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Cohen links Basic Writing and WAC, he does so not to link their pedagogies but to suggest lessons from the politicization of Basic Writing that might serve WAC well. Shaughnessy's work suggests a fruitful partnership is possible between these pedagogical approaches.

unreasonable demands on our labor, is not an effective strategy for long-term change. It is feminist and ethical and to put limits on our work and to advocate, loudly, for creating labor conditions that enable the labor of effective teaching. These debates matter to every student who sets foot inside a writing classroom. As Crowley puts it, "An experienced teacher of writing knows that what she knows will be modified by the experienced of teaching a composition class, and she must admit as well that the conduct of any class is affected by her desires as well as her health and her well-being" (*Composition* 215).

To support our teaching, our health, and ultimately our students we need to know just want kind of labor we do and what conditions support that labor. Wendell and Shaughnessy contributed to this conversation by devising curricula. Hopkins did vital work on understanding the labor of responding to student work and Wykoff (along with Shaughnessy and many others) began to study how teaching writing works and how we might, as teachers, do it more effectively. Shaughnessy also modeled a scholarly orientation and voice that acknowledge and embrace feminized elements of the field, most obviously in her treatment of her students and writing teachers. But we have not yet put these pieces, updated for our current pedagogies and institutional realities, into conversation with each other. Adjunct, contingent, and tiered labor complicate the contemporary landscape of teaching writing even more. But as reform in the employment structures of higher education becomes an increasingly important and increasingly public concern, we must be prepared to intervene in these discussions productively. That means we need to know what we need and how to articulate those needs effectively and persuasively. Shaughnessy, in particular, offers us glimpses of an

effective, well-respected administrator who has had a lasting impact on the field. She turned weaknesses, like her lack of Ph.D. and position in a feminized field, into strengths (by launching into research and demonstrating the scholarly value of approaching student writers as worthy objects of study). And while her labor was exhausting, it was effective—in part due to her focus on human relationships. These are transferable skills, to borrow a phrase from our pedagogical research, and can be useful and important in our contemporary efforts to improve the labor conditions of writing teachers.

Chapter 6: Coda: Final Thoughts

As I end this dissertation, I want to do two things. First, I want to paint a fuller picture of the labor conditions that primed me to tackle this research and drew me to these issues. Second, I want to consider *how* the histories in this dissertation can enrich and mobilize contemporary attempts to reform labor in first-year composition

A Twenty-First Century "History"

It was 2007. As a Master's student studying eighteenth-century British literature, I was ambivalent when offered the opportunity to teach composition classes. While I did dream of teaching at the college level, I looked forward to leading seminars full of graduate students as we discussed the novels I loved and the theories that made them important. My Master's program did not include student funding or a Composition and Rhetoric track and, as a very new program, had never used graduate students to staff composition classes: I took exactly one class related to theories of writing (and in that class we focused more on internet writing as activism than writing pedagogy). I was finished with coursework and working on my thesis when the first-year writing director caught me in the hall—would I be interested in teaching two sections of composition 1 in Fall? I was already working 30 hours a week at a bank and 10 hours at the Writing Center; if I hadn't felt so flattered by the offer, I probably would have declined (teaching composition, which necessitated cutting my hours back at the bank, cost me income even as it extended my working hours considerably). I had virtually no understanding of Composition and Rhetoric as a discipline and looked forward to

teaching because I thought it brought me closer to my goals, not because I thought it would be intellectually stimulating, challenging, or fun. In fact, I expected the opposite.

The first semester was a blur. It was difficult—so much more difficult than I had imagined. I was so busy—planning weeks in advance and then completely revising days when my students surprised or disappointed me, spending up to an hour grading a single paper, having to troubleshoot every issue that emerged for the first time—I never once stopped to consider how I felt about what I was doing. I was surviving. But that Spring, about two weeks into the semester, I was hit with a visceral, almost physical, reaction: I loved this. *Loved*. During the winter break, I had been reading: I wanted to learn about techniques for responding to student writing, I wanted insight into structuring peer-review so that it would actually be useful and meaningful to students, I wanted more information about involving students in classroom discussion. And the information was there (I distinctly remember wondering if those concerns were a "thing" or if I was crazy)! I discovered an entire field. At first I was overwhelmed: for the first time it occurred to me that I was not prepared to teach composition, that perhaps being a strong writer was not the same thing as being a strong writing teacher.

