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POST-INDUSTRIAL GATEKEEPING: A RHETROCIAL HISTORY OF
DISCIPILNARY COMPOSITION

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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Abstract

This dissertation argues that composition's ascendance to academic legitimacy in the mid-to-late twentieth century did not emerge as a challenge to FYC's traditional gatekeeping function but rather represents the replacement of an outmoded formalist gatekeeping mechanism that served the dominant culture of industrial society with an identity-based mechanism that meets the needs of post-industrial capitalism. The project begins by revising popular views of process as a spontaneous source of composition's legitimacy to demonstrate how process was consciously taken up—particularly by Literature PhDs facing a collapsed job market and seeking employment security in composition—as a specialized knowledge-base by which compositionists could claim a professional status for the field. This professional model positioned process pedagogy's hallmarks of anti-formalism and progressive politics as the key components of professional composition. Subsequent movements in the field could thus demonstrate their superiority to previous work by revealing retained formalist or conservative assumptions in that work. As a result, compositionists turned increasingly to antifoundationalist theories to guarantee the politically resistant character of their pedagogy, a tendency that, by the 1990s raised questions of how to deploy antifoundationalist critique in the service of seemingly foundationalist political ideals.

Theorists have resolved this problem by defining leftist "inclusion" in idealized, antifoundationalist terms; that is, as the elimination of all exclusion. Such an idealization, however, forces instructors to find ways to include yet also exclude student perspectives that embrace discriminatory discourses on a principled basis derived from moral, cultural, or ideological values. The prevailing method for escaping this bind is to

encourage students to retain nominally their exclusionary subjectivities but only by redefining those subjectivities as inherently "inclusive"—a method particularly evident in recent scholarship concerning religious students. Such approaches integrate students' beliefs but only by stripping those beliefs of the exclusionary claims to truth that distinguish them as different. This pedagogy neutralizes student difference even as it seems to privilege difference through an ostensible inclusion, thereby obscuring the selective mechanism of the course. But such pedagogy also serves the needs of market intensification through the identity customization that is at the heart of global, post-industrial capitalism. It does so by training students to embrace a range of niche subjectivities while ensuring those subjectivities do not interfere with participation in and acceptance of alternative identities that create new sites of consumption.

Chapter 1: The Master Narrative of Composition History

There is a common misconception, even among many compositionists, that the first-year composition course is meant to teach students how to write. While such a view seems reasonable, it takes too much about the course at face value. After all, even at its very inception the first-year course worked more to create a particular student subjectivity than it did to improve student writing. Early composition curricula at major universities generally derived from formalist assumptions about writing and emphasized the superficial correctness of students' written products. Instructors taught the "rules" of writing—proper spelling, grammar and paragraph structure, syntax, punctuation, etc.— and then assessed the practice of these "rules" in students' writing of weekly or even daily themes. The rules students learned were in turn derived from the conventions of upper- and upper-middle-class white dialect the use of which was universalized by this pedagogy as the mark of "good writing." Early pedagogy assumed explicit instruction in the rules of language would translate automatically to practice and, consequently, it offered little guidance in the actual act of composing while denying the rhetorical character of written communication. In other words, early composition courses carefully avoided helping students improve their writing.

This practiced ineffectiveness, while perhaps not intentional, was certainly the point. Within the context of early writing curricula, the first-year class became a sorting mechanism to select students for advancement based on their cultural and social values as expressed through competency in upper-class dialects. Students with home discourses proximate to the dialect privileged in the writing classroom found it easier to succeed while those whose home discourses were significantly different from what

became "Standard English" had more difficulty or failed completely. Since the standard was naturalized as "good writing," the inability to approximate the privileged dialect was similarly naturalized as the student's individual failure to learn how to write. In this way non-standard dialects were characterized as indicators of an uneducated, unrefined, or even unintelligent individual. Instruction was primarily meant to show what good writing was and then have students accommodate themselves to the values and social identities bound up in the privileged discourse or wrestle with the implications of their failure. To teach writing effectively, even this kind of writing, would have ruined the effectiveness of the disciplinary function of first-year composition by giving everyone a more equal chance of success.

The work of compositionists over the past 45 years or so to build a base of knowledge about writing through research and the use of sophisticated rhetorical theory and then impart this practical knowledge through student-focused, procedural pedagogies can be, and has been, widely understood as a rejection of these sorting practices. In addition, inasmuch as compositionists have seen themselves as rejecting the ineffective instruction of the past, they have also figured their work as a rejection of the exclusionary selections these formalist pedagogies (also known as current-traditional rhetoric) performed for the dominant class. In other words, the work of teaching writing effectively *is* the work of resisting the oppression and injustices of existing hierarchies that would have the course select only privileged students for advancement. Composition is, of course, uniquely positioned to do this counterhegemonic work. Since the academy remains a key access point to the social mobility and social capital offered by higher education, and since the academy and the

professional world depend heavily on writing, composition's mandate to teach writing makes it something of a special site for undermining the inequities of the status quo. With the relatively recent view of writing as an object worthy of study and the resulting development of Composition as a respectable academic discipline, the first-year course has become for many a site in which to resist the forces of the dominant culture rather than enact them.

Histories of composition have commonly supported this perspective by embracing a binary master narrative that positions the pre-disciplinary past as monolithically dominated by exclusionary and ineffective writing instruction and the disciplinary present as initiated by compositionists through their rejection of these old practices. This historical narrative thus necessarily casts disciplinary composition as liberatory and counterhegemonic as a number of critics have noted. Louise Wetherbee Phelps, for example, has demonstrated that histories of Composition commonly turn on a shift from Composition as a "cultural indoctrination in literate traditions" (41) to Composition employing rhetorical and cultural analysis that questions "an unjust society" to work "toward its transformation" (41). Noting that this narrative of Composition's history represents a "shift on the continuum from an ideological motive to a utopian one" (41), Phelps details how "the tale of that shift is a classic narrative of progress" (41), one that frames the field as democratic and progressive through its resistance to the devalued pre-disciplinary past. Summarizing a common strain in Composition historical scholarship Phelps writes, "In the founding moment, [Composition] rejected a sterile 'current-traditional rhetoric' for the study and teaching of writing as process" (41). From the perspective of these most recent developments,

initial resistance to current-traditional rhetoric and the short-lived prominence of expressivist and cognitivist process models represent limited and misguided gropings toward utopia establishing a myth of inevitable progress that began at the radical break with a rhetorically reductive and oppressive past. Through the binary division of Composition history, disciplinary-era compositionists become "the good guys, the 'progressives'" (Phelps 42) and disciplinary-era composition becomes an inherently progressive project.

Virginia Anderson sees a similar binary narrative at work in the widely-accepted history of the field, one based on rhetoric's banishment and return. As Anderson explains, in most histories of composition, rhetoric is championed as a subject that once was so prestigious it was "taught by the college president" ("Property" 450). But with the privileging of positivism and liberal humanism in the late 1800s, rhetoric "was dispossessed, kicked out of the exalted territory that literary studies was to claim" ("Property" 451). With rhetoric banished, so the narrative runs, writing was reduced to a set of formalist practices and was relegated to first-year classes that, because of this limited view of writing, could be taught by anyone. With the revival of rhetoric in the mid-twentieth century as a framework for theorizing and teaching writing, compositionists began to reject the reductive formalism of current-traditional rhetoric. This rejection granted writing instruction academic legitimacy and linked composition's elevation to increased access for traditionally marginalized student populations (Anderson "Property" 452). Since a-rhetorical practices of the past supported the oppressive goals of "the capitalist ascendancy, disarming them [through a return to rhetorical instruction] means, for many, disarming as well the dominant culture making

way for the new compositionist dawn to illuminate the social, economic, and cultural possibilities" ("Property" 454). Anderson thus demonstrates how this narrative of banishment and return figures disciplinary Composition based on rhetoric as an inherently liberatory endeavor.

Even more recently Donna Strickland has described dualist meta-narratives that work themselves through composition's historical self-representation. The first of these narratives Strickland claims "has been plotted as tragedy" (5). In this narrative "Composition teaching . . . is a fallen and diminished version of the rhetorical education that formerly dominated the curriculum" (Strickland 5) but has since been undermined by current-traditional views of writing. While there are clear echoes of Anderson's influence in Strickland's critique, Strickland maintains that a heroic tale of resistance by writing teachers is typically paired with the tragic story. As Strickland explains, in popular histories "a more romantic story is told alongside the tragic one, rescuing composition from its degraded and marginal status by repositioning the composition class as a unique site of democratic politics and pedagogical commitment" (Strickland 6). The historical counterpoint to the tragedy is the struggle of compositionists to assert a more rhetorical and democratic vision of writing instruction, one that has come into greater focus with the rise of the discipline. Strickland claims that, as a result, by the 1990s scholars "increasingly represented composition studies and the composition class as uniquely counterhegemonic discursive sites" (6). Composition's heroic resistance to its dark past allows histories of the field to define composition's disciplinary identity as democratic and pedagogically-minded insofar as it continues to resist current-traditionalist practices.

The binary of Composition's master historical narrative allows widely-accepted histories to construct a preferred identity for the field that assures compositionists of the resistant character of their work. Through this binary perspective compositionists can be certain their work is counterhegemonic so long as it rejects formalist instructional practices. But as so often the case, this certainty is achieved only through oversimplification. Certainty regarding the liberatory nature of contemporary practices is possible only because the binary narrative de-contextualizes and de-historicizes the practices of the past and those of the present. In the typical narrative, eliminating formalist instruction from composition curricula is always an implied rejection of the dominant culture's oppression because in that narrative current-traditionalist instruction always serves the interests of the dominant culture regardless of changing contexts, shifting power structures, or altered cultural conditions. Such a perspective is troubling not simply because it elides the nuances and complexities of the past but because it can obscure problematic aspects of current practice or support false assumptions that might lead us, through our research and teaching, to support pedagogical, social, and political structures we do not wish to support.

Revising and Replicating

To prevent this potentially dangerous oversimplification, recent histories of composition have attempted to complicate the reductive master narrative by focusing on local or micro histories. Drawing on postmodernist perspectives like those of Jean-Francois Lyotard that critique master narratives as exclusionary and essentialist, scholars have sought out those historical sites and groups elided by traditional histories of Composition as a way of disrupting the binary master narrative of Composition's

past. A number of these studies have appeared over the last 25 years including Jacquelyn Jones Royster and Jean C. William's seminal article "History in the Spaces Left: African American Presence and the Narratives of Composition Studies;" Tom Fox's "From Freedom to Manners: African American Literacy Instruction in the 19th Century;" Jessica Enoch's book *Refiguring Rhetorical Education: Women Teaching African American, Native American, and Chicano/a Students*, *1865-1911*; Barbara L'Eplattenier and Lisa Mastrangelo's *Historical Studies of WPA: Individuals, Communities and the Formation of a Discipline*; Brent Henze, Jack Selzer, and Wendy Sharer's *1977: A Cultural Moment in Composition*; Patricia Donahue and Gretchen Flesher Moon's edited collection *Local Histories: Reading the Archives of Composition*; David Gold's *Rhetoric at the Margins: Revising the History of Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1873-1947*; and David Fleming's recent *From Form to Meaning: Composition and the Long Sixties, 1957-1974*. These localized histories and others have begun to provide illuminating accounts of less-examined or even unexamined sites from the history of writing instruction.

Implied in the turn to microhistories as a means of challenging composition's master narratives is the notion that the exclusion of often marginalized voices creates the oversimplified binary of composition history. These exclusions, it seems, allow popular histories to erect a monolithic pre-disciplinary past dominated by current-traditional rhetoric against which the present can be opposed and declared counterhegemonic. By seeking out and including these oft-excluded sites in the history of the field, the past can be pluralized, rehabilitating the devalued term of the binary and thereby undermining the oversimplifications of the master narrative. But, unfortunately,

such a methodological solution already takes the basic assumptions of the binary as given and embraces the very universalization of pedagogical practices it wishes to challenge. Seeking out marginalized voices and sites of instruction as the means of pluralizing the practices of the past ensures that non-current-traditionalist practices are associated with access to higher education for those groups that current-traditional rhetoric commonly excluded. In essence, this approach presumes from the start that anti-formalist practices associated with the disciplinary era are inclusive and counterhegemonic, strengthening the association of pre-disciplinary and disciplinary practices with oppression and liberation respectively.

Not surprisingly, then, these revisionist histories tend to replicate and even reinforce the master narrative they seek to disassemble. A brief examination of three examples from the list above demonstrates how these dynamics play out in the scholarship. Gold's award-winning history of three marginalized sites of instruction in Texas in the late 1800s and early 1900s shows how admirable local histories can still support master narrative oversimplifications. In *Rhetoric at the Margins*, Gold takes up the work of dismantling the binary narrative explicitly. Noting how the term "current-traditional rhetoric has become a convenient catchphrase and catchall for whatever historical pedagogical practices we have deemed reductive, impolitic, or inelegant" (1), Gold traces the oversimplification of composition's master narratives to the use of "epistemological labels to define pedagogical approaches" and the assumption of "a direct line between ideology and pedagogy" (1). The tendency to trace composition's history through mainstream educational sites such as Harvard has led composition histories to overlook other sites of writing instruction that might not only complicate

"the narrative of reductivism and decline associated with rhetorical instruction in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" (4) but might also prevent misreadings "of historical practices that do not fit easily into contemporary notions of critical, liberatory, or student-centered pedagogy" (2). Challenging this binary, according to Gold, requires examining a "diverse range of student bodies and institutions" (7) and complementing "master narratives with finely-grained local and institutional microhistories" (7).

Gold's revisionist history engages these dual efforts by detailing the complex pedagogical practices of professors and students at three marginalized sites of higher education in Texas between 1873 and 1947—historically black Wiley College, Texas Women's University, and East Texas Normal. The localized historical accounts Gold provides focus on the actual instructional practices of prominent figures and programs at each school to reveal how writing instruction at these institutions promoted highly rhetorical perspectives on communication that align in many ways with present views. At Wiley, figures like Tolson embraced the "epistemic functions" (Gold 33) of rhetoric and "placed great value on audience and in taking advantage of the kairos of the moment" (Gold 48) while composition instruction at Texas Women's University often "took the form of genre-specific writing" (Gold 92) and "connected [student writing] to the world outside the classroom" (Gold 97). As Gold points out, students at East Texas Normal also "participated in a rich rhetorical environment" (133) that rejected the distinction between high and low culture (129), supported explicitly rhetorical practices on campus (135), and fostered democratic ends for higher education (148). In addition, the context of these institutions meant that when prescriptivist or current-traditional methods were employed, they often served to challenge the dominant culture by

granting marginalized students "access to the language of power" (Gold 17; 89). By focusing on more localized narratives of composition's history, Gold undermines the easy categorization of pre-disciplinary composition and the a-rhetorical perspective that equates ideology and pedagogy in support of composition's master narratives.

The collection *Local Histories: Reading the Archives of Composition* edited by Patricia Donahue and Gretchen Flesher Moon also embraces localized history to undermine the common view of Composition's past as monolithically current-traditional and thereby challenge the reductive binary of popular histories. For Donahue and Moon localizing Composition's history fragments that history in ways that challenge a number of reductive assumptions that characterize Composition's historical master narratives. As Donahue and Moon note, "From these local histories, one might begin to tease out several potential alternative histories" (3) which "challenge the dominant narrative of composition history, located primarily in elite research institutions, disrupting its apparent simplicity as the myth of origin and proposing alongside it a complicated and discontinuous array of alternative histories" (12). In place of a linear progression of historical development, the collection pursues the complexity and nuance of a plurality of histories that do not necessarily fit into a single, coherent narrative.

But much like Gold's history, the chapters of Donahue and Moon's collection generally find more rhetorically-based instruction at work in sites such as historically black colleges and universities, women's universities, and normal schools. Heidemarie Z. Weidner, for instance, frankly positions her local history of Butler University as complicating Albert Kitzhaber's influential master "narrative of rhetoric's decline

during the second half of the nineteenth century" (59). Weidner explains that Butler's

location in the Midwest and its mission to educate the less affluent through "dynamic,

community-centered and practical education" (60) meant Butler was less beholden to

Harvard's pedagogical model based on current-traditional rhetoric. Instead, the culture

of writing instruction at the university was characterized by an "energy and enthusiasm

compelling theory and practice of rhetoric at Butler University" (62). Key to Butler's

program developed by women like Catherine Merrill and Harriet Noble were the

practice of oral presentations in the form of so-called "rhetoricals" (Weidner 62), an

early form of writing across the curriculum (Weidner 66) that used daily writing

exercises and peer review (Weidner 65; 68) and drew from the most rhetorically-

informed textbooks available (Weidner 69-73). In this context even instructional topics

and methods that are commonly linked with the devalued current-traditional past—such

as a focus on style, conciseness, and coherence—became rhetorical tools to connect

audience, purpose, and "accuracy of expression" (Grayson 385, qtd. in Weidner 66). As

Weidner's localized history demonstrates, the story of Butler's writing program, helmed

by important but often overlooked women professors, complicates the assumption of a

monolithic past for composition and thus works to undermine the master narrative of

composition's history.

Likewise, David Fleming's book length study of the first-year writing program

at Wisconsin, *From Form to Meaning: Composition and the Long Sixties, 1957-1974*,

provides a detailed account of instructional practices and institutional politics at a

specific location that challenges many conventions of the popular master narratives of

composition history. In his attempt to account for Wisconsin's 25-year abolition of first-

year writing which began in 1969, Fleming challenges the assumption that pre-disciplinary writing instruction was uniformly formalist in approach. Focusing on the impact of the socially and politically turbulent 1960s on Wisconsin's first-year composition program, Fleming reveals that graduate student teachers (most of whom were literature students) took up rhetorically-based instruction in opposition to the official approach of the program that favored more current-traditional instruction and without access to the burgeoning process movement of composition going on elsewhere. According to Fleming, these GTAs saw accepted instruction as lacking relevance and even as supporting existing inequities and injustices in the way it avoided addressing pertinent issues of the day. As "committed and responsible teachers" (Fleming 92) these GTAs were "striving to do a better job in the classroom for their students" (Fleming 92) by seeking out relevant topics for writing prompts and more rhetorically-informed approaches that would enable students to address important political topics effectively. The question of "relevance" became a rallying point for these student-teachers and a "serious issue, especially given what was happening in the 'outside' world at the time" (Fleming 104). Faced with what Fleming characterizes as an intransigent or apathetic faculty, these TAs took it upon themselves to develop "something different from what had been handed down to them—something *else* that spoke better to the times and to their students' lives" (121).

While the efforts of English GTAs at Wisconsin in the 1960s ultimately led the faculty to do away with the first-year course at Wisconsin from 1969 to 1994, their work paints a complex picture of pre-disciplinary composition instruction. Though "The 'official' Freshman English of this period, even from the point of view of its defenders,

was a pedagogy of unabashed error hunting, teacher responding, and model following"
(Fleming 128), the actual practices of instructors, especially the more radical TAs, were
an effort to "vitalize the course that had been boring both students and instructors to
death. What [the TAs] devised in its place was inordinately flexible in part because the
old syllabus had been so rigid" (Fleming 128). Like the 1930s, which Fleming notes
were a time of more rhetorically-informed writing instruction at Wisconsin, the actual
practice of TAs at Wisconsin in the 1960s often reflected efforts to connect in-class
writing with outside events and reflected a focus on revision, audience, and public
discourse that undermined the officially formalist writing instruction the program itself
privileged. Though Fleming does not explicitly assert that his purpose is to challenge
the binary master narratives of composition's history, he does note that "first-year
writing is a space not only for acculturation but also for growth, change, even critique"
(14). His focus on pre-disciplinary writing instruction and the method of localizing
history suggest his account is answering the broader call of the field to complicate the
oversimplified accounts of Composition's past.

We can see how each of these localized histories seek out marginalized groups
or sites of instruction to complicate the monolithic view of Composition's past. But, as
noted above, this approach ultimately leaves in place the binary assumptions of the
master narrative because it leaves in place the universalizations that make the binary
possible. So while current-traditional rhetoric is shown to be applied for liberatory ends,
as in Gold's history of Tolson's instruction, the turn to Wiley College to demonstrate
this does little to challenge the idea that the dominant culture always employs current-
traditional rhetoric to support its agenda. With this universalization in place, the other—

that disciplinary rejections of formalist pedagogy are always inherently counterhegemonic—necessarily follows. As a result these localized histories re-inscribe the assumed linkages between disciplinary practices and progressive, democratic politics. Gold's discovery of the rhetorical writing pedagogy favored by disciplinary-era compositionists in the pre-disciplinary era at all-black Wiley College, Texas Women's University, and East Texas Normal links the rejection of current-traditional gatekeeping with efforts across a variety of times and places to expand access to higher education and fight injustice through pedagogy. Weidner's tale of the less-affluent students at Butler receiving highly rhetorical education makes similar associations by emphasizing the less-privileged status of Butler's students and the existence of rhetorical writing instruction at Butler. Fleming's history of Wisconsin's program in the sixties reflects the assumption that disciplinary-era practices and progressive politics go hand in hand by framing the development of rhetorically-based, student-centered pedagogies as the work of GTAs who had nothing—no formal training in rhetoric, no access to the latest composition research, and few resources at their disposal—but their radical politics to draw on (115).

These local histories ultimately craft a narrative in which disciplinary practices lie dormant in the pre-disciplinary past but are maintained—naturally, inevitably—in sites of educational resistance because disciplinary practices are *inherently* resistant insofar as they displace current-traditionalist writing instruction. Where there are the pedagogical practices and assumptions privileged by the discipline, there is also liberatory, resistant education and vice-versa. Not surprisingly, revisionist histories are explicit about how writing instruction at marginalized institutions pre-figures

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pedagogical practices privileged in the disciplinary era. Gold, for example, explains

how, in these marginalized locations, teachers assigned "arguments that were

rhetorically situated, addressing narrow, contemporary, local topics that in many ways

resemble the argument-based, rhetorically-situated assignments of contemporary

practice" (139). While Gold notes explicitly that current-traditional rhetoric was part of

Tolson's approach at Wiley, he notes also just as explicitly that this rhetoric was

consciously recognized as a rhetorical performance, not naturalized as inherently

superior language. Weidner's account finds peer review, an emphasis on revision, and

even an early form of WAC in Butler's program under the direction of Catherine Miller

and Harriet Noble. Other chapters in Donahue and Moon's collection make similar links

such as Julie Garbus' account of writing instruction at Wellesly in which she reads an

early form of service-learning in Vida Scudder's groundbreaking instruction[1]. And just

as predictably, Fleming notes leftist Wisconsin University GTAs developed many

instructional practices that the field of composition would come to value in the coming

decades, perhaps most notably a humane and effective basic writing curriculum (89).

The result, to put it into colloquial terms, is that these histories give disciplinary

practices more "street cred" because those practices can be shown to have been central

to efforts to support more inclusive and resistant higher education throughout history.

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[1] Donahue and Moon's edited collection does include accounts of current-traditional rhetoric at work in certain marginalized locations. Kenneth Linbdblom, William Banks, and Risë Quay's chapter, "Mid-Nineteenth-Century Writing Instruction at Illinois State Normal University: Credentials, Correctness, and the Rise of a Teaching Class," and William DeGenaro's "William Rainey Harper and the Ideology of Service at Junior Colleges" both detail the use of current-traditional instruction at marginalized sites of instruction to impose the values of the dominant culture on students. But while these histories reflect an effort to provide a complex account of composition's past, the fact that current-traditional rhetoric was present at some marginalized institutions does not trouble the collection's implicit support of the binary master narratives of composition. That these accounts are included in the collection communicates that rhetorically-based, politically progressive instruction was not always enacted at marginalized instructional sites, but when it was enacted, it was at such sites.

These local histories do not reject the binary narrative but instead transpose it in its entirety into the pre-disciplinary past. In Gold's, Weidner's, and Fleming's histories we can see clearly the "tragic" and "heroic" tales of Composition that Strickland describes. Locating rhetorical views of writing only in marginalized sites of higher education, these histories position the work of disciplinary-era compositionists that replicate these practices as continuing the heroic struggle to resist the forces of hegemony and thereby universalize current-traditional writing instruction as always serving those forces. This means of complicating the past does not undermine the binary but rather finds new locations in which it took place that have been overlooked by more sweeping narratives. Such a rhetorical maneuver leaves the tragic tale of composition's displacement securely in place and even depends on it in many cases to build rhetorical force for more localized histories. Gold and Donahue and Moon explicitly position their narratives in direct opposition to what was taking place at the same time at Harvard and more prestigious schools. The binary is still between the tragic and heroic tales of composition, these tales are simply demonstrated to be working in any encounter between disciplinary and pre-disciplinary practice.

Creating Industrial English: Access, Crisis, and Gatekeeping

The attempted complications of Composition's historical master narrative leave the binary dynamics of that narrative in place because they fail to question the universalization of current-traditional gatekeeping on which the narrative's conceptual edifice is founded. Disciplinary Composition can be figured as inherently counterhegemonic because it rejects and works to undermine the current-traditional pedagogical practices that support the exclusionary interests of the dominant class. Yet

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this preferred identity can only be claimed if histories of the field frame current-traditional pedagogy as always supporting the interests of the dominant class, regardless of shifting historical, economic, or social contexts. To challenge the reductive master narrative of Composition's history requires first challenging the universalization of the function of current-traditional pedagogy. Complicating the binary means contextualizing formalist pedagogy historically. Once this has been accomplished, we can begin to imagine and examine the elisions and oversimplifications necessary to universalize the service current-traditional pedagogy performs for the status quo.

Historians of the field have generally agreed that first-year composition was created as part of the sweeping changes brought about in American society and higher education by the Industrial Revolution of the mid-nineteenth century.[2] Higher education in colonial America worked to impart a narrow set of cultural values and generally applicable skills to students drawn primarily from the upper socioeconomic strata of American life. Such education prepared students for a limited number of professions such as doctor, lawyer, minister, or statesman and thus was "by and large meant primarily for those already financially secure who were getting ready to take their rightful roles as professionals and community leaders" (Berlin "Postmodernism" 47). Instruction was primarily oral reflecting the emphasis on oral communication in colonial public life with typical lessons involving individual students reciting passages in class from memory and responding to potentially extensive questioning from the instructor. Though in the Colonial Era students received training in rhetoric and writing throughout their education, this instruction emphasized classical languages like Greek,

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[2] There were, of course, two industrial revolutions, one in the later 1700s driven primarily by advances in steam power and the second in the mid-to-late 1800s initiated in large part by the widespread availability of electricity.

Latin, and Hebrew which were thought to improve students' thinking and ability to use the vernacular both as a matter of course and by dint of the examples provided by prominent classical orators and authors. The use of classical language also helped sort out uninvited student populations. Entrance exams required knowledge of Greek and Latin as well as mathematics ensuring only the affluent could attend college because of the prohibitive expense involved in obtaining the instruction necessary to pass the exams.

By the 1870s, American higher education was going through a series of transformations brought on by the Industrial Revolution that directly challenged the methods, purposes, and position of colonial colleges in U.S. society. Starting in the mid-1900s, the Industrial Revolution was a period of "accelerating and unprecedented technological change" (Mokyr 82), particularly in the use of electricity, that made possible entirely new forms of manufacturing. These developments and "The widespread use of electricity from the 1870s onwards changed transportation, telegraphy, lighting, and, not least, factory work by diffusing power in the form of the electrical engine" (Castells 39). The large-scale mass production the electrical engine supported transformed the entrepreneurial economy of the colonial period into a corporate economy that increasingly depended on qualified experts applying scientific and technical knowledge to organizational and production processes. The mechanized factories appearing all over the eastern seaboard of the U.S. in the last half of the nineteenth century required engineers, chemists, and machinists and large-scale industrial husbandry taking place further west required experts in agriculture,

refrigeration, and transportation. The sheer size and rapid expansion of industrial factories meant companies needed more of these various experts than ever before.

The need to communicate over long distances and to distant audiences that the functioning of a large corporation created meant that writing rather than speaking quickly became the primary method of business communication. Writing needed to be precise and appear less context dependent for meaning than spoken language. The complicated hierarchical structure of new corporations multiplied the kinds and amounts of writing that took place in business; reports, memos, instructions, schematics, and policies became increasingly familiar aspects of doing business. Managerial expertise involving new literacy skills were also in high demand. In the face of new and rapidly changing conditions, "Complex industrial firms needed a corps of managers who could size up needs, organize material, marshal evidence, solve problems, make and communicate decisions" (Ohmann 93). As printing methods and the production of written material became more efficient and thus cheaper in the last half of the century, writing for personal consumption and information dissemination among the general public began displacing speech as the primary means of public address. Colonial society had been largely oral but very quickly industrial society revealed itself as committed primarily to the written word.

The colonial college with its focus on oral recitation and the production of a gentlemanly class was ill-equipped to meet the educational needs of an industrial economy. The professional training offered by the colonial curriculum was too limited to provide necessary technical skills while socialization into the values and cultural preferences of the elite was likewise out of step with industrial society. In the new

economy "a knowledge of Latin and Greek did not seem . . . to have the practical value that a knowledge of civil engineering or mining technology did" (Kitzhaber 19). These new realities allowed self-taught entrepreneurs and innovators of working- or middle-class origins to circumvent the regulatory mechanism of the colonial college. Charles William Elliot, named president of Harvard in 1869, worried over the unsettling regularity of men from the working classes "leaping from farm or shop to court-room or pulpit" (Qtd. In Douglas 126). In addition, the Morrill Act of 1862 with its mandate to provide practical education to the industrial and commercial classes provided the resources for state universities to become another means of skirting the socialization into elite culture that the colonial college imposed (T. Miller 123). "These new state institutions," Kitzhaber explains, "founded squarely on the notion that it was the responsibility of American colleges to offer a wider selection of courses than had been commonly available before, were very influential in breaking up the older pattern and in supplying a new one for the next century" (12). State institutions offered specialized training in technical fields that allowed students to advance themselves in the new economy. The more accessible land-grant institution were thereby able to increase the supply of technical experts and thus threatened to displace more established colleges as the mechanisms for regulating social advancement.

The need to reaffirm their position forced more established colleges to emphasize their role in certifying the professionals who made industrial production function smoothly. In this way, "The increasingly competitive social spirit that brought [working and middle-class] students to college imposed a 'credentialing' function schools had perhaps always had in theory, but had never had to take quite so seriously

before" (Halloran 166). This credentialing function was a means of maintaining the relevance of these institutions and of asserting their regulatory function in society, but it required significant changes to what was taught, how it was taught, and to whom it was taught. Because this involved in many cases addressing modern language preferences and because traditional language instruction limited the college's capacity to meet labor demands, language instruction was particularly affected by these developments. As Halloran argues, "The nineteenth-century 'revolution' [in language instruction] is of course none other than the Industrial Revolution, seen from the perspective of writing and written communication" (170). Colleges began increasingly to offer instruction in the vernacular as part of their language instruction and began to offer courses in Latin and Greek as electives. The result was that "From about 1883 onward, the classics declined in power and prestige, and the star of the modern languages rose" (Parker 11). This process was not immediate and the transition to vernacular instruction was extremely embittered as established Classics scholars fought the transition (Veysey "Plural" 74)[3]. But with the advent of the Industrial revolution this transition was all but inevitable and happened with relative rapidity.

These changes, in language instruction in particular, resulted in expanded access to higher education. Without the exclusions imposed by classical language requirements a broader section of the population could now attend college. So while the old university had excluded as a matter of course, "The new university encouraged a meritocracy, opening its doors to anyone who could meet the entrance requirements (a growing number, due to the new free high schools), offering upward mobility through

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[3] The Modern Language Association was formed in 1883 in part to coordinate efforts to implement modern language instruction in college curricula in the face of fierce opposition.

certification in such professions as agriculture, engineering, journalism, social work, education, and a host of other new professional pursuits" (Berlin "Reality" 21). The logistics of handling a flood of new students brought on by expanded access and the expectations of competitive individualism driving many students to seek certification gave writing a new role in college instruction. As Halloran demonstrates:

> The larger numbers of students made the old system of oral recitation and disputation unworkable, and writing was a means by which larger numbers of students could demonstrate whether they had learned what was being taught. The new competitive spirit of the society gave a much greater importance to the business of 'sorting' students, of determining which ones were superior and which ones merely adequate, and here too writing recommended itself as a means. Because written work could be evaluated more precisely, it allowed for a more meticulous sorting of the students. (166)

The focus on language itself that writing offered was to be central to its function in the negotiations of power structures and new methods of exclusion designed to maintain social hierarchies in the more open college of the late nineteenth century.

Writing could take on this role so fully in part because of the same social disruptions that were affecting American culture. Dialect, which had for some time been developing into a marker of social class membership, became particularly important as a means of demonstrating membership in the upper class. As Connors explains, "Throughout the 1840s, 1850s, and 1860s there is evidence that the developing class system in America was based on linguistic as well as economic criteria. America was developing a native gentry, and gentry were increasingly expected to speak and write with propriety as well as dress with elegance and shoot with skill" ("Crisis" 87). Dialect increasingly became a sign of one's social standing so that "The mark of the educated was now the use of a certain version of the native language, a version that tended to

coincide with the dialect of the upper middle class, the group that had customarily attended college" (Berlin "Writing" 72). In the lingering tradition of colonial learning, "educated" meant personal refinement via familiarity with the privileged cultural expressions of the elite demonstrated individually through one's language use. As Eliot of Harvard was to argue, "I may as well abruptly avow, as the result of my reading and observation in the matter of education, that I recognize but one mental acquisition as an essential part of the education of a lady or a gentleman—namely, an accurate and refined use of the mother tongue" (rptd. in Brereton 46). Students who were not using their "mother tongue" in ways associated with rigor, refinement, and intelligence were thus not being fully educated. To speak well was to have developed one's tastes and character—to have been educated (Crowley "Composition" cf 75-77).

Harvard's new English composition entrance exam reflected these assumed links between dialect and education. The 1874 prompt directs applicants to write "a short English composition, correct in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and expression" on a subject "taken from one of the following works: Shakespeare's Tempest, Julius Caesar, and Merchant of Venice; Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield; Scott's Ivanhoe and Lady of the Last Minstrel" (rptd. in Brereton 47). This first exam presumes knowledge of literature and a facility with "correct" English or, rather, the formalized conventions reflecting the dialect of the social and cultural elite suggesting connections obtaining between the two. Thus, the exams formally instituted increasingly widespread assumptions linking dialect, culture, and education held by the broader society. With its demand that students write grammatically correct English to discuss the works of Shakespeare, Goldsmith, and Scott, this first English composition exam formally

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established connections between grammatically and mechanically correct English and familiarity with the culture of the elite class as expressed in works of literature—and then linked both to preparation for higher education. If colleges had to let more people in, they would do so on their own terms.

Until the later nineteenth century, students and their language practices were, "by modern standards extraordinarily homogenous, guaranteeing a linguistic common ground" (Russell 35) and reflecting a social and cultural homogeneity as well. Expanded access meant that the linguistic and cultural diversity of the university increased as a broader range of dialects began to be heard in the halls and classrooms of academe than ever before. When Harvard reported that nearly 50% of all applicants were failing the entrance exam in composing English, it seemed things had gone too far. As A.S. Hill was to lament, even five years after the exams were in place, "Those of us who have been doomed to read manuscript written in an examination room . . . have found the work of even good scholars disfigured by bad spelling, confusing punctuation, ungrammatical, obscure, ambiguous, or inelegant expressions" (rptd. in Brereton 46). Adding to this sense of failure, political and cultural backlashes against the influx of immigrants, particularly from non-English speaking countries, in the 1870s and 1880s further connected a narrow set of language practices with a sense of propriety, character, and national culture. The widely-held view of the situation was that America faced a literacy crisis, one that "was a genuine disaster in the minds of Americans, especially educated Americans. The idea that the best American prep schools, and even the best American colleges, were turning out 'illiterates' deeply shocked our increasingly nationalistic sensibilities" (Connors "Crisis" 89). Education

was failing not only to produce students who could use English with propriety, but was allowing national culture and individual character to fall by the wayside.

As a representation of the failure of colleges to immerse students fully into the elite culture, the literacy crisis was, in effect, a demand that colleges expand access to meet the needs of the industrial era while answering to the expected exclusions of the colonial period. What colleges needed was a means of reasserting the values of the dominant culture as dominant within the new context of industrial education. How the crisis was defined determined of course the response and ensured that new methods of language instruction would ultimately support the dominant class in the new era. More specifically, writing provided the answer. The new focus on writing in higher education highlighted the differences of the language practices of middle-class, working-class, and students of various ethnic backgrounds from those of the elite. [4] The relatively stabilizing character of written text also allowed for greater formalization of the language conventions deemed appropriate by the dominant culture with the result that "the production of writing was often presented as the product of rules separate from the idiosyncratic personality of the writer" (Brody 101). In this way, colleges began developing an effective sorting mechanism that would simultaneously grant wider access to higher education for practical and economic reasons while still enacting the socialization of students into the privileged values of the dominant culture.

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[4] Paul Kei Matsuda has explained how remedial writing instruction for second-language learners in higher education was also developed during this period. Matsuda writes, "It was also during this period [of the formation of composition] that language differences in the composition classroom became an issue because of the presence of a growing number of international students, and many of the placement options for second-language writers were created (Matsuda and Silva; Silva)" (643). For more see Matsuda, Paul Kei. "The Myth of Linguistic Homogeneity in U.S. College Composition." *CCC* 68.6 (July 2006): 637-51.

The changes in the entrance exam themselves suggested the solution. The very logic of testing applicants for admission on their ability to use English at the college level presupposed that incoming students should already be prepared to write for college (Berlin "Writing" 61). By requiring college-level writing in an entrance exam, Harvard's administrators and professors suggested that the ability to write "correct" English was a prerequisite for higher learning rather than a result of it; at the time the exams were instituted, Harvard required three years of "upper division work" (Berlin "Reality" 23) including a required Sophomore course in rhetoric as part of its students' education in writing. Through the establishment of an entrance exam on English composition, Harvard shifted the blame for the literacy crisis in higher education and the poor writing of college graduates onto the rapidly multiplying high schools and preparatory schools (Berlin "Reality" 23). The emphasis on superficial correctness in the exams made such a rhetorical maneuver possible by framing writing as a basic skill and a remedial subject. Poor student writing—most commonly associated with the dialects of ethnic minorities or the working classes—became an issue to be addressed and dealt with as early and as quickly as possible in the curriculum.

The infamous English A course at Harvard was born out of the need for remedial work in writing that the entrance exams revealed. As Crowley relates, widespread failure on the exam demanded that faculty "install course work in order to remedy the deficiencies discovered by the exam" ("Composition" 73) and since the exam (and the broader society) characterized good writing as superficially and mechanically correct writing, so too the course emphasized these aspects of written expression. Yet the focus on correctness in the exam and the course that followed it

could be effective as a sorting mechanism only in relation to the cultural function of higher learning, a function that was to be carried out through the establishment of literature as a field of study and subject for teaching. The increased literacy rates among the general public meant that literature had by the late 1800s become more important as an expression of national culture throughout the nineteenth century. Writing instruction had been one of the primary purposes of English departments before the exams, but once writing was relegated to a remedial activity, something else was needed to take its place. Literature recommended itself to replace rhetoric because it addressed two key discourses of the industrial college/university by combining "scientific research" with "Arnoldian humanism" (Graff 3). To make literature as an object of study tenable, literary discourse was increasingly figured as a distinct and privileged discourse by those who studied it—an expression of timeless truths that did not depend on context for their meaning and that required specialized training to understand. In support of this idea, literary texts were increasingly divorced from the methods of their production and were figured more and more as "unmediated expressions of experience" (Crowley "Composition" 85).

But as the exams themselves suggested, if cultural refinement was acquired through the study of literary works, mechanical correctness in written English was the marker of one's fitness to appreciate the cultural benefits of literary study. The study of literature thus became the domain of the truly literate—that is, functionally and culturally literate—while the composition course was the site of those who needed remediation before they could move on to the real work of college (Crowley "Composition 95). The English A course was dedicated to exposing the craft (or lack

thereof) in student texts through the hyper-correctness that remedial instruction imposed as part of its mandate. The conscious craft that students from the non-elite classes were put through in the first-year course made "both teachers and students vividly aware of the enormous difference between student writing and that of the (doubly meant) 'masters'" (S. Miller 66). Literary texts became the standard for great writing that students were expected to live up to but which, because it was abstracted from its own production, guaranteed students could never attain it. Literature, thereby, "dominated as both the goal of and justification for writing instruction" (S. Miller 31). Literature courses, as the goal of achieving good writing, created a standard students could never attain since student texts were, by the very nature of composition instruction, mired in the processes of their own production[5]. The result was that "composition courses decreed that some students' language was nonstandard, effectively disenfranchising nonelite linguistic communities and legitimizing the power and authority that already accrued to an educated and wealth minority" (Brody 124-5). The dynamics of writing and literature, the low and high of the English department, were firmly established and played their parts to impose the culture of the elite on those with whom they now shared access to social mobility through education.

We can see then that what marked this pedagogy as an unjust gatekeeping mechanism rather than the imposition of educational rigor was its claim to assess individual student ability to write when in fact it actually assessed students' ability to

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[5] David Russell notes how the devaluing of student writing was also tied to an assumption that writing and literacy were a single set of a-contextual practices held by practitioners of a variety of disciplinary, social, and professional discourses. Russell writes, "Because academics and other professionals assumed that writing was a generalizable, elementary skill and that academia held a universal, immutable standard of literacy, they were constantly disappointed when student writing failed to measure up to the local, and largely tacit, standards of a particular social class, institution, discipline, or profession by which they were in fact judging writing" ("Writing" 6). For more see Russell, David R. *Writing in the Academic Disciplines: 1870-1990: A Critical History*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois UP, 1991.

embrace and deploy the dialect and values of the dominant culture. This ability to impose a single, explicit cultural standard on students made current-traditional rhetoric particularly suited to supporting the status quo of the industrial era. This kind of writing instruction formed the basis of an educational model designed to ensure that the increased access to higher education required by the changes brought on by the Industrial Revolution were accomplished alongside indoctrination to the cultural values and standards of the dominant class. It also functioned to produce workers who could communicate effectively and efficiently through a shared cultural standard. Finally, and arguably most importantly, a single cultural standard toward which the socially mobile aspired created a consumer public that fit well with the production capabilities of industrial era manufacturing. Industrial production was rigid and expensive and thus required any new product to generate profit. More than a few commercial failures could be more than enough to bankrupt a company. The existence of a consumer public characterized by its adherence to a single cultural standard, particularly one that helped new members of the growing middle class feel more secure of their status, allowed companies greater certainty of profits when designing and marketing new products on a mass scale.

This fit of current-traditionalist pedagogy to industrial function was, as we have seen, no accident but rather the result of a complex process directed by the historical conditions in which it developed. The changes brought about by the rapid technological development that characterized American society in the latter half of the 1800s imposed reforms on the education system, particularly in writing instruction, meant to bring higher education in line with the needs of an industrial society. These reforms facilitated

greater access to higher education leading to a greater diversity of skill and preparation among students. The difference in educational experience and outcomes of these students from those of more traditional student populations heightened existing anxieties about shifting social structures and challenges to the status quo brought on by the Industrial Revolution. The resulting literacy crisis articulated these fears imposing on educators a mandate to attend to the demands of the new era while ensuring existing social hierarchies could be maintained. The response necessarily took up the increasingly valued and imminently effective means of sorting students—that is, writing—and fitted it to the needs of the dominant culture in the industrial era. Without the context of an industrial society, current-traditional pedagogical models would not have come about nor would their continued use necessarily serve the interests of the upper classes.

Post-Industrialism and the Binary Narrative

Those of us who teach writing today do so in a post-industrial society. Post-industrialism—as well as a number of related terms such as "the knowledge economy," "the information age," "the network society," and "post-fordism"—typically refers to major economic, social, and cultural changes taking place in industrialized nations from the mid-twentieth century to the present. Originally theorized by sociologist Alain Touraine in 1969 and Daniel Bell in 1973, the economic aspects of post-industrialism have been reductively described as a shift from manufacturing goods to providing services but more accurately involves the centrality of "the production and distribution of knowledge and information, rather than the production and distribution of things" (Drucker "Post-Capitalist" 182). The "knowledge economy" of the post-industrial era

works not simply through the effort to create new knowledge and apply it to improve existing processes which was, in fact, a key feature of the industrial era's rapid technological production. Instead, post-industrialism is distinguished by the fact that "*knowledge is now being applied to knowledge*" (Drucker "From" 30) and used "systematically and purposefully to define what *new* knowledge is needed, whether it is feasible and what has to be done to make knowledge effective" (Drucker "From" 30). The application of knowledge to knowledge makes post-industrial approaches pervasive throughout every aspect of the economy because of its applicability to all productive processes inasmuch as they represent the enactment of knowledge itself. Economically, then, post-industrialism is "the emergence of information processing as the core, fundamental activity conditioning the effectiveness and productivity of all processes of production, distribution, consumption, and management" (Castells 17).

This seismic shift in the social and economic landscape has fostered and has itself been supported by the rapid development of information technology. Significant advances in information technology beginning in World War II, but accelerating exponentially with the invention of the microprocessor in 1971 and the pervasiveness of the personal computer in the 1980s, has been "at least as major a historical event as was the eighteenth-century Industrial Revolution, inducing a pattern of discontinuity in the material basis of economy, society, and culture" (Castells "Network" 30). In much the same way as the electrical engine expanded the capacity of the human body to labor, so these new technologies work, in many ways, expand the capacity of the human mind to process information. By their very design these new information technologies represent the technological expression of an application of knowledge to knowledge. Serving

increasingly as the means of economic, political, and social interaction, these

technologies have contributed significantly to an increased focus on information and its

processing throughout industrialized society. The instantaneous communication and

information processing made possible by digital technologies has increased the

flexibility of markets, production, culture, and even the continued development of

information technology itself.[6]

These technologies, then, are one of the results of post-industrialism and one of

its driving forces. The production flexibility they facilitate has further diminished the

importance of industrial era categorizations, practices, and assumptions. The ability to

work from home using digital technology, the production facilitated by digital

technologies (in the form of fan fiction, YouTube video parodies, Facebook posts, etc.)

that are now key components of consumption itself, and the transnational

communication supported by the Internet reflect the power of information technology to

make "most of the standard industrial classifications meaningless" (Kumar 56). As

Manuel Castells explains:

> the historical oppositions between craft production and large-scale
> manufacture, between mass consumption and customized markets,
> between powerful bureaucracies and innovative enterprises, are
> dialectically superseded by the new technological medium, which ushers
> in an era of adaptive organizations in direct relationship with their social
> environments. By increasing the flexibility of all processes, new
> information technologies contribute to minimizing the distance between
> economy and society." (Castells "Informational" 17)

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[6] The rapid obsolescence of digital technology suggests the increased flexibility this technology creates
both in terms of the development of new technologies and the response to and guidance of consumer
interactions with those technologies. The rapid development of information technology facilitated by
previous developments in information technology are perhaps the most blatant example of knowledge
applied to knowledge processes and the flexibility this facilitates.

Indeed, the boundaries that organized industrial society have become, in many ways, impediments to the production of wealth and the expressions of culture in post-industrial society. The post-industrial world is a permeable world.