But my next reaction was stronger: I was hooked, motivated, intellectually thirsty. Here was research I could put to practical use. My students weren't dull vessels I needed to fill with knowledge about commas: they were my partners in unraveling the mysteries of writing. They had ideas—complex, interesting, developing ideas—and the breadth of their knowledge and life experience made reading their work both complicated and engaging. I had things to offer them: tools for writing, techniques for exploring ideas, a new understanding of revision; but, they also things to offer me:

questions I had never considered, challenges to my conceptions about writers, energy and enthusiasm. Freshmen—especially first-semester Freshmen—became my favorite students,[45] so far removed from the graduate students I thought I wanted.

But as this sense of my mission—my growing identification with Composition and Rhetoric and my attachment to first-year students—solidified, I noticed interactions around the department and with fellow teachers that I hadn't before. I was attracted to enthusiastic teachers, those who were always thinking about how they could revise and improve their classes and who shared and celebrated student success. They were generous with students, not by handing out As, but working hard to identify with their needs and experiences. At the same time, I was increasingly repelled by teachers who appeared not to *like* their students. They would derisively read aloud from bad student writing, obsessively catalogue the missteps of the students (like asking for information available on the syllabus or sending an email with a causal subject line), and reflexively blame students for failures without even considering ways they could, perhaps, improve the situation. They talked about the "dumbing down" of the curriculum and how "easy" their assignments ought to be for students. They were unshakeably confident in their own writing and status as "good writers" and their conception of students as impressively unprepared. The worst part about these interactions was my uncomfortable awareness that, not so long ago, I would have joined in these discussions enthusiastically—there was a time when the very idea of Freshmen made me roll my eyes and offer my opinions on their sundries failures and peccadillos. Teaching first-

[45] First-semester students remain my favorites, even after I had the opportunity to teach upper classmen and graduate students (which, I admit, I also thoroughly enjoy—especially first-semester graduate students).

year writers changed me as a writer, a teacher, and scholar. These were the students I wanted to teach and the negative and self-serving attitudes towards student writers were misconceptions I wanted to explode—first in the composition classroom, then across of the university. As I moved deeper into Composition and Rhetoric scholarship, I saw how late to the game I was arriving—this was not new ground. But rather than disappointing me, this realization motivated me. There was still work to be done, but now I had and army of colleagues to help me do it.

Alongside this awakening, I was experiencing adjunct labor for the first time. Some of the teachers I sketched above—both the dedicated, inspiring and ones and the disengaged, dismissive ones—were adjuncts. Some had been adjuncts for decades. I was a single woman without a family and I was supplementing my income just to stay afloat. I worked as an adjunct and at a bank for a year; after that I was hired as a visiting lecturer (with a 4/4 load and a reasonable salary and benefits). Enrollments at my home institution; however, were creeping up. The result, over my three years as visiting lecturer, were more and more adjunct hires. I had a visiting line because of luck: I was one of the first new adjuncts and when the position became available I had seniority over other new adjuncts. I wasn't better; I was luckier. And I made a living wage doing the same work as many who did not. My first reaction, like many others, was disbelief and anger. I loved my Chair and First-Year Writing Director and I saw how hard they worked to protect, promote, and reward adjuncts and lecturers. I assumed that problems surrounding the labor of teaching writing were new and unusual; there must have been a time when writing teachers were properly valued and worked in better labor conditions: the problem must be the relatively recent institutional move to adjunct labor. As the

research in this dissertation makes clear, I was both wrong and right. Labor conditions surrounding the teaching of writing *have* looked different. However, they have never been reasonable: class sizes have been ridiculously high, grading expectations have been physically impossible, research has been divorced from the work of teaching writing, and meeting the needs of students has often meant foregoing the needs of the self. Adjunct labor is the new face of an old problem in writing classrooms.

Opportunities for Action

Today labor conditions are a major theoretical and practical concern in the discipline. As has been well documented in the field by Schell, Crowley, Scott, Bousquet, Carter, and others, labor conditions have much to do with how writing is taught in the university and with how it is framed in public discourse. As we plan our own strategies for labor reform today, we cannot afford to ignore the lessons from our discipline's past. Today, course caps on writing courses are questioned by administrators trying to cut teaching costs; writing courses are often taught by low-paid and low-status contingent laborers; on many campuses first-year writing curricula suffer from administrative over-reach and "reimaginings" from those outside (and sometimes even hostile) to our field. These conditions present us with an exigent moment for considering how we can look to lessons from history to improve our labor conditions in the present. Many labor scholars in composition have suggested various avenues for reform—from unionization (Bousquet; Carter; Schell) to replacing first-year composition with vertical writing curricula (Crowley) to converting contingent faculty pools into alternative labor structures (Kinney). The practical solutions these scholars

offer are important, but I argue these conversations must be complemented by historical case studies of earlier compositionists who also fought for labor reform. By incorporating historiographical research that offers more micro-level analyses of case studies, our understandings of historical labor challenges can enrich our vision of current conditions as well as how we develop actionable plans for the future.

The research and analysis in this dissertation demonstrate three points important to conversations about labor reform: (1) the labor conditions surrounding the teaching of composition have never been ideal and there is no "golden time" to fall back on as a model for reforms today; (2) the labor conditions surrounding the teaching of writing *have* changed, sometimes quite dramatically; and (3) with the rise of professionalization, the field has the power to (to some extent) influence changes to our labor conditions. With these points in mind, let me now sketch the evolving labor structure in my current department, concluding by suggesting ways the insights from this research can usefully direct our efforts moving forward.

In my current department, we are in the midst of labor and curricular reform. While this reform is ultimately welcome, it came out of an intense conflict with our administration; we lost faculty and struggled over ownership of the curriculum. However, the administration and department eventually settled on some positive changes. On the labor front, we are moving away from relying almost solely on GTAs and adjuncts to staff first-year composition classes by adding eighteen to twenty renewable-term faculty lines over three years. The goal is to staff the majority of our first-year composition courses with experienced teachers trained in teaching writing. These lines offer stable employment at a fair wage. However, rather than converting our

current adjuncts into these lines, these positions are being filled through national searches. The benefit of a national search is obvious: attracting high-quality applicants from a variety of programs. Unfortunately, this means that most of our current adjuncts will probably not receive term faculty lines, despite (in some cases) years of service to the university. At the same time, we are piloting a new curriculum that incorporates multimodal assignments, rhetorical listening, and rhetorical education into our two semester first-year composition sequence. The new curriculum is designed to give instructors more freedom in planning days and units but also provides unit objectives and prompts so that there is curricular cohesion. The connection between our changing labor structure and our changing curriculum is not accidental. Moving to a new curriculum requires ongoing training and mentorship. For instance, instructors will need ongoing training on technology, support and training to evaluate multimodal compositions, and ideas about how to design and scaffold lessons with multimodal elements. Teachers must be able to understand and internalize rhetorical listening and rhetorical education. Having helped plan and design the new curriculum, I am excited about the changes to our program: I am also nervous. How will existing instructors respond to our radically reimagined curriculum? Returning instructors, both GTAs and remaining adjuncts, will be asked to invest large amounts of time planning and enacting a curriculum they have not designed; their labor conditions may actually deteriorate due to our changes. Incoming renewable-term faculty will be piloting a brand new curriculum and will likely run into unforeseen issues; how will those issues affect their labor?

This snapshot of a moment probably looks familiar—at least in broad elements—to many WPAs. Administrative oversight of the curriculum, debates about the relationship between labor conditions and the quality of teaching, concerns about balancing teaching autonomy and curricular cohesion as well implementing Composition and Rhetoric theory and the ability of teachers with widely different backgrounds to teach a curriculum: This familiar moment is the exactly the kind of place where insights into the history of our labor can be most useful.

Labor Conditions Surrounding FYC Have Never Been Ideal

For new and inexperienced teachers, an understanding of the evolution of our labor conditions is vital. In my own labor history, I shared my early assumptions that labor conditions in first-year composition were newly dysfunctional and my optimistic hope that—if only the new problem could be isolated and removed—it would be a relatively easy accomplishment to come up with a solution. I granted that fixing the issue, since this would require time and investment from those outside of English, might be more difficult, but I misunderstood the complex, evolving nature of the issues surrounding teaching writing. Pedagogy changes. Students change. Universities and colleges change. Understanding the history of labor in Composition and Rhetoric is the first step toward understanding how multifaceted and slippery this issue is.