This applies increasingly to national boundaries and marks post-industrialism as inseparable from the globalization characteristic of the past half-century. The focus on information and its dissemination through communications technologies reduces the importance of the location of corporate entities as they become less constrained by material resources, proximity to target consumers, or their cultural and historical ties with a particular nation-state. As Lester C. Thurow has observed, "Today knowledge and skills now stand alone as the source of comparative advantage" (201) meaning that "it is impossible to contain or control economic activities within the borders of traditional nation-states" (Kumar 9). Global dispersion and the resulting decentralization of corporate hierarchies reflect the affordances of flexibility as companies seek out competitive advantages such as reduced labor costs, lax regulations, or support for technological innovation that exist in particular parts of the world.[7] Global markets have likewise become more significant but, in turn, require a greater responsiveness to cultural and contextual market differences. As Krishan Kumar has

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[7] The significant increase in corporate executive salaries in terms relative to other workers in recent decades suggests decentralization is not as prevalent as is often claimed. But as Christopher Newfield and Greg Grandin have noted, CEO salary increases result from the emphasis on finance and short-term profit for shareholders in the corporate world. Companies themselves become consumable products to be sold for profit according to their financial standing. This figuring of companies as simply financial entities results in large part from the creation of global financial markets that resulted from the end of the Smithsonian Agreement in 1971 which ended the U.S. currency reliance on the "gold standard" allowing global market forces to determine currency value making finance as knowledge of currency exchange, central to corporate business. Global financial markets, the figuring of companies in financial terms, and the resulting CEO salaries reflect many of the characteristics of post-industrialism. For more see Newfield, Christopher and Greg Grandin. "Building a Statue out of Smoke: Finance Culture and the NYU Trustees." *The University against Itself: The NYU Strike and the Future of the Academic Marketplace*. Eds. Monika Krause, Mary Nolan, Michael Palm, and Andrew Ross. Philadelphia, PA: Temple UP, 2008: 57-70.

observed, "The world market, that is, is socially differentiated, and products have to be specifically designed and aimed at particular segments" (208).[8]

Efforts to address ever more narrowly-circumscribed markets increases customization and fragmentation which render mass production and mass consumption less and less profitable for companies or desirable for consumers. The flexibility facilitated by turning knowledge toward understanding and improving knowledge processes through flexible technologies "gives rise to flexible specialization" (Kumar 68) in post-industrial societies so that "Production is customized, geared to highly specific wants and needs in a constant state of flux" (Kumar 68). The result has been production processes that reframe the consumer market as more of a collection of individuals rather than a mass public that Robert Reich describes as the move from "high volume production of standard commodities" (47) to the creation of targeted, "high value" (48) commodities—commodities that have great importance to a relatively narrow section of the consumer public. Unlike the industrial era which focused on selling fairly standardized products "which requires persuading many customers of the virtues of one particular product, taking lots of orders for it, and thus meeting sales quotas" (Reich 49), companies of the post-industrial knowledge economy focus on "knowledge-based products and services [and so] can customize their offerings" to "determine customers' changing patterns, idiosyncrasies, and specific needs" (Davis and Botkin 161). Information technologies themselves increasingly reflect this reality

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[8] A prominent example of this customization is the production of Paramount Studio's 2014 film *Transformers: Age of Extinction* the fourth film in the extremely popular *Transformers* franchise. A modified version of the film was released in China that included Chinese celebrities and the winner of a talent contest that took place in China before production began. American audiences saw a version without these Chinese actors included, unless, of course, they downloaded the Chinese version from the Internet.

by managing information in such a fashion that it "can be processed, selected and retrieved to suit the most specialized, the most individualized requirement" (Kumar 37).

The trend toward individualization and customization supported by the assumptions and practices that define post-industrialism thus put direct pressure on the privileged position of the mainstream in post-industrial life. As value is increasingly derived from the individuality of a given consumer experience the mainstream or mass experience is proportionally diminished in value. As a 2006 article in *Business Week* claimed, "We've had a change from 'I want to be normal' to 'I want to be special'" (Qtd. in C. Anderson 169). Not only is the mass marketing and mass consumption of the industrial era becoming less effective as a business model, the individualization and customization of consumption and the identities such consumption practices support mean that the mainstream has become associated culturally and socially with narrow-mindedness, intellectual and cultural simplicity, and blind acceptance of domination. A prime example are the contemporary "hipsters" who in many ways defines their edgy elevation above the vulgar herd by the extent to which their tastes and interests remain obscure to the general public. So fully has this perspective infused post-industrial culture that, as Jeff Pruchnic points out, "the chance of promoting or participating in some movement or action of 'resistance' has emerged as the fundamental appeal for selling almost anything, whether it be cheeseburgers, cars, or politicians" (68). The associations of individualization with resistance works to frame decentralization and the disruption of industrial-era categories as democratization and empowerment which make for very strong appeals indeed.[9] In the self-referential knowledge economy of

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[9] In his essay "Ironic Encounters: Ethics, Aesthetics, and the 'Liberal Bias' of Composition Pedagogy" which I discuss in more detail in chapter 3, Pruchnic discusses the extension of the rhetorical power of

post-industrial society, rejection of the mainstream is fast becoming the mainstream itself.

Post-industrialism, then, represents a significant departure from the dynamics that guided industrial society. Certainly industrial social and economic practices have not completely disappeared, but the characteristic conditions of industrial society—manufacturing-based economies, mass production and consumption, the privileging of standardization and uniformity—can no longer claim to inform basic social, cultural, or economic structures in the post-industrial era. The significance of these changes, if composition's history of the arrival of the industrial era are any indication, suggest that writing instruction and higher education have likely been involved in these developments. Certainly digital technology has become an increasingly important part of scholarly discussions in composition journals and of pedagogical content in writing classrooms in recent decades. The prominent role of communication in post-industrial society and its rapid diversification in places of social and political power likewise suggest changes to perceptions of writing and the function of writing instruction. Situating Composition within this context and within its historical development seems important not only for understanding how to teach writing more effectively but to understanding our own assumptions about what writing is and how it should be taught.

Traditional histories of composition, however, do not provide the opportunity to take up these important considerations because of the way they necessarily exclude the emergence of post-industrialism from composition's historical narrative. As we have

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resistance and marginalization to social and political realms by drawing on the example of an event at Pennsylvania State University called "Conservative Coming Out Day" in which conservative students appropriated the discourse of marginalized groups such as the LGBTQ community to denounce the assertion of leftist perspectives in college classrooms. For more, see Pruchnic, Jeff. "Ironic Encounters: Ethics, Aesthetics, and the 'Liberal Bias' of Composition Pedagogy." *JAC* 30.1-2 (2010): 53-93.

seen, the sorting and subjectivity produced by formalist pedagogy emerged within and expressly serves the needs of industrial society. The mass uniformity these pedagogies attempt to impose on student values is counterproductive to the needs of the status quo in post-industrial society. By universalizing current-traditionalist gatekeeping as always serving the needs of an oppressive dominant culture, then, composition's binary history universalizes the conditions served by that pedagogy; that is, it tacitly universalizes the conditions of industrial society. In this way, widely-accepted histories of the field obscure the emergence of post-industrialism. But there are more troubling implications here. Inasmuch as composition's counterhegemonic identity depends on universalizing the function of formalist pedagogy, it too depends on excluding post-industrialism from composition's history. To incorporate post-industrialism into histories of composition would complicate the universalization of industrial society that traditional histories of the field tacitly accomplish when they frame a rejection of formalism as inherently counterhegemonic. In other words, it would seem that composition's rise to disciplinarity can only be figured as resistant or counterhegemonic if it obscures the very conditions in which it currently operates and, in fact, which coincide with its emergence.

This rhetorical effect of composition's master narrative suggests that introducing the post-industrial context into composition history will effectively complicate the binary of the master narrative itself. It also suggests why efforts at historical revision that fail to challenge the conceptual underpinnings of that master narrative tend to focus on complicating the pre-disciplinary past. All of which raises questions about the field's construction of its history, its preferred identity, and its emergence into disciplinarity.

Why has composition's history excluded the emergence of post-industrialism? Another way of asking the same question might be why has a counterhegemonic identity become the preferred identity of the field? Who benefits from the construction of this identity and how do they do so? What is the relationship between composition's rise to disciplinarity and the development of post-industrial society? What effect does the construction of this identity through opposition to industrial era gatekeeping have on disciplinary perspectives on writing, on the teaching of writing, and on students in writing classes?

In what follows I will an attempt to answer these questions by arguing that composition's rise to disciplinarity represents the construction of a selection mechanism that serves the specific needs and interests of the dominant class/culture in the post-industrial era. The historical process by which disciplinary composition has come to fill this role is akin to the process by which selection mechanisms based on current-traditional pedagogy developed in tandem with the advent of industrial society. Yet, while industrial era sorting operated through the naturalization of upper-class dialects, post-industrial sorting functions through the imposition of a particular politico-ethical perspective naturalized by a view of rhetorical communication as thoroughly anti-foundational. By excluding the possibility of foundationalist beliefs in rhetoric, widely-accepted theories of rhetoric make it possible for instructors to ostensibly assess students according to their rhetorical competency while in fact assessing students for their willingness to adopt the fluid identities required by the niche market economics that drive post-industrial capitalism. Integral to the creation and implementation of this sorting process, I will argue, was the legitimization of composition as a full-fledged

academic discipline that depended on a rejection of formalist pedagogies and that could direct the pedagogical content and practices of the course from the perspective of this rejection. In short, first-year composition is still not just about teaching students to write.

In chapter two I begin introducing the post-industrial context into Composition's disciplinary history to demonstrate that Composition became a discipline as a direct result of changes brought by the emergence of post-industrialism. Drawing on previous work that notes the importance of the 1958 National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in initiating the research agenda around which disciplinary Composition formed, I depart from typical histories by arguing that the launch of Sputnik and the resulting NDEA represent the arrival of the post-industrial era. Implicit in the NDEA was the notion that something was wrong with U.S. higher education which in turn meant that the solution required a better understanding of how students learn and how knowledge is made—the application of knowledge to knowledge. In this context, ineffective formalist pedagogies became increasingly untenable as did the traditional exclusions this pedagogy supported. The mid-1970s literacy crisis that resulted from falling test scores in the wake of the advent of Open Admissions in 1970 attempted to re-establish industrial era instruction through the "back-to-basics" movement. Writing instructors were faced again with the need to accommodate new developments while assuaging the anxieties of the status quo which they did by using Process pedagogy to claim professional, disciplinary status for Composition. The claim to professional status— initially supported by the turn to the scientific discourses of cognitivist process— worked to assure the public of the rigor of instruction while also allowing

compositionists to resist re-implementing formalist pedagogies. While successful, this rhetorical positioning figured process movement hallmarks of anti-formalism and inclusive, progressive politics as what it meant to do composition professionally.

Chapter three argues that the use of this professional model has directed subsequent developments in the field in ways that have led compositionists to define idealize political inclusion in anti-foundationalist terms. Tracing the debates over cognitivism, expressivism, and social process methods in the scholarship of the late 1970s and 80s, I reveal that cognitivism and expressivism were ultimately excluded from mainstream composition theory by being associated with current-traditional rhetoric or, in other words, being show to operate outside the boundaries of the recently established anti-formalist professionalism. This use of anti-formalism required ever expanding definitions of formalism—first as superficial correctness, then as a failure to theorize invention, and finally as the retention of foundationalism—leading anti-formalism to be eventually defined as anti-foundationalism. Such a definition puts pressure on Composition's accepted professional model since anti-foundationalist critique challenges the progressive political ideals that make up part of Composition's claim to professional standing. This contradiction, problematically apparent in James Berlin's published pedagogical research, was ultimately resolved in the late 1990s by scholarship that idealized inclusion in anti-foundationalist terms—that is, as the exclusion of exclusion itself. Such a resolution, however, works only by displacing the contradiction onto less powerful practitioners since this idealization is impossible to enact in actual practice.

The impact of this idealization on pedagogy and how its results align with the needs of post-industrial capitalism makes up the focus of chapter four. I examine the increasing focus on teaching students of faith in Composition scholarship since the late 1990s, demonstrating that much of this scholarship draws its exigence from the need to include, yet also exclude, students beliefs that results from the idealization of inclusion discussed in chapter three. I show how this contradictory effort derives from instructors' acceptance of anti-foundationalist critique and conceptually opposed foundationalist democratic ideals. Next I detail how post-industrial niche-market economics depend upon both an intense association with a particular identity and a fluid conception of identity that allows for multiple self-identifications. Having demonstrated the centrality of this fluid identity to both consumption and production in post-industrial capitalism, I then explain how the relationship between disciplinary composition and the first-year composition course replicates the traditional relationship between literature and composition in the industrial-era. This relationship imposes idealized inclusion on individual instructors as a professional mandate—in other words, it creates an ideal that must be enacted in the classroom. I then analyze pedagogical attempts at idealized inclusion by Jennifer Seibel Trainor and Shannon Carter to show how efforts to resolve the inclusion/exclusion contradiction in practice leads instructors to encourage the fluid identity required by post-industrial market economics. This pedagogy operates as a gatekeeping mechanism insofar as it claims to assess students' rhetorical competency while actually assessing their willingness to surrender the political positions supported foundationalist beliefs. I conclude by drawing out the implications of these

developments for Composition scholars, teachers, and students in the context of post-industrial education and the corporatized university in which it exists.

A historical account of Composition that includes the post-industrial context inevitably puts pressure on Composition's binary historical narrative, though it may not be in a form many of us want to accept. But this new perspective creates ways to engage more effectively with the very challenges it exposes. Having recognized the inadvertent complicity of disciplinary Composition in supporting the interests of the dominant classes in a post-industrial era, we can take a more nuanced view of the pre-disciplinary past, seeing the work of often vilified figures like Charles Elliot and A.S. Hill as well-intentioned, if misguided. We can then learn from their experience how we might create systemic correctives to expose our blind spots and force us to constantly re-examine the purposes to which our work is put by the institution and society around us. We can also begin to see the story of English as the story of first-year gatekeeping with the rise and fall of Literature and the fall and rise of Composition as part of the same story about the establishment of one sorting mechanism that was discarded for another. Such a view helps us think more carefully about how departments address new developments and how the splitting off of Composition programs from English departments—while not necessarily a bad thing—is not necessarily the key to more liberatory instruction either. This historical work, then, is essential for navigating the difficult decisions we face today. It is work I will now take up in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: Post-Industrialism and the New English

The importance of federal funding provided by the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958 in establishing a research agenda on which the discipline of Composition was constructed has been widely recognized by composition historians. In his landmark book *The Making of Knowledge in Composition: Portrait of an Emerging field*, Stephen North, for example, provides a succinct but authoritative account of how the composition course became Composition (capital "C") as a result of emergency federal funding after the Soviet launch of Sputnik I in 1957. Drawing on the work of Arthur N. Applebee, North explains that the 1950s were marked by a general reform movement in humanities education away from progressive concerns about the needs of students toward an articulation of field-specific knowledge around which disciplines like English could define themselves. What made this reform different by the time of the 1960s was the perception of it by many involved "as a national issue with a new urgency—as, really, a Cold War crisis, a matter of national defense" (North 11). When the Soviets launched the first artificial satellite (the aforementioned Sputnik I) the American education system came in for serious critique with lawmakers and educators scrambling to find out why the U.S. had fallen behind the Soviets and to make up lost ground.

The response from Congress was the NDEA, a law designed to improve U.S. education, especially in math and science, through increased federal funding. While the NDEA "provided money for educational reforms on an unprecedented scale: for research, for curriculum design and testing, for professional training . . . the original legislation did not make provision for English" (North 11). Left out of the funding loop,

the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) took up lobbying Congress for money, their most prominent effort being the publication of *The National Interest and the Teaching of English* in 1961. This document, penned and published in an astonishingly short twelve months, argued forcefully and successfully for the central role of English in helping defend national interests through education. In response Congress authorized federal support by expanding the application of the funds delegated by the Cooperative Research Branch of the U.S. Office of Education under Public Law 531. The result was "Project English" which involved funding "basic and applied research (over thirty projects were funded in the first year alone); curriculum study centers to produce new materials for classroom use; and conferences and professional meetings designed in general to increase professional involvement and in particular to outline needed areas of research to guide future funding" (Applebee 201). Based on the work of Project English and continued lobbying by the NCTE and the MLA, Congress would officially expand NDEA funding to English in 1964.

The material support and the mandates of federal funding led to a number of changes in the world of English Studies. Not the least of these was, as North explains, changes in "English teachers' self-perception as professionals" (12). The focus provided by federal money led English teachers at all levels to begin to see themselves as addressing a set of "shared common problems" (Applebee 213). But Congressional support also put pressure on the traditional structure of English departments. For while Literature had always been the centerpiece of the English department and curriculum, "it could not attract the sough-after Federal support" (North 13) being perceived as "less easily amenable to the 'scientific' modes of inquiry favored for government support

than either language or composition" (North 12). Composition and linguistics were, however, another matter. The evident practicality and applicability of writing and language use that were central to these areas of study and teaching made both more likely to win federal dollars.

The existing knowledge about composition, however, fell far short of what was needed to fit it to the rapidly developing reform movement of the 1960s. Composition could no longer rely on the knowledge of practitioners who developed curriculum and pedagogical wisdom by trial and error or by relying on conventional wisdom or simply by turning to what was most easily taught. In the race to win federal support, a more research-based form of expertise was necessary. Something more than this collection of "lore" as North has termed it, was needed—"something, in short, that looked like acceptable, formal, academic inquiry" (15). While these realities demanded changes in composition, they also provided compositionists with the means to elevate the field to a position of academic respectability. Instructors of composition now had "a way out of their academic 'ghetto'—or, more accurately, a way to transform that ghetto, to make it a respectable neighborhood" (14). Though practitioner knowledge would be utterly supplanted by researched-based expertise, composition would become an academic field developing in time all the accoutrement of disciplinary knowledge production and dissemination. As North argues, "Federal interest in English *per se* on this scale was relatively short-lived, but the momentum generated by the intense interest of these few years launched modern Composition" (12).

But the NDEA response to Sputnik was more than simply the result of a national panic over the state of U.S. education. The NDEA was, in many important ways, one of

the early harbingers of the emerging post-industrial era in which knowledge and information processing would serve as the foundation of economic, political, and social power. The NDEA reflected the turn toward the post-industrial application of knowledge to knowledge in that its mandate to improve education entailed an implicit call to apply learning and knowledge to how learning took place and how knowledge should be organized in the "discovery and development of new principles, new techniques, and new knowledge" (NDEA 1581). Congress would supply the funding, but this very funding suggested the expectation of effective instruction that produced results and this would require better knowing how knowing itself took place and how new knowledge was made. The implication was, then, that the launch of Sputnik reflected the Soviet's superior application of knowledge to learning and that this was to be the source of power in a highly technologized near future. In addition, the launch itself was a physical representation of knowledge applied to knowledge insofar as it served as a powerful piece of propaganda communicating not simply superior manufacturing capacities (the Soviets were far outmatched in this capacity by the U.S.; parts of Sputnik I were actually made of wood!) but superior command of knowledge and knowledge making processes. The post-industrial era had, in many ways, begun.

North's historical perspective, and that of many other composition historians, is thus broad enough to account for the material changes brought about by the Sputnik launch and the NDEA response but remains narrow enough to prevent these events from undermining the universalizations that support traditional master narratives. By failing to recognize the NDEA and Sputnik as markers of the emerging post-industrial context, accounts like North's fail to see the denouncing of practitioner lore in favor of

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scholarly expertise for what it was—the abandonment of industrial-era language

instruction and the beginning of a search for a post-industrial writing pedagogy. This

limited perspective prevents us from fully contextualizing composition's rise to

disciplinarity or the privileged disciplinary practices that result from it. When we

recognize the post-industrial nature of the crisis that the NDEA represents, it becomes

evident that the rapid changes in language instruction that took place from 1960 to 1980

in American colleges and universities were direct responses to the need for and

implementation of post-industrial instruction in writing. As I will argue in this chapter,

then, composition became a discipline not as a result of the heroic rejection of current-

traditional rhetoric by composition instructors nor because of short-term funding or

research-based expertise, but because of the emergence of post-industrialism and the

reforms this new social, cultural, and economic context demanded.

  To demonstrate how composition's rise to disciplinarity resulted directly from

the advent of post-industrialism, I will first demonstrate that securing the federal

funding by which English would remain relevant in a post-Sputnik world necessarily

involved dismantling the departmental and pedagogical dynamics that supported

industrial-era composition. The reforms brought about by the post-industrial realities

the NDEA was meant to address led to a widespread rejection of formalist definitions of

writing, the secondary status of composition, and the traditional exclusions enforced by

industrial-era gatekeeping. The process movement and its connections to Open

Admissions policies of the late 1960s and 1970s was more the result of the collapse of

industrial gatekeeping in the face of a new post-industrial order than the cause of that

collapse. The literacy crisis that attended this collapse amounted to an attempt to

maintain existing power structures by re-implementing industrial-era writing instruction. To resist this effort, reformist writing instructors turned to research as a way of demonstrating their expert knowledge and to thereby claim a professional status that would allow them to pursue reforms as they saw fit. The new tenure lines in composition and basic writing programs that the literacy crisis pushed administrators to create allowed compositionists to pursue research even as it enabled them to frame professional composition in opposition to the pedagogies and politics favored by the "back-to-basics" movement. The literacy crisis and the reform movement worked together to create professional composition which would be defined in terms of post-industrial writing instruction—anti-formalist in its method and inclusive in its politics.

The Turn to Process as Post-Industrial Writing

As social, technological, and cultural developments of the post-World War II period increasingly reflected the advent of a post-industrial society, higher education had to change to remain viable. The NDEA, with its call to improve the effectiveness of education, was a recognition on the part of lawmakers—even if they did not articulate it explicitly—that industrial-era instruction was ill-equipped to address the educational needs of a post-industrial context symbolically represented by the launch of Sputnik. Structured around the use of formalist writing instruction as a sorting mechanism for industrial society, English was particularly affected by these changes. That English was excluded from NDEA funding indicated that the standardized cultural reproduction industrial-era English accomplished through an emphasis on Literature and the use of ineffective writing instruction no longer served desired ends. Post-industrial education required effective instruction, the creation of new knowledge, and "that no student of

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ability . . . be denied an opportunity for higher education" (NDEA 1581) all of which threatened to make English irrelevant. Accommodating the demands of a post-industrial society thus meant dismantling the departmental dynamics and the formalist pedagogies that developed as a response to the industrial revolution. In other words, the emergence of post-industrialism demanded a turn to anti-formalism in English writing instruction.

That scholars and teachers recognized the challenge to industrial-era English posed by the NDEA is evident in the way lobbying efforts worked to distance the role and importance of English in terms that de-emphasized industrial-era English's focus on literature in favor of an equal division among linguistics, composition, and literature. This reframing of English resulted from defining English in post-industrial terms—that is, as a body of knowledge uniquely applicable in the acquisition and development of new knowledge and its dissemination. As *The National Interest* argued, English filled this special role through its emphasis on language and literacy instruction: "Because language is the vehicle for ideas, command of language is important in every subject. The task of educating students to use language is the special responsibility of the English teacher, but his success or failure ultimately affects instruction in all other subjects" (17). English was essential for outpacing the Soviets because English was a post-industrial discipline. Knowledge of English was the application of knowledge to the processes of acquiring and using new knowledge making it central to all forms of learning. But if English was important because it taught "language" then its work was not primarily dictated by helping students appreciate great literature. As might be expected, *The National Interest* positioned the writing and language study that made English relevant as equal to the study of literature arguing specifically that, "English

and its teachers should focus on the study of language, literature, and composition"

(26). This assertion undermined the secondary status of Composition and the primacy of

Literature—at least theoretically—and thereby reflected the dismantling of industrial-

era English that attended making English relevant in a post-industrial world.

In its focus on literacy instruction, *The National Interest* reflected other reform

efforts of the time such as the Basic Issues conferences of 1958 and the report of the

College Entrance Examination Board's (CEEB) Committee on English from 1959. The

influential Basic Issues conference report entitled "Basic Issues in the Teaching of

English" and published in 1959 was a key part of a general reform movement in the late

'50s to define English via its disciplinary-specific knowledge rather than its particular

enactment of progressivist concerns for student needs and experiences. As Applebee

characterizes the report, "The most important assertion was that English must be

regarded as a 'fundamental liberal discipline,' a body of specific knowledge to be

preserved and transmitted rather than a set of skills or an opportunity for guidance and

individual adjustment" (193). The underlying assumption of the report, and that of the

CEEB Committee, was that knowing what defined the subject of English would reveal

the proper sequence for introducing students to that knowledge. Tellingly, both reports

reached similar conclusions. The Basic Issues report asserted, "Our only vested interest

is the development of an increasingly higher degree of literacy in young American

citizens" (6) and the CEEB report argued that "language, primarily the English

language, constitutes the core of the subject" and that "the study and use of the English

language is the proper content of the curriculum" (Qtd. In Shugrue 26).

These reforms articulated a perceived need to reformulate English in terms of its disciplinary-specific knowledge and how that knowledge could best be organized for instruction. At least for the Basic Issues conferees, the implications of redefining English in this way included questioning the traditional purpose of writing instruction and its place in the English department. If literacy was the core of the discipline, then all literacy instruction was a matter of disciplinary expertise. The result was that "composition acquired status as the third leg of a tripod describing English curricula, along with linguistics and literature" (Lloyd-Jones "Composition" 73). Consequently, the report concluded its discussion of writing instruction by asking the important question, "Can the teaching of composition be raised to the same level of academic respectability as the teaching of literature?" (12). As Berlin notes, "the mere fact that the question could be entertained by a group of scholars representing the MLA signaled a new attitude toward freshman composition . . ." (125). While the CEEB Committee's definition did not necessarily undermine an emphasis on literary language—the Committee attended primarily to literature in its report—their definition did align with the Basic Issues report findings and included a detailed and rigorous description of suggested writing pedagogy.

But if making English relevant in this new context meant rehabilitating, at least to some extent, the standing of composition within the department, it also meant abandoning the industrial-era methods of instruction that went along with composition's second-class status. *The National Interest* argued that English's role in teaching language made it indispensable for improving instruction in all disciplines, thereby calling on composition, linguistics, and literature to justify its importance. But by

calling on composition, "the 'service' course, so long considered the dirty work" (North 13) because it "*could* attract [Federal] money" (North 13), the NCTE lobbying efforts were embracing the tricky rhetorical position of touting the effectiveness of a composition pedagogy that was decidedly and purposefully ineffective, at least as it was represented in most textbooks, handbooks, and much practitioner lore. In addition, current-traditional rhetoric marked composition as a remedial subject and writing as a set of basic formal features that anyone could teach. Current-traditional rhetoric would need to be explicitly abandoned if writing were to become a more important part of what made English relevant and if that relevance depended on effective instruction.

The reports of the Basic Issues and the CEEB Committee on English had argued that improved effectiveness in instruction depended first on defining the disciplinary-specific knowledge of English. This perspective was echoed in Jerome Bruner's widely influential *The Process of Education*, Bruner's report on the proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences 1959 conference on learning processes. In his report, Bruner, a Harvard professor and cognitive psychologist, argued perhaps most significantly that "any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development" (13). For Bruner, instruction began not with "a skill but a general idea, which can then be used as a basis for recognizing subsequent problems as special cases of the idea originally mastered" (17). Students would take up the basic methods and approaches of a given field and return to problems and questions that required ever more complex applications of disciplinary knowledge. The inductive nature of the approach demanded a clear articulation of the disciplinary knowledge students were to discover for curricula to be designed effectively. This "spiral"

curriculum as it was commonly referred to, reflected the idea that defining the knowledge of the discipline was key not only to knowing what to teach, but to knowing how to teach it. Effective instruction meant having expert knowledge in both what one knew and how one came to know it.

The case the NCTE made to Congress addressed the ineffectiveness of formalist instructional practices by positioning them as no longer effective due to changing conditions and the solution as more training in knowledge of the subject matter of English. According to *The National Interest* writing was growing more complex in an increasingly technological age and required greater capacities on the part of students and teachers. The report explained that despite the reality "that the scientific, political, and industrial practices of a century ago are too rudimentary today, we have not faced the fact that simple literacy is not enough" (*National Interest* 23). Indeed, the increasingly sophisticated structures of modern life—the "more corporate and more interdependent organization in all institutional life" (*National Interest* 25)—meant that effective communication was increasingly essential for individual achievement and societal functioning. The "shrewd presentation of the importance of English to national welfare" (Applebee 199) of *The National Interest* framed the poor teaching of such an essential subject as English as one of the primary reasons English deserved NDEA money. "Poorly prepared teachers of English," the report argued, "have created a serious national problem" (26) with "national concern about the deficiencies in English instruction" becoming "almost commonplace" (27). Part III of the report, entitled "The Status of English Teaching Today" focused almost entirely on improving teaching in English and improving teaching conditions. English teachers, especially writing

instructors, could no longer be allowed to implement whatever hodgepodge of practitioner lore they saw fit. The effectiveness of such practices was too uncertain. The influence of the latest reform movements and Bruner's "spiral" curriculum were evident in where *The National Interest* located the key to improved pedagogy: "What the teacher must study and understand is the complex, incremental nature of the subject, the way in which language develops, the way in which understanding and appreciation evolve" (27). Teachers would need to be trained in what constituted the knowledge of the discipline in order to teach English—linguistics, literature, *and* composition—effectively.

As noted above, the NCTE's initial lobby was not able to convince Congress to include English in the NDEA but did secure funding for English in 1961 through an extension of the U.S. Office of Education's Cooperative Research Program. The U.S.O.E. funding created what became known as "Project English" which involved a number of research projects, professional conferences, and curriculum study centers designed to create new pedagogical materials at various universities across the country. Other programs that emerged from the late 1950s shift in emphasis to disciplinary knowledge concentrated on teacher training in that knowledge as well. The CEEB report emphasized teacher training and development; As Applebee explains, "Of the fourteen specific recommendations in the first chapter of the report, for example, all but three dealt with certification requirements and teaching conditions" (197). In addition, the Commission created a number of summer teacher training institutes in 1962 which would influence the design of future curriculum developments such as those initiated by the Office of Education's Project English. This pedagogy took up curriculum

development in ways that reflected earlier reforms by seeking to develop a "'beefed-up,' content-oriented curriculum for the schools" (Shugrue 35).

Disciplinary content was, however, precisely what industrial-era composition lacked. If the recent reform recommendations were right, composition instruction could hardly become more effective without a basis of knowledge from which to organize and sequence writing curricula. But in the rush to implement reforms instructors could not wait for the development of such knowledge despite the research funding provided by Project English. The initial study centers were to complete their work in 3 to 5 years meaning "there was no time for the fundamental rethinking or even the basic research that might have generated radical change" (Applebee 203). Curriculum continued to focus on literature and its teaching leaving little in the way of new composition curriculum that would guarantee improved instruction in writing. While none of the research studies funded by Project English in its early years "concerned themselves more than peripherally with literature" (201), reflecting the outward face of a new English, study centers themselves were more varied in their approach to and incorporation of literature into new pedagogy.[10] Certainly long-standing traditions of the importance of literature can account for this reality in the actual practice of designing curriculum, but there was little disciplinary knowledge in composition available to counter this impulse. Composition could no longer be neglected.

Kitzhaber, who served as chair of the Project English study center at Oregon University, lamented the inadequate knowledge base for Composition in a paper presented at the 1963 CCCC and later published as "4C, Freshman English, and the

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[10] The Project English study center at Oregon University chaired by Albert Kitzhaber made literature a primary focus of the curriculum.

Future." Initially decrying the "bewildering variety" of pedagogies at work in the freshman course, Kitzhaber explains the increasingly difficult position this puts Composition in vis-à-vis other fields receiving Federal support. Kitzhaber notes, "The gap [between math and science and English] is wide enough already to cause acute uneasiness; and the wider it gets, the more untenable will be the position of those of us who have direct responsibility for the course" (131). While other subjects had already embraced the reform movement emphasizing the importance of studying school subjects as organized bodies of knowledge, English—especially composition—was falling behind precisely because it did not have a unified research approach. The answer—reflecting the influence of the Basic Issues report and the assumptions of Bruner's "spiral" curriculum—was to define a subject matter and become experts in it through research. Kitzhaber argued:

> if we in the English teaching profession are serious about wanting to make radical improvements in the teaching of composition, whether in school or college, we shall have to start asking fundamental questions about the act of writing, and asking them in a way that will make it possible to get answers based on more than hunches and personal theories and long-established custom. (133)

Kitzhaber's laments are hard to argue with but they also reflect the direct challenge to the industrial-era notion that writing instruction required no particular expertise. In an era when new knowledge worked as the source of political power, inexpert instruction was unacceptable.

The NCTE formally recognized this reality by commissioning Richard Braddock, Richard Lloyd-Jones, and Lowell Schoer to assess the state of research in composition in 1961 as part of an attempt to improve the teaching of composition. Braddock, et al.'s famous report, *Research in Written Composition* collected 504

examples of previous research and found existing research to be in a woefully

inadequate state. "Today's research in Composition taken as a whole," the most often

quoted passage from the report explains, "may be compared to chemical research as it

emerged from the period of alchemy: some terms are being defined usefully, a number

of procedures are being refined, but the field as a whole is laced with dreams,

prejudices, and makeshift operations" (5).[11] Many of the studies Braddock, Lloyd-

Jones, and Schoer examined were conducted by education faculty intent on addressing

the needs of the student in the classroom rather than the specific knowledge that post-

industrial reform efforts were undertaking. But if the existing research was not up to

par, collectively it did support a basic challenge to industrial era instruction. The studies

collected pointed at least to the fact that "the teaching of formal grammar has a

negligible or, because it usually displaces some instruction and practice in actual

composition, even a harmful effect on the improvements of writing" (37-38). In other

words, industrial era assumptions about writing were wrong and needed to be replaced

by new forms of expert knowledge.

As reform efforts converged in 1963, the form of post-industrial writing

instruction began to take shape. Michael F. Shugrue observes, "The exhilaration of the

profession late in 1963 can scarcely be overestimated. The federal government had

finally recognized its obligations to the humanities and had, with significant amounts of

money, begun a program to improve instruction in English through basic research" (37).

This was particularly true for composition for which 1963 was "a fulcrum year"

(Connors "Composition" 202). With formalist instruction becoming increasingly

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[11] As a response to the findings of the survey, Braddock founded the journal *Research in the Teaching of English* in 1965.

untenable in the face of reforms and the need to define a disciplinary knowledge on which writing instruction could be based, discussions of composition began to turn toward the processes of composing and finding a base of knowledge with which to describe those processes. The important 1963 CCCC—which Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford describe as a "watershed" moment in composition history (10)—exhibited this approach with its conference theme "The Content of English" and the emphasis on composing processes among a number of presenters. The content with which to properly organize the understanding and teaching of those processes for many prominent presenters was rhetoric whether of the "new rhetoric" or classical variety. The conference included seven important papers on rhetoric, including Wayne Booth's "The Rhetorical Stance," Edward P.J. Corbett's "The Usefulness of Classical Rhetoric," and Francis Christiansen's "A Generative Rhetoric of the Sentence" that discussed Christiansen's rhetorical model developed as part of his work at the University of Nebraska Project English study center.

Certainly the prominence of important papers on rhetoric at the '63 CCCC had a number of sources including recently completed work by Stephen Toulmin and Thomas Kuhn on novel articulations of rhetorical principles. But the influential discussion of rhetoric in this instance and its coincidence with developments that demanded a disciplinary knowledge for effective, anti-formalist writing suggests connections between the importance of rhetoric at the conference and the reforms in English spurred by the NDEA and the post-industrial context its passage represented. At that very conference, the CCCC passed two resolutions accepting rhetoric as "an integral part of the freshman course" and arguing that "rhetorical principles should be the

organizational principle of the freshman English course and the evaluating criteria for grading student papers'. (Connors "Composition" 206) Reforming composition required rejecting formalist practices and defining a disciplinary knowledge base from which to construct new, more process-oriented writing pedagogies. As North, Connors, and Ede and Lunsford note, 1963 was a pivotal year in composition, but it was a pivotal year because reform-minded compositionists were articulating the model for post-industrial composition that would characterize reforms from that point on. When the NCTE finally secured NDEA funding with the 1964 publication of *The National Interest and the Continuing Education of Teachers of English*—a detailed account of the developments of Project English and directions for future reforms—these trends only became further instantiated. Industrial-era composition was not to be abandoned overnight, but "advances" in composition would from this point on would exhibit the turn to the composing process and the application of an established knowledge base in efforts to understand and teach that process.

While the publication of *Research in Written Composition* by Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer revealed the need for further research on writing and writing instruction, compositionists tended to draw from existing traditions or expert knowledge borrowed from other disciplines as there were few material supports for writing-specific research to be done by those that could actually apply it to the course. Christiansen's already mentioned sentence rhetoric was influenced heavily by work done in linguistics and classical rhetoric. Gordon Rohman and Albert Wlecke's influential work on "pre-writing" drew most directly from Bruner's cognitive psychology and process-based model of education. Edward P.J. Corbett turned to the weighty tradition of Classical

rhetoric to create his 1965 textbook, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* and

even argued in a 1967 article entitled "What is Being Revived?" that "What we seem to

need now is a rhetoric of the process rather than of the product . . ." (172). Richard

Young, Alton Becker, and Kenneth Pike's 1970 textbook *Rhetoric: Discovery and*

Change used a complex tagmemic grid that appropriated cognitivist problem-solving as

a means of generating new arguments by playing two sets of concepts against each

other (one from a triad of physics metaphors and the other from a triad of linguistics

metaphors). Even the famous disagreement between American and British scholars at

the Dartmouth Conference in 1966, inasmuch as it concerned composition, generally

amounted to a debate over whether disciplinary knowledge or student experience should

form the basis for rejecting overly formalist pedagogies.[12]

These appropriations, whatever their intentions, were understood and explicitly

articulated as rejections of industrial-era formalist composition. Indeed, opposing the

use of cognitivism, rhetoric, or linguistics in composition to current-traditional

formalism became something of a trope in composition scholarship of the 1960s. In his

1964 *CCC* article, "Pre-writing: The Stages of Discovery in the Writing Process,"

Gordon D. Rohman draws on Bruner's piece, "Art of Discovery" to redefine "good

writing" in opposition to the uninformed, traditionally formalist definition arguing "We

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[12] The complexities of the debates at Dartmouth fall outside the scope of this project and, of course, provide complications to this oversimplified assessment. For example, the debate did not split entirely between Americans and British scholars for one thing. In addition, the focus of the conference was defining English, not simply composition. But the debate divided primarily, as Joseph Harris points out, between the American's focus on disciplinary knowledge and the British focus on teaching. The Americans at Dartmouth generally hoped to define English according to any number of potentially disciplinary-specific knowledge bases such as linguistics, literacy, and established literary traditions. The British were more interested in students' responses to English instruction than imparting a disciplinary knowledge. The British version of Process—or the growth model—would influence a number of the American scholars but would ultimately be aligned with "expressivism" and, as I will discuss later, be mostly dismissed for very specific historical reasons. For more on the debate at Dartmouth see Harris, Joseph. *A Teaching Subject: Composition since 1966*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1996.

submit that 'good writing' is that which has involved a writer responsible enough to discover his personal context within the 'subject context,' and 'bad writing' is that which has not. (In neither case is 'correctness' an issue. 'Bad writing' can be, often is, flawlessly 'correct')" (108). And in his 1968 "A Method for Teaching Writing," Peter Elbow proposes a rhetorically-based approach to writing instruction that calls on students to find an authentic voice with which they might address shifting writing contexts. Opposing his methods to formalist writing instruction, Elbow claims that traditional instruction cannot ensure good writing for "A student who has [an authentic voice] may make spelling and syntactical errors, he may organize his papers badly and reason badly; and his sentences may contradict all the structural canons of what is currently called good prose" (120). Proper writing is not necessarily a mark of good writing and so instruction in mechanics and surface features should not form the basis of writing instruction.

The need to improve writing instruction in order to secure federal funding demanded the rejection of ineffective and uninformed current-traditional pedagogies in favor of instruction based on some identifiable disciplinary-specific knowledge base. Lacking sufficient expertise, material support, or individual professional incentive to conduct basic research on writing, compositionists appropriated what knowledge they could from linguistics, rhetoric, psychology, and semantics. For a number of specific rhetorical reasons I discuss below, widely-accepted histories of the field have figured the use of these knowledge bases as the initiators of the turn away from current-traditional formalism, finding ample evidence in the use of these influences in pedagogical reforms of the time. While this borrowing did help advance and no doubt

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influenced the development of anti-formalist, or process-based, pedagogies, it is more accurate to understand the role of linguistics, psychology, and rhetoric as the "disciplinary knowledge" to which reform-minded compositionists turned once the NDEA had demonstrated the need to abandon current-traditional formalism in order for English to remain relevant. The educational demands of the post-industrial era that the NDEA represented, forced compositionists to embrace an anti-formalist pedagogy and to seek the requisite disciplinary knowledge base that would inform that new pedagogy wherever they might.

Post-Industrial Pedagogy and Inclusive Politics

As we have seen, these reforms necessarily meant taking apart the departmental dynamics and perspectives on language through which English served the purposes of the dominant culture in the Industrial era. But while dismantling industrial-era English did not necessarily mean certainly did not mean dismantling the dominant culture, it did involve a tacit rejection of the traditional exclusions that industrial English supported. Current-traditional pedagogies had characterized the dialects of upper- and upper-middle-class whites as "proper" or Standard English. By framing the use of a specific dialect as "good writing," formalist instruction obscured the inherent disadvantages some students faced in accommodating an academic discourse so divergent from their home discourse. Current-traditional formalism thus naturalized the exclusion of poor, minority, or linguistically diverse students as a failure on the part of the individual student to learn to write "properly." The increasingly widespread association of industrial-era writing instruction with an inexpert past meant that student failures, especially the failure of what was commonly called the "disadvantaged" student was a

failure of the new English to enact its expertise on the subject of writing instruction. As the report of the "Composition Courses for the Unprepared Freshman" workshop of the 1969 CCCC would put it,

> Failing such students becomes an admission, in part, that English is unteachable, that the students are unteachable, that English teachers cannot adapt to changing needs, and that ethnic and cultural disadvantages cannot be overcome. Instead of continuing to be entrenched behind traditional clichés and courses, teachers and administrators, impelled by growing concern, should be instigating research into an educational problem peculiar to this decade. (248)

Effective instruction was instruction that could teach all students to improve their writing, especially disadvantaged students.

Not surprisingly then, the intellectual developments and curricular reforms that marked the emergence of this new English from the beginning concerned themselves rather explicitly with addressing less capable or "disadvantaged" students. In his description of the "spiral" curriculum Bruner emphasized its applicability to all students, particularly those commonly left out of discussions of effective curricula. Noting that teaching should focus on student excellence, Bruner explains that the term "excellence":

> here refers not only to schooling the better students but also to helping each student achieve his optimum intellectual development. Good teaching that emphasizes the structure of a subject is probably even more valuable for the less able student than for the gifted one, for it is the former rather than the latter who is most easily thrown off track by poor teaching. (9)

The effort to reach every student found a receptive audience in English departments looking to reframe themselves for a public and a Congress ready to fund expert knowledge creators who could support the nation's interests through education. As Shugrue explained in 1968, "[Bruner's] emphasis on reaching every student has become

as essential a consideration in curriculum planning in English as the search for an underlying structure in the field" (28). Expertise in teaching English was acquired by knowing the discipline but demonstrated by reaching the disadvantaged student however that student might be defined.

The connections between reforms, research, and expanded inclusion in English, especially writing instruction, were prominent throughout the rest of the 1960s. No less than seven of the Curriculum Study Centers created by Project English directly addressed the effect of curricula on students of less privileged backgrounds—cultural, social, economic, or linguistic (Shugrue 31-32). In a 1962 conference talk, published as part of the conference report *Improving English Skills of Culturally Different Youth in Large Cities*, Marjorie Smiley, director of the Hunter College Project English study center, argued that minority and low-income students "are in certain specific ways *deprived*" and so often need "*much more* practice in the many phases of language readiness that teachers take for granted among middle-class children" (55). The traditional instruction that met the needs of a narrow section of the student population was insufficient in accomplishing the goals of inclusive instruction that the latest research, educational theories and the NDEA itself demanded. As Steve Parks has observed, "process advocates focused on the protection of a student's language. At academic conferences, such as Dartmouth, and in academic works, such as Ken Macrorie's *Uptaught* (1970), arguments were made for increased attention to the knowledge and language that students brought into the classroom" (69). A single dialect was increasingly perceived as a potential impediment to the learning of disadvantaged

students. As a result, accepting the usual exclusions of writing instruction became a mark of an instructor or researcher's uninformed and inexpert approach.

As reforms progressed through the 1960s these projects became formalized by various professional bodies. The descriptive rather than prescriptive approach to language in structuralist and then socio-linguistics provided "scientific" research-based justifications for embracing the plurality of student language and their influences are evident in the official studies and resolutions. In 1965, for example, the NCTE Task Force on Teaching English to the Disadvantaged published a study of 190 programs entitled *Language Problems for the Disadvantaged* in which the task force concluded that "children be permitted to operate in the dialect of their community at the lower levels of elementary school education, and that direct instruction in the use of standard informal English be begun no earlier than the intermediate elementary grades" (271). Four years later the NCTE passed a resolution "On the Need for Courses Reflecting the Cultural and Ethnic Reality of American Society" in which the influence of this descriptive turn of effective instruction was evident. The resolution, which applied to "all of [the NCTE's] appropriate commissions and committees and related professional organizations," called for working "actively to educate [NCTE] members and the total American community to an understanding that social dialect is not an index of intelligence, capability, or learning ability" (34). The anti-formalism that marked expertise in English and that had become an integral part of new developments in English increasingly involved defending the plurality of student languages.

Such reports and resolutions, of course, reflected as well the political context of their time which around the country, and on college campuses in particular, involved

radical challenges to the political and educational status quo. The rise of the New Left

and its social activist politics in the late 1950s and 60s led to a surge of political

activism centering on institutions of higher learning. A number of varied but related

movements such as the student power movement, Black Power, and the women's

liberation movement began staging protests and activist events on college campuses

across the country. Students demanded greater say in their own education and a less

authoritarian approach to instruction. As part of this explicit politicizing of the college

campus, student groups like the Students for a Democratic Society also called for

greater "relevance" in college curricula, challenging what seemed the willful

disconnection of course content from the social injustices of American society and U.S.

politics, especially in relation to the war in Viet Nam. Many students objected to

becoming part of a system they saw as inherently supporting a military-industrial

complex built on racism, sexism, and imperialism. Textbooks and assignments that

excluded the voices of black or women authors were seen as tacitly perpetuating

injustice society through education.

As the one course every student had to take First-Year Composition came in for

a disproportionate share of criticism.[13] But part of this focus on writing had to do with

the increasingly politicized nature of language and its use in education. Questions

regarding language and its role in excluding students became a central focus of

criticisms emerging from the New Left, the Black Panthers, and more radical scholars

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[13] Sharon Crowley relates an extreme example of the ire activist students could unleash at first-year writing. Crowley writes "During the late 1960s, students began to express their dissatisfaction with business as usual in the freshman writing class" that students at Iowa, as part of an anti-war movement, burned down the composition building. Sometimes this dissatisfaction was expressed quite compellingly: at the University of Iowa, for example, the rhetoric building was burned down" ("Composition" 203). For more see Crowley, Sharon. *Composition in the University: Historical and Polemical Essays*. Pittsburgh, PA: U of Pittsburgh P, 1998.

within the university itself. As part of their political goals, "the Black Panthers had tried to link Black English to a general critique of U.S. society" (Parks 165). The Black Panthers asserted the legitimacy of Black English as a dialect in an attempt to challenge the class-based, racially segregated U.S. society that excluded Black English from the main stream. Advocates of women's liberation likewise pointed to the sexist language that made up American language norms whether spoken or written.

By 1969 the New University Conference—a group of leftist English professors and educators who sought to use the clout of professional organizations like the NCTE, the MLA, and the CCCC to effect political and social change—were announcing in an open letter penned by Paul Resnikoff that "Linguists and English teachers should concentrate not on trying to teach everyone to speak and write upper middle class white dialect but rather on changing the attitude of society that discriminates against other dialects" (265). These political movements and the critiques they employed highlighted the political character of choosing a particular language to teach in school. Though writing instructors and researchers might have had their own reasons for turning away from current-traditional rhetoric and its traditional exclusions, the political activism of the 1960s increasingly made embracing the plurality of students' language a political action. As Parks explains "although process advocates were not necessarily linked to the New Left, as the 1960s drew to a close, certain elements of their rhetoric became permeated by and associated with the New Left and progressive social movements" (70). The anti-formalism of 60's reforms would only become more of a political statement as time went on.

The creation of Open Admissions policies in 1970 at the City University of New York brought a practical urgency to the reforms of the previous decade and the politics of language instruction. Under Open Admissions, any student with a high-school diploma could attend university and the result was an influx of students who were less traditionally prepared for college writing than educators were used to. This influx of "students that differed in socioeconomic background, culture, gender, and discourses not only from the instructors but also from each other probably threw a much brighter spotlight on the ineffectiveness of composition" (Goggin 39). Under these conditions and facing student writing that they had trouble even reading, more and more instructors embraced anti-formalist pedagogical reforms in place of product-focused instructional methods for which these new students, coming as they often did from poor school districts or from home discourses that used "non-Standard" dialects, were often utterly unprepared. In addition, the sheer number of students Open Admissions brought to the university put enormous pressure on teachers tasked with grading multiple finished student products in a single semester. Those instructors still relying on product-focused pedagogies found themselves ill-equipped to handle the workload but as Sharon Crowley explains, "Early advocates of process tactics . . . turned to them as means of relieving the pressure put on teachers by the institutional situation of composition" (194). A focus on the process of writing seemed a more effective and humane way to teach many Open Admissions students to write and allowed instructors to ease the burden of teaching by using in-class writing, peer review, and revision activities characteristic of process pedagogies.