At the same time, while there have never been ideal conditions surrounding the labor of teaching writing, people have theorized about what those conditions might be. Hopkins, for instance, calculated the ideal number of students a teacher could handle (teaching his pedagogy). Wykoff wrote about "Utopia University" and the teaching,

research, and service loads a teacher in this environment would encounter. More recently, the *Council for Writing Program Administrators* has published guidelines for evaluating scholarship of WPA's in light of the close relationship between their research and service as well as "The Portland Resolution," a guideline for ethical practices in hiring, promoting, and evaluating WPAs. Additionally, the *National Council of Teachers of English* has position statements on class size and teacher workload. While colleges and universities are not bound to follow these recommendations (and many do not), as a field we are actively working to articulate and achieve labor conditions that will support our teaching: that work could not happen without an understanding of the history of labor in the field.

The Labor Conditions Surrounding the Teaching of Writing Have Changed

From Wendell to Shaughnessy we see clear changes in the labor conditions of writing teachers. Wendell taught writing sections with enrollment in the hundreds. Shaughnessy's class sizes hovered between twenty and thirty. Wendell taught men and women separately and nearly all of them would be considered well-prepared students by today's standards. Shaughnessy taught in an ethnically and economically diverse coeducational classroom (while not all contemporary teachers experience this, her classroom is represented of the greater access to higher education today). Over the years the kind of curriculum favored for teaching writing has changed, class sizes have changed, administrative duties have changed, and requirements and expectations for teachers have changed. While these changes have not always been positive, they demonstrate that it *is* possible to alter labor conditions.

Writing Teachers and Research Can Influence Labor Changes

Many of the changes I have described reflect institutional and cultural changes. Writing teachers do not typically decide what students are admitted to a university or how many. But our responses to those changes matter. Hopkins documented the unsustainable labor conditions he saw. While his arguments were not effective in the way he intended—he does not appear to have won over administrators or the public—he did influence the guidelines of accrediting institutions and through them help to bring about reductions class sizes. Wykoff's push to professionalize the field opened pathways to tenure and promotion for writing identified teachers. Examples like this demonstrate that though slow-moving, imperfect, and influenced by factors outside our immediate control, writing teachers can and do have the power to direct and influence their own labor conditions.

This is not, however, to say that our efforts have always been successful or positive. Wendell's popular pedagogy defined generations of teachers' labor conditions, but not in positive ways. Shaughnessy was a determined advocate for basic writers, but today most universities are once again seeking to push basic writers out of their classrooms and to community colleges. Yet, even examples of missteps or familiars offer important insights for contemporary teachers.

At my current university, considering and applying these insights produces tangible suggestions for actions. We have adopted a new and very different curriculum: Wendell reminds us that all pedagogies must explicitly consider the labor involved. Can

teachers do what we ask of them without undue stress and strain? Can we adequately train and support them? Hopkins and his attempts to persuade his administration and general public to invest in first-year composition remind us, also, that it is vital we work closely with our administration both to reiterate the value of our work and the labor it reflects. Wykoff's championing of professionalization reminds us that, as we integrate our renewable-term faculty into our department, we need to work to institutionalize support for their ongoing professional development. And Shaughnessy's labor across the university, working to understand the writing her students would be required to do throughout the undergraduate experience, reminds us to both build campus partnerships around the teaching of writing and to articulate to students how the skills we offer them can transfer to new contexts. All these are actionable ideas that we can either implement directly or lobby for with our administration.

That is what histories like these can do. They can contextualize and complicate situations happening right now on all our campuses. And while even these four histories are, I hope, powerful and useful our field would be enriched by even more. What has the labor surrounding the teaching of writing looked like at community colleges? At women's or historically black colleges? The more we chart and understand our labor history, the better prepared we will be as field to both make nation-wide arguments about minimally acceptable conditions and apply a general framework for approaching labor to our own institutions and contexts.

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