But if Open Admissions provided one more impetus for rejecting current-traditional rhetoric, it also strengthened the connection between anti-formalism and a leftist politics. The most immediate and visible cause of the new admissions policies was the protests carried out by black and Puerto Rican students demanding greater access to education at Columbia university in 1969. This "radical" political action and the resulting policy changes meant that Open Admissions "along with federal, state, and local affirmative action policies put the highly charged issue of accommodating culturally diverse students at the center of debates in higher education" (Henze, et al. 13). The issue was access and was highly politicized suggesting as it did a challenge to existing social, racial, and class structures. As Jerome Karabel explained, writing in 1972, "The way in which a society distributes its rewards is a profoundly political matter, and as long as the occupational structure remains linked to the educational system, the admissions process is inherently political" (38). Opening the doors to students from populations traditionally marginalized in American society amounted, on one level, to challenging the existing system that marginalized them. And the doors were definitely opened; from 1974 to 1978 the number of African American students enrolled in college went from 821,930 to 960,804, the number of Hispanic students rose from 287,432 to 370,366, and Native American students increased from 52,876 to 66,264 (Deskins 20).

The turn toward anti-formalism in writing instruction as a means of helping these students succeed was, then, a political act that aligned such instruction with progressive inclusive politics. Process based pedagogies became what James Marshall calls a kind of "political-pedagogical protest" (47) meaning that, as Marshall explains,

many process advocates "were rebels, or tried to be. We did inhale. We self-consciously set ourselves up as outsiders, and then we gloried in it" (48). Anti-formalist pedagogies went from being a means of improving the standing of English in terms of funding and educational theory to a progressive political movement aligned with many of the goals of the New Left. The ideas expressed in Donald Murray's 1972 manifesto "Teach the Process, not Product," were not exactly new when Murray published them. "For example," James Zebroski observes "the very phrase 'from product to process' was circulating for years before it was widely printed and took on the tone of a political slogan" (110). But after political activism of the late 1960s and the advent of open admissions it *became* a political slogan, declaring explicitly the connection between the anti-formalism that characterized post-industrial English and the progressive politics of the New Left. What started primarily as a rejection of industrial-era composition designed to ensure the relevance of English in a new age, had become a political movement that tinged reforms of writing instruction with a progressive politics that would characterize the field thereafter.

The political-pedagogical movement that began to grow out of the educational reforms and political activism of the 1960s and which was galvanized by the debate over Open Admissions policies granted impetus for ever more formal assertions of the assumptions of post-industrial English instruction. Perhaps the most assertive of these was the CCCC Students' Right to Their Own Language (SRTOL) resolution of 1974, ultimately published in 1976. SRTOL reflected all the developments of post-industrial reforms. The resolution draws on a research-based anti-formalism for its justification arguing "Language scholars long ago denied that the myth of a standard American

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dialect has any validity" (ncte.org). It then points to the political nature of the willful

ineffectiveness that characterizes industrial-era composition stating that "The claim that

any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its

dominance over another. Such a claim leads to false advice for speakers and writers,

and immoral advice for humans" (ncte.org). Instead, the resolution implies, effective

instruction is necessary and the training that supports teacher expertise will enable these

teachers to "respect diversity and uphold the right of students to their own language"

(ncte.org). The hallmarks of post-industrial reforms—effective instruction through the

rejection of formalist ineffectiveness, attention to disadvantaged students, instructor

expertise, and leftist politics—had become the official position of Composition's key

professional organization. In other words, Composition had officially embraced post-

industrial English.

Process as Expertise

Histories of composition have commonly figured Janet Emig's 1971 study, *The*

Composing Process of Twelfth Graders, as initiating a distinct "process movement,"

qualitatively different from what came before that would itself lead to the formation of

the discipline. According to North, the study "arguably stands as the single most

influential piece of Researcher inquiry—and maybe *any* kind of inquiry—in

Composition's short history" (197). Emig's monograph, "a slight, 151-page NCTE

research report, which was published without fanfare in 1971 and sold at the time for

under five dollars" (Nelms 108) accomplished this influence by the sheer force of its

innovations and insights. Perhaps most important among these was that "composing

processes were as idiosyncratic as the people who deployed them and the occasions on

which they were used" (Crowley "Composition" 202), a discovery that spoke to the complexity of writing and that "remains an idea central to composition theory" (Nelms 108). In addition, as Emig herself explains, previous studies of composing were "experiments in instruction" whereas the purpose of her study, "on the other hand, is to attempt to describe how student writers usually or typically behave as they write with minimal direct intervention by the investigator" (21). The results were "rewarding enough to make further investigation of this process seem worthwhile" (North 197) leading compositionists to turn increasingly to basic research on composing processes. This trend, in turn, established a base of research knowledge that granted composition greater academic legitimacy as a field and provided the basis for the creation of the discipline (Crowley "Composing" 191; Fleming "Rhetoric" 33).

As novel as Emig's study seemed, the work very much positioned itself within the context of 1960s reforms developed in response to the demands of post-industrial education. The descriptive effort on Emig's part might have been "an expedition into new territory" (Buxton, v), but calls for such basic research, like those made by Kitzhaber and *Research in Written Composition* eight years earlier, had been a key feature of initial reforms; Emig cites *Research in Written Composition* directly as a source of both the exigence for her study and its methodology (2; 19). Like earlier reformers, Emig criticizes current-traditional pedagogy as an inexpert, uninformed, and "neurotic activity" (99), arguing that "There is little evidence . . . that the persistent pointing out of specific errors in student themes leads to the elimination of these errors, yet teachers expend much of their energy in this futile and unrewarding exercise" (99). The attention the study's results indicated should be paid to process-oriented "reflexive

writing" (Emig 37)—writing that played a "contemplative role" in "relations between the writing self and the field of discourse" (Emig 37)—was necessarily more inclusive, being a form of writing which "the 'average' and 'less able' student . . . can do best and, often, far better than the 'able,' since there is so marvelous a democracy in the distribution of feeling and of imagination" (Emig 100). Research in *The Composing Processes* demonstrated the need for anti-formalist instruction which Emig aligned with leftist politics by attacking the five-paragraph theme, as Marshall notes, in "the language we used to voice our other protests at the time—the language we used to satirize militarism and narrow forms of patriotism" (47).

That same context also spoke, however, to the novelty and rarity of works like *The Composing Processes*. The vast majority of composition instructors had little material support or time to conduct research nor was there much incentive in English departments to do so. Basic research was part of the effort to improve instruction but such work required time, money, and energy unavailable to most writing teachers and low on the list of research priorities for tenure-track English, even in the early 1970s. Emig's own dissertation, on which her 1971 study was based, was itself extremely difficult to complete because of a similar lack of support. Her dissertation took nine years to complete during which time Emig went through ten different advisors the lack of direction available to her and the sense that research on composing was not important. Her dissertation took her nine years to complete during which time Emig went through ten different dissertation advisors. That Emig had such difficulty as a graduate student researching composing in the Education department at Harvard suggested the difficulty an adjunct instructor or a faculty member of an English

department that still based its raison d'etre on the study of literature would have conducting methodologically sound basic research on the composing process. This fact alone accounts for the widespread appropriation of research from other disciplines and the variety of approaches that characterized efforts to find a disciplinary knowledge base on which to reform writing instruction in the 1960s. It also explained the relative dearth of any mention of Emig's groundbreaking research in the pages of *CCC* in the years immediately following its publication. Much would need to change for the potential impact of Emig's work to find purchase among compositionists.

Change was not long in coming. The reforms of the 1960s had been supported by prominent voices in composition but had not been without controversy, particularly among the broader public. The popular backlash to reforms, commonly called "back-to-basics," advocated a "return" to a pedagogical focus on the fundamentals of a given subject, the "basics" that allegedly made more complex work possible. As it related to writing this meant demanding a current-traditional approach that taught students the "basics" of grammar, spelling, syntax, and sentence and paragraph structure. In the minds of many, instructional reforms and pedagogical experimentation had pursued various forms of academic fancy or political relevance or both at the expense of these essential components of writing instruction. As early as 1971 Janet Ross could voice a weary lament in *CCC* that "Those of us who teach freshman composition are accustomed to the complaint from parents, employers, and other educators, 'Students can't write. They aren't taught grammar anymore'" (179). Certainly complaints about the state of education were nothing new but tied as reforms were to the unruly 1960s, the exclusion of these tedious, yet necessary, aspects of writing reflected not only

questionable teaching but controversial politics and increased the calls to return to the alleged basics. By 1973 "Across the country the demand was rising for *traditional* schooling or *conservative* alternatives. 'Back to basics' was a spreading slogan, and a new name, 'fundamental school,' was growing popular. Our youngsters weren't learning to read and write as well as they used to, the argument ran" (Willhelm 46).

Complaints about the basics would grow louder with the implementation of Open Admissions policies. Standardized test scores in all subject areas had been on a slow but steady decline since the 1963-64 academic year which had in part called forth the back-to-basics rhetoric. Students' scores on verbal skills measured by the SAT fell from 478 in 1962-63 to the 430s by the end of the decade and mathematics scores dropped from 502 to the 470s ("Why" par. 2). The influx of less traditionally prepared students that Open Admissions made possible drove scores down even further. During the 1973-74 year the combined scores slipped a full 11 points raising alarm bells among parents, administrators, and the public at large ("Why" par. 2). The passage of the SRTOL resolution by the very people charged with teaching students to read and write coupled with falling scores raised serious questions about what exactly students were being taught and why. As *Time* magazine claimed in 1977 the answer to "why those falling test scores?" was "Perhaps too much TV, certainly too little hard work in school" ("Why" par. 1)[14] It all seemed clear evidence that the permissiveness of 60s reforms in terms of grammar instruction and drill in mechanics were at fault for students' inability to write.

The result was a full-fledged literacy crisis. As Lisa Ede points out, "the 'dominant ideological climate' of the 1970s was such that a material reality that could

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[14] It is difficult not to indulge in pointing out the non-standard character of this sentence.

have been viewed positively as a sign of the increased democratization of higher education in America—the presence of a new group of students who were the first in their family to attend college—was interpreted instead as a literacy crisis" (66). Certainly much of the popular press favored that interpretation with prominent publications like *Time* ("What Schools Cannot Do," April 1973; "They Shall Not Pass," Dec. 1973), *U.S. News and World Report* ("Why 1.4 Million Americans Can't Read or Write—And the Remedies Proposed," Aug. 1974), and *Education Digest* ("The Right to Read," Nov. 1974) making alarmist claims about the state of education in general and literacy education in particular. But it was in 1975 when *Time* published "Can't Anyone Here Speak English?" in August of 1975 followed closely by Merrill Sheils' widely-read *Newsweek* piece, "Why Johnny Can't Write," in December of the same year, that the discussions of the alleged problems with literacy instruction reached a sense of crisis resulting in widespread calls among the public for something to be done.

Predictably, the answer involved rolling back the reforms of the 1960s and a return to the "basics." For Sheils blame rested entirely with recent reforms, their focus on process, and the new perspectives on language that this focus supported. Dismissing the typical scapegoat of television, the effects of which "might be counteracted if students were required to learn the language in the classroom" (2), Sheils argues that "Even where writing still is taught, the creative school discourages insistence on grammar, structure and style" (3). Specifically the villains were the new theories being applied to writing by instructors looking for novel approaches. "Teachers in the classroom" Sheils argued, have ignored the essential basics because they "have come increasingly under the sway of the structural-linguistic dogma" (3) which asserted that

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"there are no real standards for any language, apart from the way it is commonly spoken" (3). The result of these developments was the SRTOL resolution, what Sheils calls an "extraordinary policy statement," adopted by well-meaning but misguided teachers who failed to see that not teaching Standard English was itself a form of oppression (3). "Those who would teach English," Sheils writes "must also once again insist that not all writing is equally admirable" (5).The answer for Sheils—and many others—was a return to the disciplining effect of tighter standards, themselves articulated as the "basics."

Despite the emphasis on writing skills in much of the reporting, the crisis had less to do with students' ability to write and more to do with anxieties about the changing social and economic context. Sheils' primary concern, for example, was not about the literacy skills of students or the effect on the economy. The real worry was the effect of expanded access to education on civilization itself: "If the written language is placed at the mercy of every new colloquialism and if every fresh dialect demands and gets equal sway, then we will soon find ourselves back in Babel" (Sheils 5). Failing to impose a single standard dialect—which in turn represents a single set of cultural values—risks degeneration into barbarity. As unfounded as this position is, Sheils and other critics were not entirely wrong; a particular way of life was collapsing—industrial society. The expanded access that drove down test scores precipitating the crisis had been facilitated by new approaches to writing intended to meet the needs of post-industrial society. The attempt to return to the "basics" of industrial-era instruction was, in part, an attempt to reassert the industrial context that those basics served and so reflected anxieties about the passing of the industrial era on the part of those in power in

industrial society. Jerome Karabel notes a similar reaction to Open Admissions policies by immigrant families who established themselves through a "meritocratic system of higher education" which "will enable them to transmit their status to their children" (40). But the development of an equality-based system of access that did away with the meritocratic restrictions on access "threatens these people (and, more widely, the 'haves' of American society) precisely because it challenges the legitimacy of the principle that justifies their position" (Karabel 40). By calling for industrial-era writing instruction, the crisis amounted to a demand that the power structures of the industrial era be ensured despite the shifting context.

But if the crisis made a case for industrial-era writing instruction, it also made one of a sort for post-industrial pedagogies. The crisis highlighted for composition instructors just how distinct their reformist perspectives had apparently become from widely accepted views of writing among the general public. The widespread support for "back-to-basics" in the popular press suggested that the traditional exclusions and formalist pedagogies of industrial-era writing instruction represented a lay perspective. If industrial-era writing instruction was the lay approach, then the anti-formalism of post-industrial approaches reflected an expert perspective developed since the passage of the NDEA. That process-based, left-leaning pedagogies seemed only to appeal to those who taught composition for a living, at least if the press were to be believed, only further suggested that writing instructors were professionals possessed of an exclusive and unique expertise. What that expertise consisted of was itself informed by the crisis. The industrial pedagogy advocated by the public figured writing as a remedial skill involving the application of a simple set of formal rules. The knowledge the public did

not possess, the knowledge that positioned compositionists as experts was precisely the knowledge that writing was a complex phenomenon that could not be reduced to the basics as they were traditionally conceived.

Efforts to respond to the crisis, particularly in the primary professional organization of writing instructors, the CCCC, were clearly focused on demonstrating that expertise. The CCCC themed its 1976 meeting "What's Really Basic?" as a call to respond to the public furor. As Lloyd-Jones explains "Clearly, the 'really' was intended to suggest that popular discussions were not getting the point" ("Afterword" 52). Just how much the public missed the point was made clear by Carl Klaus in a December 1976 *CCC* article entitled "Public Opinion and Professional Belief." Responding to "the sound and fury of all the news I've been hearing lately about bad writing and all the remedies about how to make it better" (335) Klaus argues that "being professional" about teaching writing means knowing "as much about writing as we can" (337). Product-focused instruction that equates writing "with marks on a page, rules of grammar, forms of expression. . ." (Klaus 337) creates a simplistic view of teaching writing in which "all you have to do is memorize the rules and apply them in your teaching" (Klaus 337). But writing, of course, was not as simple as the post-industrial turn to process made clear. As Klaus notes, "if you conceive of writing not simply as a product but also as a process, if you conceive of it as a complex mental activity, which brings together, through language, a writer, the universe of experience, and an audience, then you will find the requirement [to know about writing] to be very complex and demanding" (337). Those who understand writing as a process can see the true character of writing as a complex phenomenon that only experts could teach.

In 1977 in the first-ever CCCC Chair's address, Richard Lloyd-Jones made a similar argument by describing composition in terms strikingly similar to those used by *The National Interest* to frame English as a post-industrial discipline. Responding directly to the literacy crisis—"When the press report a crisis there *is* a crisis, and *we are it*" ("Center" 24)—Lloyd-Jones claimed that writing instructors, "are the ones at the center who reach to all other disciplines and to all other people" ("Center" 27). Recognizing the centrality of writing to all learning simultaneously reveals its rhetorical character and thus its complexity. Noting that "the choices in the language are mostly to be determined on rhetorical grounds rather than on linguistics ones," ("Center" 26) Lloyd-Jones explains "if the audience is different, if the situation is different, if the amount of explanation is different, it is no longer *it*. *It* is other" ("Center" 26). The job of composition instructors is no less than to "master the spaces between everything" ("Center" 2?) in order "to make a coherent whole of all this diversity" ("Center" 27). In other words, composition instructors possess a unique knowledge and specialized expertise—they are "interdisciplinary scholars"—who are aware of the complexity of writing on which its central position in the university depends. By contrast "Those people who believe that there is one correct form of English" Lloyd-Jones explains, "simply deny this rhetorical choice and insist on ontological certainty" ("Center" 26). To embrace the view of writing as simple is not only to misunderstand what writing is, but also to demonstrate one's lack of expertise in teaching it.

The knowledge of writing's complexity that marked compositionists' professional expertise and placed writing at the center of all education justified anti-formalist pedagogies and inclusive reforms as well as the construction of disciplinary

mechanisms through which to pass on that expertise. William F. Irmscher made these

connections explicit in his 1979 Chair's address explaining first that compositionists

"are concerned with one of the most essential and valuable resources of anyone's

education: the ability to write" (240). The reforms against which the popular press raged

were evidence that writing instructors "have acquired new expertness; we have learned

new approaches" (240) which in turn meant that calls for "back-to-basics" were beneath

serious consideration. Irmscher argued, "To those who do not fully appreciate the

complexity of our enterprise,"—that is, the non-professional public—"we can now say,

'You are outdated,' 'You are misguided,' 'You are naïve,' 'We've gone that route

before and it doesn't work'" (240). By 1980, Frank D'Angelo could describe a proposal

for a graduate program in composition and rhetoric based on the claim that writing and

rhetoric were worthy of research (420) and the idea "that composition can provide a

unifying center for English studies as well as for the liberal arts" (423). That teaching

writing required the expert knowledge of writing's complexity became a rallying cry in

response to the literacy crisis. As Ellen Barton explains, "From Lloyd-Jones's address

in 1977 to Nell Ann Pickett's in 1997, CCCC Chairs have made similar, if not identical,

arguments for the complexity, challenge, and importance of teaching writing in the

university" (236-7).

But if a recognition of the complexity of writing defined expert knowledge in

composition, then there had to be basic underlying principles that defined that

complexity and the boundaries of that knowledge. Failing to define those basic

principles only undermined compositionists' claims of professional expertise: "By the

time we bicker about definitions [of what is basic], we have lost whatever authority we

had with the public to claim competency in dealing with basics" (Lloyd-Jones "Center" 26). For Klaus that research was found in other fields meaning writing instructors should possess some expertise in a range of disciplines including "psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and linguistic anthropology" (337). But increasingly the consensus would be that knowledge of the complexity of writing as the basis for compositionists' expert status demanded research that specifically revealed the principles that demonstrated that complexity. Echoing his earlier work with Braddock and Schoer in 1963, Lloyd-Jones argued, "We need more demanding training programs for teachers; we need research programs for scholars. We need our journals not only to deal with what to do on Monday but to demonstrate our right to a central function in the academy" ("Center" 29). Research on composition would need to show the complexity of writing and, as we have seen, complexity meant the composing process.

Such research and the methods employed to conduct it, as Vivian I. Davis argued in her 1978 address, would thus need to be composition-specific. Because composition required a unique expertise, "we cannot depend on others to have the required sensitivity to the complexities of the composition process that we have" (Davis 29) but must "develop experimental designs and identify analytical methods especially adaptable to our own discipline" (Davis 29). The varied approaches and plurality of appropriations that characterized the reforms of the '60s would need to be replaced by a more coherent set of agreed-upon basic assumptions and methodologies so that compositionists could claim the expertise necessary to protect the profession. Without such research "We don't know what we are doing" (Davis 28) and "become easy prey for those who have their own vested interests for claiming to be able to appraise our

teaching" (28). Claiming the expertise that would allow writing instructors to implement the anti-formalist pedagogies so many outside the profession were clamoring about required identifying clearly "the questions to which we need answers" (Davis 28) and providing "guidelines for future studies so that our research and experimentation will follow the needs of the profession rather than the special interests or circumstances of the individual researcher" (Davis 28).

Fortunately, the pursuit of this researched knowledge was increasingly becoming a realistic possibility. Under pressure from the public resulting from perceived literacy crisis, administrators began to pour funding into new remedial writing programs intended to bring test scores up to expected standards and improve the writing of "unprepared" Open Admissions students. As Ede explains "the existence of a media-supported literacy crisis was the most specific and powerful catalyst for the creation of new tenure-line positions in composition in the 1970s" (68). Basic writing programs expanded and as new writing program director positions were created, "*brand-new* professors increasingly were hired specifically to work as administrators" (Strickland 82). The new positions were faculty positions *in writing* and thus represented positions that required the application of academic training in teaching *and* research. Colleges were taking the literacy crisis seriously and results were expected. The literacy crisis had made basic writing "one of the few boom segments of the academic economy in this period" (Zebroski 108).

This boom in basic writing was attended by a simultaneous bust in Literature. That bust began in 1969, "the year in which professional saturation occurred in British and American literature, the year in which there were literally more candidates for

faculty positions than there were jobs . . ." (Fleming "Form" 73). Over the next few

years, the professional prospects for PhDs in English would only worsen. Budget cuts

and staff reductions were widespread in the early 1970s with 74% of private four-year

institutions, 66% of public four-year institutions, and 41% of two-year colleges cutting

faculty and staff from 1971-1974 (Alm, Erhle, and Webster 153). By the 1973-1974

academic year, the bottom had fallen out of the market for the traditional English

professor teaching Literature (Zebroski 107).[15] The teaching of Literature was no longer

a viable profession for the majority of PhDs in English and would not regain its

viability. In fact, the prospects grew even dimmer in the following years as

"Appointments in literary studies decreased by over 65 percent between 1972 and

1978" (Henze, et al. 20). Suddenly, graduates of English PhD programs who wanted a

career in academe had nowhere to go except into basic writing programs or the other

viable area in English—technical and business writing—which were often part of the

same program.

The combined result of this collapse and the expansion of basic writing was that

many graduate students trained in Literature began taking jobs in Composition. The

realities of the job market and the creation of tenure lines in composition meant

composition was no longer a stepping stone to teaching literature in the future but

[15] Marc Bousquet puts pressure on the notion that the poor employment prospects for English PhDs is
simply a result of the fluctuations of the "market." Instead, Bousquet reads the collapse of the labor
"market" as a result of a deliberately created labor conditions that position graduate students and adjuncts
as the primary labor force for teaching composition (cf 19-27). The numbers from this era suggest that
Bousquet's arguments apply specifically to this period. David Fleming points out that "In fact, from
1953-54 to 1963-64, the number of graduate teaching assistants in public U.S. universities tripled, from
11,352 to 31,083" (71-2) and so actually "outpaced the rise in undergraduate enrollment, which also grew
spectacularly, from 493,817 to 1,005,173" (71). The connections between post-industrial economics and
the increased use of contingent labor suggest the collapse of literature had much to do with the emergence
of post-industrialism. For more on Bousquet's take on the "market" see Bousquet, Marc. *How the
University Works: Higher Education and the Low-Wage Nation*. New York: New York UP, 2008.

demanded the full application of one's graduate training and experience. The seriousness with which these new faculty took their positions is reflected by how many converts from literature became luminaries in writing studies. This group included Patricia Bizzell, Lisa Ede, Linda Flower, James Berlin, Victor Vitanza, Richard Inkster, Sharon Bassett, David Bartholomae, Charles Kneupper, and Sam Watson. Many of these and others embraced additional training and preparation in seminars of the late 1970s sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities and facilitated by figures like Richard Young and William Coles. To put it another way, compositionists not only had the opportunity to conduct the research to back up their claims to expertise, the field was increasingly populated by people who expected this work to be their profession and expected research to be a part of that profession.

With these developments in material support, opportunity, and the exigence to embrace basic research brought about by the literacy crisis, research on composing that could demonstrate the underlying complexity of writing would become an increasingly prominent part of the work of composition. Mina Shaughnessy's extremely popular *Errors and Expectations* published in 1977, with its revelation of the logic and complexity of thought underlying the errors of basic writers, provided an exemplary model of such work. Emig's study also revealed the complexity of writing and clearly modeled the empirical research composition needed. In addition, it was available at the moment of crisis and communicated its results in the privileged discourse of scientific theory that would serve compositionists's claims of professional expertise so well. Emig and Janice Lauer were invited to give the keynote addresses at the 1976 CCCC with both emphasizing research and scholarship in composing while "seven regular sessions

on research drew overflow crowds" (Lloyd-Jones "Afterword" 52). The turn to anti-formalism that had initiated the original calls for the creation of discipline-specific research were finally able to be fulfilled.

The empirical methods and cognitivist theories Emig's study employed had been the subject of the rather vicious debate between Janice Lauer and Ann Berthoff in the pages of *CCC* over the course of 1971 and 1972, but in the latter half of the decade, talk-aloud protocols, case study methodology, and the use of psychological theories of cognition to describe the complexity of the writing process became markers of the most prominent research in the field. Linda Flower and John Hays published their "Problem-Solving Strategies and the Writing Process" in *CCC* in 1977 outlining a cognitive model of the composing process that "would soon generate a series of essays, a 1978 conference, and a set of essays based on that conference, *Cognitive Processes in Writing*, edited by their Carnegie Mellon colleagues Lee Gregg and Erwin Steinberg in 1980" (Henze, et al. 34). In 1979 Sondra Perl's Emig-influenced study, "The Composing Processes of Unskilled College Writers" made her test subject "Tony" and her method for coding talk-aloud data famous among compositionists. That same year, Irmscher explained in his Chair's address that "The cognitive structure of individuals determines their potential for learning and writing. To the extent that the existing cognitive structure is clear, stable, and organized, it facilitates learning" (244). Research, it seems, did not so much discover the composing process, as the turn to process had been forced to discover research.

The Post-Industrial Discipline

The history of the field demonstrates that composition's disciplinarity was ultimately a result of the emergence of post-industrialism. The post-industrial demand for effective writing instruction required English departments to abandon current-traditional views of writing and writing instruction and to rethink, at least in theory, the departmental hierarchies constructed on those views. In keeping with reform efforts of the late 50s, compositionists sought out the disciplinary-specific knowledge base necessary to make the new anti-formalist instruction effective and thereby maintain the relevance of English in a post-industrial age. Effective instruction reached all students and thus the rejection of an ineffective and uninformed formalist instruction meant also a rejection of the traditional exclusions it supported. With the implementation of Open Admissions policies in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the inclusive character of these new pedagogies created a backlash in the form of a literacy crisis that called for reinstating industrial era composition and the social structure it was expected to maintain.

In response to this crisis, compositionists defended reforms as a reflection of their own expertise, an expertise defined as the recognition of the complexity of writing. Such a claim figured post-industrial writing instruction, terms process pedagogy, as professional writing instruction and thereby positioned the anti-formalist assumptions and inclusive politics of that pedagogy as markers of professionalized composition. As Richard Ohmann explains, claiming professional expertise requires convincing the public that the profession offers a service to society that "is a needed one, that only certified practitioners can meet the need, that they understand it better than their clients

do, and that they will supply it . . . in the interests of the client and by extension of the whole society" (227-8). The perceived literacy crisis took care of proving the need for expert composition instruction while the complexity that anti-formalist reforms addressed demonstrated the superiority of professional understanding to the public's privileging of the basics. The effectiveness of this instruction, demonstrated by its inclusivity, spoke to the ways in which professional writing instructors served the interests of their clients and the deliberative democracy that characterized American society. Anti-formalist focus in composition pedagogy became, then, the method of a professionalized writing instruction while inclusive, democratic education became its professional goal.

The funding for writing programs spurred by the alleged crisis provided the material support for enacting that expertise in a disciplinary manner in the form of tenure lines and expanded writing programs. The period immediately following the initial public panic about literacy instruction in America, 1975-1980, saw the rapid establishment of the mechanism for constructing, disseminating, and replicating newly claimed expert knowledge of anti-formalist and thus inclusive views of writing. Of the 23 composition and rhetoric journals founded between 1950 and 1990, 14 were founded between 1972 and 1982 and 9 (a full 41% of the total) of those were founded between 1975 and 1980 (Goggin 36). Graduate programs in composition and rhetoric began to spring up across the country as the claims of compositionist expertise became further instantiated and implied the necessity of training a new wave of professionals in writing. As Strickland observes, "Of the sixty-five graduate programs listed in *Rhetoric Review*'s 1999 survey, only eight report founding dates before 1977 ('Doctoral

Programs'). During the four-year period 1977-1980, fourteen programs, or almost a quarter of all currently existing graduate programs in rhetoric and composition were founded" (Strickland 77). Among these fourteen were programs that would become prominent centers of composition and rhetoric such as Carnegie Mellon University's graduate program started in 1978 and Purdue University's which began that same year.

Since knowledge of the complexity of writing defined the expertise that justified the professional status of compositionists, that knowledge could not be seen to be the result of historically specific and rhetorically situated processes. The reforms and the turn to research that marked compositionist expertise had to be figured as the result of intellectual advances the knowledge of which distanced the expert instructor from the uninformed public. Expertise was "proven" through a narrowed historical perspective that obscured the role of post-industrialism and the literacy crisis by crafting Strickland's "heroic tale" in which compositionists drew from the latest developments of other disciplines to reject current-traditional rhetoric and take up the research focus that an increased understanding of writing's complexity demanded. The history of disciplinarity became the story of various geniuses whose discoveries advanced composition's development in the face of opposition from the less informed or politically conservative. In such a narrative, Emig's truly influential and insightful work became the sole source of the turn to research rather than a model compositionists took up to address the very real rhetorical exigence for research created by the literacy crisis. But if research conducted to understand and demonstrate the complexity of writing was the work of professional composition, then professional composition as a qualitatively distinct period began with figures like Emig "around 1971" as Crowley phrases it (??).

The appropriations of other research and theories from other disciplines in the 1960s were not efforts to find a disciplinary-specific knowledge base from which to teach the composing process but influences and early gropings toward the truth that pushed composition toward process.

But if the process era was the beginning of the profession, what came before was pre-professional and thus characterized entirely by the inexpert current-traditional perspectives that define lay perspectives on writing. Since instruction before process was pre-professional, it was current-traditionalist through and through. Such a binary historical view supports the idea of a distinct break with the past that in turn emphasizes anti-formalism and inclusive pedagogy as what it means to "do" composition professionally. That this professional model was a response to the literacy crisis would have far reaching implications that were themselves obscured by the binary master narrative that naturalized that model. As I hope to demonstrate in the coming chapters, by demanding a response that attended to the anxieties of those in power over the expanded access of post-industrial education, the literacy crisis set in motion the process by which a post-industrial gatekeeping mechanism would be established. That the professionalization of post-industrial anti-formalism and inclusive pedagogy was the response to the crisis meant that this model was to be integral to that process. The universalization of anti-formalism as politically inclusive would do more than obscure the origins of disciplinary composition. It would, as we will see, obscure its appropriation as a post-industrial selection mechanism and thereby ensure its development.

Chapter 3: The Contradiction of Post-Industrial Composition

In a book chapter entitled, "Writing at the Postsecondary Level" and penned in 2006, Russell Durst concludes a survey of the intellectual developments in composition of the last 20 years with a briefly stated but rather sweeping complaint about the discipline. Durst laments that, on the whole, composition as a field is failing to produce innovative intellectual activity, or, put more bluntly, "the field presently finds itself in something of a rut" (98). Durst describes that rut in part as the widespread agreement about the usefulness of process pedagogies arguing, "few compositionists seriously challenge the approaches put forward by writing process adherents in the 1970s and 1980s continuing to emphasize prewriting, revision, collaboration, conferencing, and critical reading" (98). For Durst, the danger in this broad agreement is that the field requires at least some dissensus in the face of a received orthodoxy for composition to remain innovative and, thus, important. The idea that writing is a process has become so widely accepted as the nature of writing and as a guiding principle for writing instruction that it has, according to Durst, actually stunted the development of new approaches to teaching and theorizing writing.

Paul Kei Matsuda has explained the enormous success of process pedagogies as the result of a rhetorical trope that Matsuda argues has determined how subsequent developments in composition have been successfully represented as advances in disciplinary knowledge. Matsuda argues in his essay "Process and Post-Process: A Discursive History" that the process movement's self-representation depended on asserting that "composition pedagogy before the process movement was methodologically monolithic" (68), characterized chiefly by its current-traditional focus

on students' written products and the enforcement of superficial correctness in writing. This reductive representation of pre-process composition instruction operated as "a caricature against which the process movement developed" (Matsuda 71). In this trope of caricature and opposition, the emergence of process in the 1970s was the moment of transformation from an older, misguided, and naïve approach to a methodologically sophisticated and theoretically informed understanding of writing and writing instruction. Opposed to current-traditionalism, Process represented itself as all that the caricature of current-traditional rhetoric was not. For Matsuda, this model of oversimplification and rejection evident in "the discursive construction of current-traditional rhetoric" (70) ensured the success of the process movement which in turn "served as an impetus for the development of composition studies" (70).

And as we saw in the previous chapter, the rhetorical construction of expertise in response to the literacy crisis of the mid-1970s required the kind of radical split between the process and pre-process eras such a caricature would support. A number of scholars and historians also agree with Matsuda that process advocates have generally worked hard to distinguish the process movement from previous writing instruction models by fashioning a reductive view of writing instruction in the pre-process era. Susan Miller has argued that, "'current-traditional rhetoric' or 'product' theory appears to have been created at the same time that process theory was, to help explain process as a theory pitted against old practices" (110). George Pullman agrees explaining that the current-traditional rhetoric against which the process era defined itself was not "a theory but was instead a shorthand and off-the-cuff way of alluding to the way the tradition of rhetoric was currently being purveyed in the Freshman Composition textbooks" of the

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time (22). By opposing itself to a time when there were allegedly "no other traditions, no other practices" (22) than current-traditional rhetoric, Process established itself as the first legitimate, concerted effort to think carefully about writing and writing instruction. According to Pullman, such oversimplification and opposition provided Process with its master narrative of the "triumph of compassion and empiricism [over the forces of] tradition and prejudice" (16). As I noted in chapter one, Phelps reads the myth of progress driving the binary master narrative of composition history as beginning with the process movement of the '70s.

Interestingly, Matsuda understands the rhetorical positioning of more recent theoretical and pedagogical developments in the field as informed by this rhetorical trope deployed with such success by Process advocates. This is especially true among supporters of post-process theories whom, Matsuda explains, have ironically begun to use the process movements' own rhetorical model against it (74). Post-process discourse, Matsuda explains through an analysis of claims made by John Trimbur and Thomas Kent, offers a reductive reading of process, associating it narrowly with cognitivist and expressivist views while claiming the terrain of "the social" for itself (Matsuda 73). Having so narrowly defined process, Kent, Trimbur, and others are able to use social aspects of composing to claim greater explanatory power for post-process approaches to writing. Thus, just as the process advocates opposed process pedagogies to an oversimplified view of pre-process composition as dominated by current-traditional rhetoric, so now post-process discourse "seems to be on its way to constructing its own narrative of transformation with process as the necessary caricature" (Matsuda 74). For Matsuda, then, the rhetorical trope created by process

continues to inform the rhetorical self-representations of more recent developments in writing pedagogy and theory.

Matsuda's discursive history thus provides an important critical perspective on the notion of intellectual progress underlying composition's development. But the explanatory possibilities of that history are limited by the form/content binary on which it operates. Certainly in Matsuda's account current-traditional rhetoric as the "content" of the caricature and process's empirical, theoretical, and pedagogical sophistication as that of the opposition are key to understanding the success of the process movement. For Matsuda, however, only the form of the model—the act of caricaturing and opposing the caricature—informs the rhetorical representation of new developments, not the opposition between current traditional rhetoric and anti-formalist pedagogy. The very success of the process movement that Durst laments is evident in Matsuda's own history in that Matsuda sees only the form of the trope influencing subsequent developments and not the content. Matsuda's history can only explain why post-process takes up the trope of caricature and opposition but not why the social approaches of process became the privileged terms in the post-process reconfiguration of that trope. In other words, a discursive history needs to consider the impact not only of the fact *that* process employed caricature and opposition, but also *what* it set up in opposition to that caricature and how that works with the trope of caricature and opposition to inform the subsequent direction of the field.

In this chapter, I will argue that the professional model of anti-formalism and leftist politics established in response to the literacy crisis has not only guided developments in the field since its establishment in the 1970s but has led

compositionists to define rhetoric and democratic inclusion in idealized, anti-foundationalist terms. To explain how these developments took place, I will first demonstrate how the professional model of anti-formalism and leftist inclusion created the rhetorical conditions that allowed social process advocates to assert the superiority of rhetorical approaches to process in the so-called "social turn" of the 1980s. This social turn led compositionists to equate rhetoric with anti-formalism making rhetoric the critical method of professional composition and the key to achieving the critical goal of inclusive pedagogy. Next I will show how the rhetoric employed by social process advocates to assert the superiority of the rhetorical approach demanded the expansion of the definition of formalism. The corresponding expansion of the definition of anti-formalism led, eventually, to anti-formalism becoming equated with anti-foundationalism and thus anti-foundationalism becoming figured as the means to accomplishing democratic pedagogy. The critical power of anti-foundationalist critique suggested just such a role for anti-foundationalist theories in professional composition, but also raised the problem of how to use anti-foundationalist critique to forward seemingly foundationalist political ideals. Faced with this challenge, composition theorists idealized inclusion by defining it in idealized terms—that is, as the exclusion of all exclusions—that seemed to link inclusion with an anti-foundationalist critique. While this idealization appeared to resolve the contradiction facing the rhetorical construction of professional composition, it did so only by displacing that contradiction onto individual instructors as an ethical mandate to include, but simultaneously exclude, any students who embraced discriminatory beliefs on a principled basis.

The Search for Professional Knowledge

The need for a definable set of basic principles to support compositionists'
claims to expertise pushed writing instructors to define their approaches in ever more
narrow terms. As we have seen, reformers in the 1960s had turned to a number of
different disciplines and traditions to locate a knowledge base on which to ground anti-
formalist composition pedagogies. The work of Bruner and Piaget had been major
influences laying the foundations for the cognitivist models of the composing process
that became prominent in the 1970s. Linguistics, including socio-linguistics and later
Noam Chomsky's transformational generative grammar had provided the researched
support for attending to a variety of student languages that anti-formalist pedagogies
necessitated. The "rhetorical revival" of the late 1950 and 1960s had demonstrated its
impact at the 1963 CCCC and in the work of such figures Edward P.J. Corbett, Wayne
Booth, and even Francis Christiansen. Among the most amenable of legitimizing
traditions for instructors working in English departments, however, was what came to
be called "expressivism," an approach to teaching writing that embraced humanistic and
literary traditions to define composing as a highly individual act dependent for its
success on the revelation of the authentic self through writing.

As embedded in traditional literary ideals as expressivism could appear to be, its
challenge to current-traditional rhetoric emerged from the shifting cultural and social
conditions of World War II that represented the forefront of the information age and the
communications course it spawned. The communications courses came about as part of
the interest in semantics and general education in the 1930s. These courses only became
a prominent feature of higher education, however, after World War II when the military

employed communications courses to train GIs to process and disseminate information effectively and as a means of accommodating the influx of veterans attending college on the GI Bills (George and Trimbur 683). The course's accessibility and communications instructor's willingness to employ "permissive," student-centered models appealed to the new demographic of student veterans and positioned the product-focus of first-year composition and its concerns with "correctness" as outmoded and ineffective. The communications movement proved so popular at its height that it eventually spawned "courses at over two hundred colleges and universities" (George and Trimbur 683). As a result, "By the late 1940s . . . the communications course was well positioned, and in more ways than one, to take on freshman English" (Heyda 666).

Their disciplinary territory threatened, English faculty began denouncing communications courses in the 1950s as crudely utilitarian and swayed by mass commercial culture. For composition instructors ensconced in the literary traditions of English, "the 'generation of communication' must have seemed to be the heralds of social utility and 'life adjustment' skills without the redeeming connection to language and literature sponsored by English studies" (George and Trimbur 688). English faculty opposed composition to communications as the site of complete individual development available only through the cultural refinement of an English-based view of writing as self-expression. As Kenneth Oliver argued in 1950, communications courses are insufficient because they attend only to the "*immediate social* purpose" (3) of language and ignore the "cultural uses of language—i.e., the expression of personal human experience via poetry, essay, fiction, or drama" (Oliver 3 qtd. in Heyda 672). Only

composition courses, housed in the traditional site of humanistic language study in the university, could provide the necessary instruction to help students defend themselves against the stultifying effects of the modern world's mass commercialization.

But if writing was to prevent the dehumanizing effects of mass communication by privileging the individual's voice, the standardized conformity imposed by current-traditional instruction and its demand that students write according to a prescriptive set of rules simply would not do. Writing instruction that would take up the liberal humanist traditions which in turn would protect first-year composition from being overrun by communications would need to focus on other aspects of writing to develop the student's personal expression. Diana George and John Trimbur note this anti-formalist strain in the expressivism of Ken Macrorie as it appears in a pair of articles from 1958 and 1961. George and Trimbur explain that when Macrorie articulates in 1961 "the dual doctrine of writing as epistemic ('writing not only reflects but generates thought') and as expressive ('You know who you are . . . in a special way from reading your thoughts on paper' [207]), we know we are now on the verge of the process movement . . ." (690). The expressivist approach emerging from the struggle with communications thus forwarded an understanding of writing that challenged formalism and linked that challenge, because of this same struggle, with the defense of the individual in the face of a commercially and politically conformist society.

Before the literacy crisis of the 1970s, expressivist pedagogies mingled with cognitivist process models and rhetorical approaches, often in the work of a single reformer. Gordon Rohman's work on pre-writing drew heavily from Jerome Bruner's cognitivist theories as part of an effort to help the individual student in the expressivist

project of self-actualization (108). Peter Elbow's "A Method for Teaching Writing" of 1968 embraced a view of writing centered on the effect of writing on its audience with an expressivist focus on the author's ability to fully represent his or her individual self through writing. Elbow proposed assessing student work according to "whether it produces the desired effect on the reader" (115). But for Elbow achieving this effect required communicating an authentic voice, leading Elbow to conclude that revealing the self through words "is a root quality of good writing and that we should try to teach it" (120). Even Emig's empirical study, while it relied heavily on cognitivist theories of creativity and imagination, combined cognitivist approaches with more expressivist views of writing in the expansion of writing from merely *extensive* practice to a *reflexive* one (Harris 58). After the crisis, the need to define expertise more narrowly according to a set of shared principles made the various appropriations seem increasingly incompatible and therefore more difficult to combine explicitly into an acceptable whole.

As a result of the need for a definable disciplinary knowledge, compositionists began engaging in a number of debates in the late 1970s and early '80s over the proper theoretical and methodological approaches to understanding and teaching the composing process. This appropriation of theories and research from other disciplines that marked the reforms of the 1960s had, by this time, led writing instructors to appropriate a number of perspectives amenable to the professional model erected as a response to the literacy crisis. As Fulkerson explains in his 1979 article "Four Philosophies of Composition" compositionists in the late 1970s embraced four basic approaches to writing. These included "expressive" (philosophies emphasizing the

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writer), "mimetic" (emphasizing correspondence of writing with reality), "rhetorical" (emphasizing the effect of writing on the reader), and "formalist" (emphasizing the internal characteristics of a given text) (343). Not surprisingly, given the emphasis on professionalization and the form it took in the wake of the literacy crisis, Fulkerson admits in 1979 that "formalists are hard to find these days" but that "adherents to the other three positions", all associated with process pedagogies, "are not" ("Four" 344). The developments of the 1970s had led compositionists to construct a model of professional composition that rendered current-traditional rhetoric unacceptable, at least as an explicitly articulated pedagogical approach, and, coupled with the effort to create a post-industrial method of writing instruction of the '60s, had narrowed an acceptable view of writing to some form of one of the other three philosophies.

The defining approach of disciplinary composition would narrow further by the end of the 1980s with the so-called "social turn" in composition, the emphasis on the exogenous aspects of writing as a social practice that paralleled the continued development of the discipline in the '80s. In a 1990 follow-up piece to his 1979 article, Fulkerson explains that despite the lack of "shared axiological presumptions" that characterized composition in 1979, "Composition Studies now shows the emergence of a significant consensus: the widely-held position today is a rhetorical axiology" ("Composition" 411). By the end of the 1980s, compositionists had come to explain composing—at least in the scholarship and journals privileged by the discipline—as a chiefly rhetorical phenomenon dependent primarily on audience for its success. As Fulkerson describes the general view of compositionists at the time, "Good writing, the sort of writing that we hope to enable students to produce, is contextually adapted to,

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perhaps even controlled by, its audience (discourse community), addressed or invoked, or both" ("Composition" 417). Fulkerson is quick to note, however, the historical nature of this development. He writes, "The importance of audience may now seem *obvious* to us" but "A concern for audience was not standard in composition scholarship or textbooks a decade ago" (416). The turn away from "self-expression, discovery, and actualization . . . [or] . . . the acontextualism of formalist rules" ("Composition" 416) were part of a historically and rhetorically situated process. Tracing the major developments of that situated process reveals that the professional model of composition that developed in response to the needs of an emerging post-industrialism—that is, an anti-formalist method combined with an inclusive educational politics—created the rhetorical conditions that allowed the consensus regarding a rhetorical axiology to emerge.

Even as early as 1979 the dominance of cognitivism was slipping in composition in the face of the rhetorical axiology. The landmark cognitivist process essays that would influence the articulation of composition theory and pedagogy among the mainstream of compositionists were finished by the mid-1980s. Fulkerson notes the increasing prominence of the rhetorical perspective noting that "In almost any issue of *College Composition and Communication*, several writers espouse the fourth philosophy, the rhetorical one" ("Four" 346). As I noted in chapter two, the CCCC had resolved in 1963 that rhetoric should be the foundation of first-year writing instruction. In addition, rhetoric had a longstanding tradition that reached back to the beginnings of Western culture allowing it to impart legitimacy to composition in a kind of reflected glory. Cognitivism employed the rhetorically powerful discourse of science but as the

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debate between Lauer and Bertfhoff demonstrates, its prominence in the mid-1970s was an uneasy one with few humanities-trained writing instructors comfortable with its jargon and methods. The effort to define composition as a distinct discipline made the use of expressivism, indebted as it was to literary traditions, potentially damaging to the standing of composition in relation to literature within English departments. Rhetoric was, then, already widely touted by composition instructors at the time.

Within the context of the established professional model, any of the four philosophies that would serve to circumscribe the boundaries of disciplinary knowledge would necessarily have to reflect the anti-formalism and generally leftist politics that defined that knowledge. If composition possessed such a knowledge, which the rhetoric of professionalization demanded it to possess, one of the privileged philosophies would embody that expertise most clearly. Another way to think of this prospect was that those philosophies that were not the defining knowledge of composition would of necessity exhibit current-traditional views of writing, support conservative politics, or both. That expressivist, cognitivist, and rhetorical, or social, process perspectives all favored a rejection of the current-traditional focus on superficial correctness meant the effort to define composition's basic principles involved locating and revealing the current-traditionalism hidden in a particular approach. Because professional composition was defined by its anti-formalism and inclusive politics, demonstrating the retention of current-traditional or conservative tendencies in one of the philosophies amounted to demonstrating that that philosophy lay outside the acceptable boundaries of expert knowledge in composition. While rhetoric was already an important grounding for the discipline, the professional model of composition created the conditions that allowed

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the rhetorical axiology to emerge as dominant and for the social turn to take place by providing a shared standard among compositionists with which social process advocates could effectively critique expressivist and cognitivist approaches as existing outside of professional composition.

Professional Composition and the Social Turn

The impact of composition's newly established professional model is evident in many of the texts that were most influential in driving the turn to a social perspective on composing. These texts typically defined anti-formalism itself as a rhetorical approach to composing by framing other prominent models as latently current-traditionalist because they ignored some aspect of writing's complexity to which rhetorical views attended. To connect current-traditional rhetoric with expressivist or cognitivist process models and thereby eliminate expressivism or cognitivism from the domain of professional composition, many social process advocates had to expand the definition of current-traditionalist formalism so that it could be more easily aligned with expressivism and cognitivism. As a result, many social process scholars framed expressivism and cognitivism in reductive ways that made connections with current-traditional rhetoric easier to construct rhetorically.

Richard Young's influential 1978 book chapter, "Paradigms and Problems: Needed Research in Rhetorical Invention" employs the standard of professional composition to denounce expressivism by linking expressivism directly to current-traditional rhetoric. Young begins his critique lamenting that the use of current-traditional rhetoric remains a dominant force in teaching writing. Borrowing the term from Daniel Fogarty's 1959 book *Roots for a New Rhetoric*, Young describes the "overt

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features" of current-traditionalism as:

> the emphasis on the composed product rather than the composing process; the analysis of discourse into words, sentences, and paragraphs; the classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument; the strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, punctuation) and with style (economy, clarity, emphasis); the preoccupation with the informal essay and the research paper, and so on. (398)[16]

These features expressly represent the form of writing that Macrorie and other expressivists directly opposed for its stifling structure and lack of individuality. Young's characterization of current-traditional rhetoric amounts, then, to an admission that expressivism appears anti-formalist. Expressivist ideas, as developed in the work of Macrorie, Elbow, Donald Murray, and others had played a key role in denouncing the very formalist pedagogies that Young describes precisely because those pedagogies had not allowed for the full expression of the individuality of the writer that made writing effective.

The formalism of the expressivist perspective lay, then, in less obvious assumptions it shared with current-traditional rhetoric about invention. Departing from Fogarty's view of current-traditional rhetoric as Aristotelian in its assumptions, Young figures current-traditional rhetoric as defined primarily by its adherence to informal inventional procedures (Hawk 23). After equating vitalism and expressivism, Young draws a direct connection between vitalism and current-traditional rhetoric arguing that "Vitalism, with its stress on the natural powers of the mind and the uniqueness of the creative act, leads to a repudiation of the possibility of teaching the composing process, hence the tendency of current-traditional rhetoric to become a critical study of the products of composing and an art of editing" (??). In other words, the product-focus of

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[16] While Fogarty is recognized as coining the term current-traditional rhetoric, Young's essay popularized the term and thereby helped establish the notion of a binary history of the field.

current-traditional rhetoric was the result of an expressivist view of invention as the result of unteachable genius. As a result, neither current-traditional rhetoric nor the more explicit version of expressivism could theorize invention as part of the composing process.

This reality framed expressivism as incapable of participating in the process revolution and thus as serving as a form of expert writing instruction. Drawing from Thomas Kuhn's notion of paradigm shifts, Young figures invention as a paradigmatic problem developing in the "normal science" of traditional writing instruction. Because of current-traditionalism's informal approach to invention, invention itself becomes "a fundamental educational problem for which current-traditional rhetoric offers no solution" (400). The linking of expressivism and current-traditional rhetoric makes invention the problem with current-traditionalism because theorizing invention is precisely what expressivism as the pedagogy of romantic genius cannot do. In Young's view, then, the return of invention as a recognized component of written composition drives the turn toward process pedagogy since only process pedagogy can allow invention to emerge fully into its own:

> It is no accident that the shift in attention from composed product to the composing process is occurring at the same time as the reemergence of invention as a rhetorical discipline. Invention requires a process view of rhetoric; and if the composing process is to be taught, rather than left to the student to be learned, arts associated with the various stages of the process are necessary. (401)

Young's rhetoric draws on the process movement's allegedly scientifically superior formal theorizing about composing over alleged mystical, superstitious lore of current-traditionalism but in doing so figures current-traditional rhetoric as informal and process as formal (Hawk 25). Young's redefinition of current-traditional rhetoric

"reveals" the formalist assumptions of expressivism which prevent it from attending to the full complexity of the composing process and demonstrate expressivism's inability to serve as an expert form of writing instruction.

Young's highly rhetorical characterization of current-traditional rhetoric and his framing of invention as the source of the turn to process not only naturalizes process as an intellectual advance but rhetoric, which accommodates invention, as the source of process pedagogy. Byron Hawk notes the interested position from which discusses expressivism arguing that "Young needed classical rhetoric as an authoritative basis for the discipline" (25). As Hawk himself points out, this rhetorical positioning has been repeated a number of times when influential composition scholars and historians have "worked to find a solid basis for rhetoric and composition's disciplinary status and generally did so at the expense of some scapegoat category, whether it is characterized as current-traditional rhetoric, literature, romanticism, expressivism, vitalism, or articulated in some amalgamation of these discourses" (Hawk 16). All of these scapegoats have been rendered such through an association with either the conservative politics or current-traditional practices (or both) positioned beyond the limits of the process-composition model. As we will see, social compositionists became adept at expanding and fluidly defining the central characteristic of other process models in order to position these other models as extra-compositional.

Social process advocates were also able to deploy this model successfully to critique cognitivist theories of process as well. Patricia Bizzell famously terms these cognitivist models "inner-directed" theories which she distinguishes from more rhetorically-based, "outer-directed" perspectives on the composing process. Bizzell's

critique of "inner-directed" cognitivist approaches such as those favored by Flower and Hayes relies heavily on demonstrating the misalignment of these theories with the professional model of composition. While inner-directed approaches emphasize the composing process, their efforts to stabilize and universalize that process fail to address the full complexity of writing leading to current-traditional classroom practices. As Bizzell explains them, inner-directed theories typically figure the use of language in specific situations "as out-growths of individual capacities" ("Cognition" 77) leading inner-directed theorists to figure individual language capacities, experience with a particular language, social and cultural conditions of language use, and engagement of specific writing situations as "isomorphic" or all operating on "the same basic logical structures" ("Cognition" 77). From such a perspective, "the basic structure of the language cannot change from location to location because this structure is isomorphic with the innate mental structures that enabled one to learn a language, and hence presumably universal and independent of lexical choice" (Bizzell "Cognition" 77). Cognitivist views of the composing process stabilize the process of writing by situating it wholly within the individual and aligning it with unchanging cognitive structures.

Inner-directed cognitivist theories, then, reduce the complexity of writing by ignoring the shifting rhetorical conditions of the social and political context that makes writing a complex act, as Lloyd-Jones had made clear in his Chair's address.[17] While cognitivist theories attend to the impact of audience, "The changes made to accommodate an audience, however, are not seen as substantially altering the meaning

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[17] David Bartholomae's important 1985 essay "Inventing the University" offers a very similar critique of the work of Linda Flower as does Marilyn Cooper's 1986 piece, "The Ecology of Writing." Flower herself has been convinced enough of these critiques that she has turned toward a more socially-informed model of composing as she explains in her 2008 book *Community Literacy and the Rhetoric of Public Engagement*.

of the piece of writing because that is based on the underlying structure of thought and language" (Bizzell "Cognition" 79). This lack of complexity reduces also the function of writing, making writing secondary to the act of thinking; "Writing does not so much contribute to thinking as provide an occasion for thinking—or, more precisely, a substrate upon which thinking can grow" ("Cognition" 85). By universalizing the cognitive structures of the writing process, inner-directed theories "assume that although each writing task will have its own environment of purposes and constraints, the mental activity involved in juggling these constraints while moving to accomplish one's purposes does not change from task to task" ("Cognition" 82). The universalization and stabilization cognitivist theories impose on the writing process reduce the complexity of writing to a single effort to help students develop their innate capacities for language use.

As anti-formalist pedagogies depend upon and demonstrate the full complexity of writing, the simplicity of writing in cognitivist models promotes a formalist approach to teaching. Because writing as an expression of thinking is only a matter of lexical choice, teaching students to write becomes little more than teaching the basics. Bizzell writes, "Writing does not so much contribute to thinking as provide an occasion for thinking—or, more precisely, a substrate upon which thinking can grow. Beyond minor matters of spelling, diction, and so on, we do not have to worry about how students are going to find out about the features of written language because these are already innate" ("Cognition" 85). But the link between cognitive structures and language use suggests particular language forms reflect a more developed capacity to use language rather than a response to the expectations of a particular discourse community. In their

efforts to focus on teaching a particular set of discourse conventions, "some inner-directed theorists treat one set of lexical choices as better able than others to make language embody the innate structures. Insofar as these better choices fall into the patterns of, for example, a 'standard' form of a native tongue, they make the standard intellectually superior to other forms" ("Cognition" 77). Because of their overly simplistic understandings of writing, cognitivist views of the composing process result in current-traditional practices of teaching the "basics" of Standard English. In other words, cognitivist models are forms of inexpert instruction.

Bizzell's challenge to cognitivist models of composing reveals much about the demise of the use of sentence combining. According to inner-directed theories, to improve students' cognitive abilities with language, instructors need only provide students with "patterns of correct syntax, which we can then ask students to practice until they internalize the patterns. Sentence-combining exercises offer such pattern practice" (78-9). Robert Connors has convincingly explained how once popular sentence combining pedagogies were discredited precisely because of their inherently formal nature that connected them too directly with more traditional pedagogies associated with current-traditional rhetoric. Tracing the development of sentence combining pedagogies back to the New Rhetoric of the early 1960s, Connors notes that scholarship in the field's major journals and at conferences demonstrates that interest in sentence combining reached a peak in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Several studies revealed that sentence combining improved student writing in the eyes of teachers and other academics not only at the sentence and paragraph level, but in more global aspects like the structure and logic of arguments. Despite the apparent successes of sentence-

combining, "After the mid-1980s, the sentence rhetoric of the 1960s and 1970s were gone, at least from books and journals" (108). The dates that mark the beginning and end of sentence combining are significant as they mark the period of transition from formalist to axiologically diverse anti-formalism, to the consolidation of anti-formalism under the banner of social process.

Not surprisingly, the primary difficulty that seems to have undone sentence combining was the field's anti-formalism. For those opposed to sentence combining "The first and most obvious of the lines of criticism that would engulf sentence rhetorics was what we might call anti-formalism—the idea that a pedagogy based in form rather than in content was automatically suspect" (Connors "Erasure" 110). The exercise-based nature of sentence combining pedagogy linked it too directly to "the old workbook 'drill and kill' exercises that had stultified students since the 1920s" as set of approaches that faced an established resentment "against all pedagogies based in the older ideas of exercises as 'mental discipline'" (115). Developing students' fluency with formal features through imitation exercises harkened back to pre-process pedagogy. The support sentence combining advocates drew from behaviorist psychology and its emphasis on unconscious imitation disturbed expressivists and only strengthened its links with current-traditional rhetoric's alleged rote learning of superficial correctness. The greatest challenge sentence pedagogies faced was, thus, "The great difference between the early New Rhetoric of the 1960s and 1970s [that had helped spawn sentence combining] and the work that came after it" between "the New-Rhetoric acceptance of atomistic formal levels up until the late 1970s and the later rejection of them" (Connors 110). Sentence combining had emerged before the establishment of the

new model of process-composition had come into its own and only survived as long as it did in the new post-process environment by trading on the allegedly empirical revolution created by the Process movement. As the model of process-composition was redefined and increasingly narrowed, sentence combining was doomed.

In his 1988 article, "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Classroom" Berlin similarly positions cognitive and expressive process models as unprofessional by linking them with the reductive views of writing favored in current-traditional rhetoric. For Berlin, though, the connection with current-traditional pedagogy is exhibited through a shared ideological alignment with the oppressive status quo. In his discussion of cognitivist models of process, Berlin wastes little time positioning cognitive rhetoric as inexpert by asserting that "Cognitive rhetoric might be considered the heir apparent of current-traditional rhetoric . . ." (480). Berlin is able to make this claim by defining current-traditional rhetoric—in an interesting counter to Young's view—by its "positivistic epistemology, its pretensions to scientific precision, and its managerial orientation" (480). Cognitive rhetoric makes "similar claims to being scientific" (480) and in so doing naturalizes existing conditions, figuring "obstacles to achieving these goals are labelled 'problems,' disruptions to the natural order, impediment that must be removed" (Berlin 482). This positivistic perspective prevents any critical assessment of the individual's writing goals instead emphasizing the pursuit of those goals through a managerial problem-solving approach. The ideology employed by cognitive rhetoric aligns directly with the ideology of an oppressive corporate America. With its uncritical approach to the alleged "problems" of writing cognitive rhetoric assures "the pursuit of self-evident and unquestioned profit-making goals in the composing process" that

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parallel "the pursuit of self-evident and unquestioned profit-making goals in the corporate market places" (483). The impossibility of critical self-appraisal reflects the formalism latent in cognitive rhetoric leading cognitive models to inevitably support an oppressive status quo.

What Berlin terms "expressionistic rhetoric" appears, on its face, to resist this status quo, but ultimately embraces an ideology that supports existing corporate structures. While expressionistic rhetoric opposes "in no uncertain terms the scientism of current-traditional rhetoric and the ideology it encourages" (Berlin 487), the extreme individualism of its underlying assumptions makes it "easily co-opted by the very capitalist forces it opposes" (Berlin 487). From the perspective of expressionistic rhetoric "power within society ought always to be vested in the individual" (Berlin 485) meaning that "the correct response to the imposition of current economic, political, and social arrangements is thus resistance, but a resistance that is always constructed on individual terms" (Berlin 487). This view not only limits the possibilities for "gestures genuinely threatening to the establishment" (Berlin 487) but makes expressionistic rhetoric all too easily available "to reinforce the entrepreneurial virtues capitalism most values: individualism, private initiative, the confidence for risk taking, the right to be contentious with authority (especially the state)" (487). As a result, expressionistic rhetoric naturalizes the success of individual elites who, Berlin claims, "see their lives as embodying the creative realization of the self, exploiting the material, social, and political conditions of the world in order to assert a private vision, a vision which, despite its uniqueness, finally represents humankind's best nature" (487). The critical

limitations of expressivism prevents it from actually challenging the capitalist system it hopes to resist and, in many ways, actually supports that system.

The lack of critical capacity and alignment with capitalist ideology that it engenders in cognitive and expressive models is not simply a political problem, but reflects the reductive, inexpert nature of these models. In the logic of composition's professional model—and Berlin's perspective—a complex understanding of writing demonstrates the critically resistant character that marks it as distinct from current-traditional rhetoric, that is, as anti-formalist. As a result, the ways in which a rhetorical approach attends to the contextualized, epistemic aspects of writing supports a truly critical, and thus anti-formalist, understanding. For such an approach, which Berlin calls "social-epistemic rhetoric," "the real is located in a relationship that involves the dialectical interaction of the observer, the discourse community (social group) in which the observer is functioning, and the material conditions of existence" (Berlin 488). Knowledge exists as the dialectic of all three of these elements which is, in turn, "grounded in language" (Berlin 488). The situated character of language and writing revealed by social-epistemic rhetoric means that knowledge is "an area of ideological conflict: there are no arguments from transcendent truth since all arguments arise in ideology" (Berlin 489). As a result, questions of truth "must be continually decided by all and for all in a way appropriate to our own historical moment" (Berlin 490). The complex nature of writing and its recognition demonstrates that particular rhetorical structures are the result of power enacted in exclusionary fashion to privilege an elite few. A socially-situated, rhetorical approach to writing "thus offers an explicit critique of economic, political, and social arrangements" (Berlin 490) and thereby "inevitably

supports economic, social, political, and cultural democracy" (Berlin 490). A complex perspective on writing attends, then, to the constructed nature of reality and thereby makes reality available for critique which cognitive, expressive, and current-traditional rhetorics fail to do. The ideology they support links cognitive and expressive rhetorics with current-traditional formalism by revealing the reductive views of writing they share.

The social turn, then, was as much an affirmation of post-industrial composition as it was a collective realization of the inherent superiority of a rhetorical model of the writing process. But by affirming the professional model through a turn toward a more rhetorical axiology, the social turn equated rhetoric with professional composition's expert critical method of anti-formalism. A truly anti-formalist approach was a rhetorical approach, it seemed, and so expert writing instruction was rhetorically-based writing instruction. This explains Durst's other complaint about the rut composition is in—the overwhelming consensus regarding the social turn that "composition specialists largely have accepted . . . regularly organizing courses around (and publishing works on) topics of political and cultural import and linking their course with service and community work" (98). The results could hardly have been otherwise once social process advocates were able to define anti-formalism as a rhetorical axiology dragging the assumed connection with more inclusive, socially just politics along with it. Expressivist and cognitivist process models might linger in particular teaching methods or individual understandings of the writing process, by 1990 neither could be asserted as the basis for a legitimate writing pedagogy.

Expanding Anti-formalism, Explaining Rhetoric

We can begin, then, to flesh out the model Matsuda sees as established by the process movement but continuing to inform the rhetorical positioning of subsequent movements in the field. The caricature process fashioned in creating current-traditional rhetoric as a theoretical entity was an exaggerated rendering of a monolithic and uniformly applied focus on the formal features of textual products, a focus process advocates linked implicitly with inexpert instruction and conservative politics. What process advocates opposed to this model was an anti-formalist approach understood as attendant to the complexity of writing and thus resistant to the social and educational status quo. This professional model would continue to be redefined and narrowed as it was deployed to rhetorically position expressivism and cognitivism as providing insufficiently complex views of writing and therefore characterized as inexpert instruction. The "social turn" in composition saw composition scholars such as Young, Bizzell, and Berlin distinguishing social process models by linking cognitivist and expressivist models of process with features of formalization—particularly assumptions about authors and the writing process—that social process advocates claimed were shared by current-traditional rhetoric. Post-process discourse, Matsuda explains through an analysis of claims made by John Trimbur and Thomas Kent, has claimed the terrain of "the social" for itself while narrowly equating "process" pedagogies and theories strictly with cognitivist or expressivist views (Matsuda 74).

Given the success of social process critiques of cognitivism and expressivism, the caricature of process as associated with these devalued approaches amounts to an attempt by post-process advocates to position process itself as inexpert and uninformed.

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While post-process arguments draw on a variety of theories and arguments not forwarded by process advocates, post-process advocates seek the available rhetorical high ground by linking their position with social perspectives on process that have been widely-accepted as reflecting the anti-formalism and leftist politics that define professional composition. Thus, just as the process movement opposed itself to an oversimplified view of the field when it was dominated by current-traditional rhetoric, so now post-process discourse "seems to be on its way to constructing its own narrative of transformation with process as the necessary caricature" (Matsuda 74). But that caricature is rhetorically effective because it links the opposed theory to a formalist tradition to which the true model of composition is itself opposed. Recognizing the existence and nature of this model of true composition allows us to begin to answer the question of how the process rhetorical model is able to shape the rhetorical positioning of subsequent movements in the field.

But the effort to denounce expressivist and cognitivist approaches to process as formalist on which so much of social process rhetoric relied required constantly expanding the definition of formalism to make connections between seemingly anti-formalist perspectives and inexpert current-traditional rhetoric persuasive. The focus on superficial features of mechanical correctness that Young describes as the "overt" feature of current-traditional rhetoric is opposed by expressivist pedagogies as much as it is challenged by rhetorically based models. Rhetorically positioning expressivism outside of professional composition demands refiguring formalism in a more generalized fashion than simply a pedagogical emphasis on students' written products. Young can only link expressivism to current-traditional formalism by defining

formalism in more expansive terms such as the inability to theorize invention. Likewise Bizzell's association of cognitivism with formalism requires defining current-traditional practices as a denial of the social, or outer-directed, aspects of writing. The consistent redefinition of formalism implied a corresponding redefinition of anti-formalism as well. By the time Berlin critiques expressivism and cognitvism in the late 80s, anti-formalism was critical self-appraisal evident in an ideological commitment to resisting existing capitalist structures.

The assumed connection between anti-formalism and leftist politics at work in composition's professional model meant that each expansion of anti-formalism—or each new iteration of rhetoric—was a more democratic and socially just approach. Joseph Petraglia's discussion of social constructionist theory in composition provides an example of how developments converged in new intellectual movements in the field. Petraglia describes social constructionism as "a counterbalance, to a field that has for too long accentuated the role of the individual writer and ignored the social forces that shape the writer's perception of reality" (Petraglia 51). Instead, social constructionism embraces a rhetorical, or anti-formalist view focusing "on the ways in which the audience (that is, the community) shapes the discourse of its members" (97). The anti-formalism of social constructionism provides a means of addressing the full complexity of writing that frames composition in the familiar terms of post-industrial writing. The epistemic powers granted to rhetoric through social constructionism emphasize the post-industrial character of composition as a discipline employing rhetoric as its expert knowledge. If reality is constructed through social interaction, then rhetoric becomes not only the means of knowledge organization and dissemination, but of creating reality

itself. As a result, "The appreciation of rhetoric as a foundational discipline, critical for understanding any other academic enterprise, is thus a recurring theme in much constructionist literature, especially in English studies and rhetoric" (Petraglia 99). Social constructionism's anti-formalist bent suggests it as a means of fully capturing the complexity of writing, eliminating any formalist possibilities in the teaching of writing.

The anti-formalist qualities of social constructionism, reflecting as they do the basic assumptions of composition's claims to professional status, generally prevent critiques from being levelled at social constructionism. Petraglia notes the widespread and "uncritical" acceptance of social constructionists by compositionists, characterizing the deployment of social constructionism in the field as "a closed dialogue" that at once overlooks the "criticisms and controversies surrounding 'social construction'" (95) while attempting to "downplay or ignore a wealth of critical thought available in related disciplines—speech communications and social psychology in particular" (95). These limited challenges to constructionism result, in large part, from the connection between social construction as an advance in the anti-formalist critical method of professional composition and the leftist politics such an advance is assumed to support. Petraglia observes that social constructionism "has often been construed in such a way as to give further impetus to a political agenda, common in contemporary English departments, that centers on issues of social justice and empowerment even though there is little in constructionist theory itself that suggest a moral or political stance" (Petraglia 51). As a result, any "call for a review or for a reframing" of social construction "becomes associated (unnecessarily) with a repudiation of those values" (Petraglia 52). While Petraglia characterizes the linkage between social constructionist theory and progressive

politics as logically unnecessary, the model of true composition makes that linkage

rhetorically necessary for the use of social constructionism in the field of composition.

But the connections between anti-formalism and rhetoric framed the turn to

process and the rejection of rhetoric as a result, historically, of the re-emergence or

return of rhetoric. This not only supported the sense of binary history that would come

to dominate composition's history, it suggested the social turn's methods were

themselves a model for what came after. As Anderson notes, narratives of return like

that supported by the social turn "often entail some pivotal event that enables the return,

perhaps a psychological epiphany or transformation" which in turn acts as "a moment

of self-recognition, of coming into one's own, of finding one's *true* self" ("Property"

451). A "*true* self" as Anderson goes on to observe, implies a proper role, a distinct way

of doing things that conforms to one's authentic inner character and function

("Property" 451). Part of that function and inner character was the self-critical view of

composition that the social turn's methods exemplified. There was as Joseph Harris

points out, "a shift in the 1980s toward historical and meta-critical work in

composition" driven by the work of prominent social process advocates (128).

Appropriations that supported that self-critique, such as classical rhetoric, linguistics,

reader-response theory, or social construction philosophy, were typically associated, as

Petraglia shows, with the goals of professional composition. Additionally, with growing

consensus shaping reception, appropriations of theories that seemed to ensure anti-

formalist perspectives on writing began to be implemented more quickly and on a

broader scale by writing instructors. Lee O'Dell has described this aspect of the field

development, arguing that compositionists engage in "serial monogamy. We embrace

one conceptual framework, then, another, and then another, each time talking as though we have indeed found the love of our professional lives" (152-3). As is common with new loves, the flaws or difficulties new appropriations created for composition were not always apparent from the start.

Continuing insecurity over the demonstration of expertise in writing instruction drove continued expansions of the definition of anti-formalism and with it rhetoric and the means for achieving an inclusive writing pedagogy. By 1992 Sharon Crowley was critiquing process itself in ways that demonstrated these developments in practice. Predictably, Crowley's challenges process on the grounds that process pedagogy is simply a new form of current-traditional rhetoric. Such a claim would seem a hard sell to compositionists who had challenged current-traditional rhetoric on a number of process-based assumptions and then seen the process movement further developed into a seemingly unassailable rhetorical approach to writing instruction. Crowley herself admits the differences between process pedagogy and current-traditional rhetoric by noting the affective distinctions between teaching the composing process instead of the finished product. Crowley writes, "With the advent of process pedagogy the classroom truly was a more interesting place to be . . . [and] was also much more interesting to think about than it had been prior to the advent of process . . ." ("Composition" 190). The key to this improvement was indeed the emphasis of the composing process in writing instruction over the written product, but it was an emphasis that obscured the connections between the two.

As with expressivist and cognitivist models of process, the formalist tendencies of process were lurking beneath the surface and required a new definition of current-

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traditional rhetoric to draw them out. For Crowley, current-traditional rhetoric operates on modernist foundationalisms chief of which is the coherent self, existing prior to discourse and in complete control of that discourse. It is this assumption that process pedagogy fails to address and so leads process to enact current-traditional rhetoric despite its ostensible rejection of formalist pedagogy. As Crowley argues, process pedagogy "retains the modernist composing subject of current-traditionalism—the subject who is sufficiently discrete from the composing context to stand apart from it, observing it from above and commenting upon it" (213). The modernist belief in an essentialist, coherent subject limits the recognition of the full complexity of writing and so prevents process pedagogy from escaping the pull of current-traditional rhetoric. Crowley notes, "The easy accommodation of process-oriented strategies to current-traditionalism suggests that process and product have more in common than is generally acknowledged in professional literature about composition, where the habit of contrasting them conceals the fact of their epistemological consistency" (212). Crowley's critique thus rejects process on the very model by which process rejects current-traditional rhetoric. But this rejection depends on defining anti-formalism—and thus rhetoric—as anti-foundationalist. Foundationalist beliefs, then, become a mark of an oppressive pedagogy[18].

A number of prominent figures in composition took up similar critiques of the field itself for its reliance on foundationalist or modernist principles in crafting theories of composing and pedagogies for teaching writing. Lester Faigley's *Fragments of*

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[18] As early as 1977 Crowley had argued in an article entitled "Of Gorgias and Grammatology" that the basic tenets of sophistic rhetoric and post-structuralist theory align in many respects. This perspective was not widely taken up, however, until the late 1980s and 1990s. Certainly the critical power and left-oriented politics of many post-structuralist and postmodernist theories made such anti-foundationalist perspectives perfect for appropriation into the burgeoning project of self-critique in composition.

Rationality: Postmodernity and the Subject of Composition, Bizzell's "Foundationalism and Anti-Foundationalism in Composition Studies," Crowley's *Methodical Memory: Invention in Current-Traditional Rhetoric*, Victor Vitanza's "Three Countertheses: Or a Critical In(ter)vention into Composition Theories and Pedagogies," Lynn Worsham's "Going Postal: Pedagogic Violence and the Schooling of Emotion," and a number of others including the aforementioned work by Thomas Kent on post-process have critiqued composition for its perpetuation of modernist foundationalisms and have advanced an anti-foundationalist perspective on rhetoric, often as a means of supporting the critical work necessary to ensure social change. The continued insecurity over composition's professional status that the continuous honing of self-critique represents has made the critical power of anti-foundationalism as welcome addition to the toolbox of compositionists working to ferret out the vestiges of formalism hiding in the latest theories or pedagogies.

Anti-foundationalism as a general rejection of essentialist or modernist claims to transcendent truth has consequently enjoyed widespread and rapid acceptance. David Smit commenting on the "sheer onesidedness of the argument" in support of anti-foundationalism in contemporary composition studies discourse, explains that "scholars in composition and rhetoric are overwhelmingly anti-foundationalist" (134). For Smit the lack of "any organized or serious opposition" (135) to anti-foundationalism from composition scholars is odd given critiques of anti-foundationalism in related fields such as communications and philosophy and anti-foundationalism's "many conceptual problems" (135). One of those conceptual problems facing compositionists' wide adoption of anti-foundationalism is the pressure it puts on the critical goals of the

profession. The forms of inclusion and leftist politics of the sixties and early seventies

on which much of composition's professional ethics are based derived from

foundationalist concepts that were themselves potentially dissolved by the caustic

critical power of the very theories compositionists were turning to advance these ideals.

As Fleming explains, ". . . even the most radical political and cultural movements of the

1960s were thoroughly dependent on classically *modern* narratives of freedom, truth,

and enlightenment" ("Form" 124-5). Within the discourse of composition's professional

model, each expansion of the definition of anti-formalism had necessarily advanced

inclusive politics, but with the turn to anti-foundationalism the critical method of

professional composition came into direct conflict with its critical goal.

Contradiction and Idealization

The turn to anti-foundationalism, then, was as much of a problem as it was a

solution for composition's self-critical impulses. The deep-seated formalism—in the

form of foundationalist principles—that anti-foundationalism revealed in composition

suggested its usefulness in explaining the full complexity of writing, but its critical

reach brought the critical goal of professional composition itself under critique. An anti-

foundationalist critical method threatened the very heart of composition's professional

identity even as it seemed to ensure its perpetuation. The connection between anti-

formalism, however defined, and inclusive leftist politics undergirding composition's

professional identity had been sufficiently naturalized in the discourse of the field to

prevent any suggestion that either anti-foundationalism or inclusion should be set aside.

The myth of intellectual progress on which the field's development and self-

representation were based suggested that these two seemingly conflicting concepts were

simply that, only apparently in conflict. The various means of attempting to bring them together would have a significant impact on composition's continued development, its instructors, and its students.

James Berlin's pedagogy provides a prime example of how this problem affected composition and what its ultimate effects were. As described in his posthumously published work *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures: Refiguring College English Studies*, Berlin's pedagogical approach relies heavily on anti-foundationalist critique. Drawing from Paul Smith's work that itself borrows from Luce Irigaray and Julia Kristeva, Berlin views his application of social-epistemic rhetoric to the social justice goals of composition instruction as reliant on the "contradictory complex of which subject formations are made" ("Poetics" 73) as a means of creating space for a dialectic among subject positions out of which "emerges the possibility of political action" ("Poetics" 74). As Berlin notes in his application of post-structuralist thought to his pedagogy, "the subject is not the source and origin of [speaking and acting] but is finally their product. This means that each of us is formed by the various discourses and sign systems that surround us" ("Poetics" 65-6). The social constructivist sources of Berlin's pedagogy demand a view of the student subject of the composition classroom as fragmented and multiple. The post-structuralist effort to destabilize the individual subject is as much at the heart of Berlin's pedagogical project and for Berlin this allows for the larger effort of challenging existing socio-political conditions that challenge the status quo.

Berlin details two course plans: the first he calls "Codes and Critiques" ("Poetics" 124) and the second he titles "The Discourse of Revolution" ("Poetics" 140).

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"Codes and Critiques" draws on sources from popular culture as a means of examining the cultural codes at work in cultural expressions. Two examples Berlin employs are the television sitcom *Family Ties*, a show that Berlin notes "prospered during the 1980s when economic success for those at the upper income levels was a reality" ("Poetics" 130), and the T.V. show *Roseanne*, produced during a time of even more "glaring disproportions" (Berlin "Poetics" 130) in wealth distribution.[19] Berlin's choices are deliberately dated in order to grant his students some cultural distance from both examples and to ensure that both examples reveal subtle yet observable differences in the cultural codes they employ allowing for a historicized and deconstructive reading of each. These codes are demonstrated to depend on eliding the contradictions that lie at the heart of the ideology they express. For example, Berlin notes that he leads students to discuss how "in the ingratiating actor Michael J. Fox's hands, ruthlessness [in the character Alex] is made charming" ("Poetics" 131) by representing the character's rebelliousness "in a socially approved manner, working hard to be rich" ("Poetics" 131). The conflicts on the show become, then, a moment in which resolutions that "cannot stand the light of close analysis" ("Poetics" 131) are made to appear attractive to the viewer by appearing in forms that the dominant culture accepts. Berlin's course aims to help students develop a sense of the ways in which actual conflicts are resolved in an imaginary fashion in cultural expressions such as television programs.

In this way Berlin's pedagogy hopes to identify exclusionary narratives developed by the dominant public and empower students to actively challenge them. But Berlin's instructional methods, because they embrace this post-structuralist account

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[19] Berlin's lesson also includes the use of the films *Other People's Money* (1991) and *Roger and Me* (1989). The approach to these films, however, involves the kind of deconstructive reading and reflection I describe below and so, in the interest of space, I include only the television programs.

of meaning, depend on the fragmented sense of self and truth that underlies his deconstructive reading as class practice. Indeed, as Berlin himself notes, "the binary conflicts that an audience discovers in a film [or television sitcom] as well as the resolution of these conflicts are as much a product of the historical conditions of the audiences as the elements of the film" ("Poetics" 133). While it is difficult to argue with the implications Berlin draws from the assumptions of his deconstructive approach, those assumptions clearly depend upon post-structuralist views of truth and subjectivity. Likewise the aims of Berlin's pedagogy are revealing in this respect as well. The goal of this instruction is for students to "become reflective agents" ("Poetics" 132) but "unlike classrooms that insist that each student look within to discover a unique self, this course argues that only through understanding the workings of culture in shaping consciousness can students ever hope to achieve any degree of singularity" ("Poetics" 132). Berlin's aims are clearly admirable, directed as they are to helping students achieve a consciousness of the ways in which powerful cultural forces shape their lives so that they may engage those forces more actively.

"The Discourse of Revolution" operates in similar ways but draws on a reading of texts produced in England in response to the American and French revolutions by authors composing from a variety of viewpoints. This course seeks to historically situate conceptions of reading and writing practices in order to allow student readers "to locate the conflicts and contradictions addressed, resolved, ignored, or concealed" ("Poetics" 141) within each text "with a view to considering their significance to the formation of subjects" ("Poetics" 141). This course thus replicates the work of the previously described "Codes and Culture" but does so through the use of written texts in

order to allow students practice in applying the deconstructive methods of post-structuralist theory to print communication in an even more distanced historical moment that is more overtly politically oriented. The goal of the course is "a consideration of signifying practices and their relation to subject formation" ("Poetics" 141). Again we see the assumption of post-structuralist views of the individual subject as the guiding principles of Berlin's course and how these assumptions inform even the reading practices he claims should be privileged in composition classrooms in order to challenge the status quo.

Importantly, the teaching Berlin describes carries problematic assumptions about the relation of anti-foundationalist critique to democracy and social justice. As Anderson observes, throughout his work Berlin figures his reading of the implications of critique as inevitable and proper; we are told by Berlin that students "'must come to see,' 'must realize' (93), 'must learn' (111), . . . 'recognize' (120), . . . become 'aware' (116), . . . and 'begin to understand' (131)" (qtd. in V. Anderson "Confrontational" 205). Once Berlin's anti-foundationalist readings reveal the contradictions he sees at work in the dominant culture, there is only one outcome available to students. In this pedagogical dynamic, students who resist Berlin's reading of the world and challenge the conclusions of his deconstructive critique are, as Berlin puts it, "deny[ing] the obvious" ("Poetics" 102). For Berlin any argument over the propriety of leftist inclusion is finished once the anti-foundationalist critique is in place; once the contradictions of the dominant culture's foundationalist principles are revealed and the contingency of truth is asserted the result "inevitably supports economic, social, political, and cultural democracy" ("Rhetoric" 489). The anti-foundationalist critique students employ in

Berlin's course is assumed to produce democracy reflecting the assumed connections between this critical method and professional composition's critical goals despite their apparent conflict.

The problem facing Berlin and those like him who would figure democratic inclusion as emerging naturally from anti-foundationalism, is that an understanding of the perspectival nature of truth seems just as likely to lead a person to read into it license to pursue domination as it does to foster some sense of radical democracy. Thus, Berlin's representations of his pedagogy contain "markers of Berlin's struggles with his own contradictions . . ." (V. Anderson "Confrontational" 205), the contradictions of figuring foundationalism as the result of anti-foundationalist critique. Berlin smooths over this contradiction by failing to admit "that the pictures we paint of postmodern reality are truth claims and . . . like all truth claims, they cannot be merely asserted as starting points. As activist teachers insist about everyone else's theories, they must be argued for" (Anderson "Confrontational" 207). What Anderson is suggesting without saying as much, is that the privileging of inclusion is a belief and figuring this belief as a foundationalist principle grants it persuasive force but only at the cost of removing it from the field of rhetorical play. As a result, "we beg the basic question, assuming as a starting point that we would do better to try to prove" (Anderson "Confrontational" 207). Berlin's answer to the question of how to connect an anti-foundationalist method and a foundationalist goal is ultimately to ignore it, or, in other words, to make a foundationalism out of the connection itself. Berlin's pedagogy relies too heavily on the assumed connection thereby drawing it to the surface and making it available for

critique and revealing the underlying strains of this connection in the broader trends of professional composition.

A number of scholars critical of Berlin's methods have recognized the foundationalist principles of democratic inclusion and social justice that underpin his own post-structuralist critiques of foundationalist beliefs. J. A. Rice, discussing Berlin as an example of widespread pedagogical practices in composition, notes the logical disjunction underlying Berlin's approach. According to Rice, the critical aspects of Berlin's pedagogy depends on a liberal tradition that privileges concepts such as equality, freedom, democracy, and justice which function as ideals that are beyond question even as Berlin employs anti-foundationalist critique as the means to bring these ideals to fruition. For Rice, such an effort represents a "gap between critical method and ethical certitude" (??). The ideals of these pedagogies can in fact never be called into question—Rice asserts, "liberalism is no better at questioning its own foundations than the discourse it denounces" (??)—because they function as the justification for the critical work that would question them. Because pedagogies like Berlin's employ anti-foundationalist critique but "base themselves in an ethical certitude, these humanist critical pedagogies exceed their own theoretical conditions; in doing so, they are less *strategies* of social change than assertions of it" (?? Rice). Rice sees the anti-foundationalism that has come to function as professional composition's critical method as in conflict with its longstanding critical goal. Michael Murphy describes this problematic disjunction more succinctly quoting Berlin throughout his observation that, "The progressivist discourse of educational democracy—along with its allied sense of duty ('our responsibility as teachers and citizens" [493]) and social

welfare ('the greater good of all' [490])—is so fundamental a part of the language of composition scholarship that it can effectively underwrite the work of even as guarded an anti-foundationalist as Berlin" (355). Berlin's pedagogy represents the assumed connections between professional composition's critical method and critical goal which, with the appropriation of anti-foundationalism, have become thoroughly problematic.

The alternative, it seems, is to embrace anti-foundationalism more thoroughly, a perspective perhaps best represented by Victor Vitanza in his critique of Berlin. That critique is ultimately the very familiar one that Berlin's pedagogy is formalist and thus ineffective and oppressive. For Vitanza, the assumed connection Berlin makes between the critical examination of the contradictions of dominant discourse and a resulting political action constructs a grand narrative of emancipation built strictly on reason. Berlin and others like him "speak of the contradictions in society and the curriculum, which must be laid bare so that students might 'resist. But this laying bare is to be attempted by way of the game of knowledge. And ah, there's the rub!" (Vitanza "Countertheses" 142). Such an emancipatory narrative is limited in its effectiveness because it eliminates the non-rational aspects of desire and thereby oversimplifies the complex work of discourse to construct subjects. As Vitanza explains of Berlin and others like him, "Simply put, they have not fully confronted and embraced the problem of the ethical subject or the gross limitations of the rationalist-leftist approach to this problem" ("Countertheses" 157). Thus, even though Berlin asserts "that the social is saturated with ideological constructs that 'speak us,'" his anti-foundationalist methods are undercut by the foundationalist effort "to advocate a certain, uncertain view of emancipation" (Vitanza "Countertheses" 157). As a result, Berlin's pedagogy fails to

account for the full complexity of discourse and writing and thus remains ineffective in getting students to enact political change.

But in addition to being ineffective, Berlin's foundationalist pedagogy is, of course, oppressive. Drawing heavily from the work of Jean-Francois Lyotard, Vitanza argues that the grand narrative of emancipation of Berlin's approach is necessarily exclusionary because of its totalizing character. Such totality is obtained only by negating those aspects that do not align with the rationalist systematizing of emancipation "because systematization *is* the result of exclusion. Wherever there is system (totality, unity), there is the trace of the excluded" (Vitanza "Negation" 4). As positive as the effort to ensure leftist political visions of democracy may seem, it depends on a logic of negation that excludes whatever does not fit into the grand narrative or the creation of a stable identity. This negation, Vitanza explains, "is extremely dangerous (E.g., a little girl is a little man without a penis! Or an Aryan is not a Jew! And hence, they do not or should not – because in error – exist.)" ("Negation" 12). While the pursuit of leftist politics grounded in foundationalist concepts such as democracy, justice, and freedom appears a laudable goal, it ultimately embraces a logic that results in saying "No to females, Jews, gypsies, queers, hermaphrodites, all others" (Vitanza "Negation" 12). As Vitanza's examples of oppression suggest, the fact that "Grand narratives of emancipation do not emancipate" ("Negation" 14), does not mean that emancipation is not worth pursuing.

If compositionists are to embrace the critical method of anti-foundationalism, the answer to the problem of disjunction is, then, to re-imagine the critical goal of professional composition in anti-foundationalist terms. Expert writing instruction would

then focus on an anti-foundationalist elimination of totality itself in order to become fully inclusive. Vitanza argues that the anti-foundationalist project of composition should move forward "By denegating that which gives us the conditions of exclusion" ("Negation" 13). Only the radical inclusivity of an anti-foundationalist dismantling of totality would prevent the dangerous negations on which a foundationalist politics rests. For Vitanza this means including even those whose beliefs are exclusionary. And so Vitanza concludes "If someone cum-a-radical-many wants change, it is necessary 'to Yes' everything" ("Negation" 220). Such inclusivity paradoxically undermines the very concept of negation on which totalizing foundationalisms depend for their exclusivity. Vitanza asserts this paradox writing, "To Yes the excluders by saying No to their No. By saying No to all reactionary thinking and acting. In another word, by denegating the excluders' No" ("Negation" 220). The rejection of exclusion is accomplished by favoring inclusion without boundary and thus makes inclusion as a general concept—not as a specific effort to include a specific someone into a specific somewhere—the ethical standard for compositionists. So encompassing is the understanding of inclusion according to this logic that, as Vitanza argues, "Finally, then, if there is to be exclusion, the very principle of exclusion itself must be excluded!" ("Negation" 233). Inclusion is, therefore, defined not in positive terms of the addition of a given someone to a given space—since such inclusion would imply the exclusion of totality—but negatively and in the idealized form of the very absence of exclusion.

Berlin's and Vitanza's approaches draw into sharp relief the nature of the challenge faced by composition instructors as Jeff Pruchnic has explained. So central has Berlin's pedagogical method become in Pruchnic's view that Berlin's

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"foregrounding of 'bias' (and its associated categories of dominant/marginal, complicit/resistant, exploitive/liberatory) remains the coin of the realm for the majority of pedagogical scholarship on systems of social power" (64). The challenge of ideology that this "iconoclastic gesture" (64) involves amounts to positing a correct ideology of which the dominant discourse, with its unjust systems of power, is a distortion. Berlin's pedagogy, as noted above, represents the swapping of one totalization for another. But the other option available to expert writing instructors is a critical perspective that limits the possibilities of leftist political action. Pruchnic describes this approach, which he associates with Vitanza, as an "amping up of critique *qua* critique, the unending search for higher grounds of valuation only to submit them to hermeneutic disruption" (66). This practice, in turn, reduces critical pedagogy to "a wholly negative vein" emphasizing what compositionists "*cannot do* (cannot make claims to truth, legitimacy, or meaning, and cannot guarantee an ethical frame or praxis) rather than what they *can do*, or how [critique] might be leveraged for particular purposes" (66). The conflicting commitments of professional composition prevent compositionists from happily embracing either. As Pruchnic describes it, instructors are "stuck between the Hegelian 'hard rock' of negation and the 'no-place' of endless critique" (66).

Resolution through Displacement

The model of professional composition created in response to the literacy crisis of the mid-1970s set in place the critical method of anti-formalism and the critical goal of leftist inclusion as the characteristics of expert instruction. The creation of this model made it possible for social process advocates to build consensus among their peers that a rhetorical axiology most effectively encapsulated this model but only through a

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continuous expansion of the definition of anti-formalism that positioned other process approaches as outside the professional model. The effort to locate the basic principles of expert instruction that the social turn represented was only the beginning of a continued effort to locate that form of anti-formalism that ensured compositionists distinction from lay perspectives on writing—a distinction that might calm the fears of writing instructors that just anyone could teach writing. Anti-foundationalism provided this distinct perspective and allowed for the continued self-critique of composition that ensured its professional standing. But by defining anti-formalism as anti-foundationalism, compositionists undermined their own professional identity by drawing into question the critical goals that described composition's professional contribution to society. The result was a contradiction between anti-foundationalist critique and foundationalist political ideals. This contradiction and its ultimate resolution—insofar as it was resolved by composition theorists—amounted to a full articulation of what it meant to teach writing in a post-industrial context.

But these developments when engaged by instructors presented the immediate problem of how to include all student perspectives while excluding those student views that undermined the political goals of an expert composition pedagogy. As early as 1991, Patricia Bizzell was describing this problem when she addresses the issue of authority in the democratic classroom. Hoping to use her authority to foster critical consciousness while also recognizing such a use of authority countermands her pedagogical goals, Bizzell finds herself trapped in a sort of pedagogical and ethical double-bind. Situating her predicament within the larger framework of the field, she writes, "On the one hand, we wish to serve politically left-oriented or liberatory goals in

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our teaching, while on the other, we do not see how we can do so without committing the theoretically totalizing and pedagogically oppressive sins we have inveighed against in the systems we want to resist" ("Power" 54). Ultimately, as a means of escaping from these conflicting commitments, Bizzell offers a solution to this problem by suggesting a vision of socially constructed authority tacitly bestowed upon her by her students. Bizzell's solution is, however, problematic in that her claim that students willingly offer her the position of classroom authority works only insofar as we see the demand of a college degree for social mobility as a "choice" made by students rather than as itself a coercive social system imposing this "decision" on them.

My aim here is not necessarily to critique Bizzell's work. What interests me most about the passage from Bizzell's article is that it makes explicit references to the discursive influences creating the problem she wants to address. In this passage we can see Bizzell struggling to reconcile a foundationalist adherence to a particular ethical/political viewpoint while also attempting to enact the critical expectations of an anti-foundationalist perspective. Bizzell's assertion that we cannot see how to pursue our liberatory pedagogy without totalizing and universalizing its truth speaks to the foundationalist assumptions on which her pedagogy is based. But the very fact that this foundationalist approach gives Bizzell pause, speaks to a conflicting rejection of foundationalism and universalization – those "theoretically totalizing and pedagogically oppressive sins." Bizzell is explicit about the leftist democratic politics that drive her pedagogical goals and which lead her implicitly to make space for a particular spectrum of beliefs while excluding others. The foundationalist nature of her investment in "politically left-oriented . . . pedagogy" requires her to establish a standard that marks

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some perspectives as the "right" ones to embrace and others as the "wrong" ones. But this standard bothers her because it demands that she totalize her particular view; that is, she attempts to embrace an anti-foundationalist and foundationalist perspective at once.

With the recognition of the crisis and the articulation of a truly anti-foundationalist perspective, the challenge facing instructors became a question of inclusion. Anti-foundationalism required radical inclusion while the political agenda of expert instruction required the exclusion of, at least, some student positions. By framing the issue as one of inclusion, the work of Berlin, Vitanza, and others like them made the challenge of reconciling the critical method and the critical goal and ethical one. That ethical question was how to include all student perspectives while simultaneously excluding those student perspectives that restricted radical inclusion itself. As an ethical challenge, of course, this problem became one for individual instructors to resolve as a mark of their professional expertise. Failure to accomplish the contradictory practices of including and excluding amounted to a professional and ethical failure on the part of the individual instructor rather than a result of the conflicting discursive formations by which composition's preferred identity was maintained. The solution of professional composition's identity crisis amounted, then, to displacing the contradiction at the heart of that crisis onto individual instructors. In this way the discourse of professional composition was able to obscure the sources of this contradiction and perpetuate its preferred identity. This displacement, however, was to have long-term effects on the field and was to reveal itself as a characteristic of post-industrial education in the way it ensured the existence of the dominant culture in a post-industrial society.

Chapter 4: Catching Students by the Long Tail: The Post-Industrial Gatekeeping of Disciplinary Composition

Over the past 15 years, the issue of religious faith has become an increasingly prominent and important part of the landscape of composition scholarship. As Thomas Deans has observed, around 2001, "religion was starting to emerge as a topic of interest in the field" (408) with compositionists attending to a variety of ways that composition instruction and rhetorical theory inform and are informed by rhetorical practices in which faith plays a part (408-9). In particular, student faith in the first-year classroom and as it affects the teaching of critical thinking and rhetorically-based writing have characterized this focus on published research. Scholars such as Doug Downs, Bronwyn Williams, Elizabeth Vander Lei, Michael-John DePalma, Shari Stenberg, Geoffrey Ringer, bonnie lenore kyburz, and others have taken up the topic of teaching critical writing and thinking to students of faith. Major journals such as *College Composition and Communication* and *College English* have featured a number of articles on student faith in recent years and panels on teaching writing to students of faith have appeared regularly in the program of CCCC over the past decade. Much of the attention to faith focuses on students from Christian fundamentalist backgrounds. As Rebecca Nowacek observes, "The compatibility of faith and academic writing—in particular, the struggles between fundamentalist Christian students and their writing teachers—has been a focus of recent scholarship" (155). How to teach writing as the field currently understands it to religious students has clearly become an important question for many compositionists.

It is tempting to see these developments in terms of a natural progression of academic inquiry, especially for a field as concerned with student experience and learning as composition is. Since faith-based perspectives represent an important subjectivity for many students (Rand 350), the recent scholarship on student faith can be seen simply as the work of ethical compositionists attending to an important form of student difference. But framing this recent increase in scholarship in such individualistic terms can elide the discursive forces that select teaching writing to religious students as an exigent focus of study (cf. Foucault *Archaeology* 38ff.). After all, we have always had students of faith in our classrooms and the tensions between faith and academic inquiry are nothing new. While fundamentalism may be an increasingly apparent phenomenon than perhaps it was in the past, especially in the context of globalized, post-industrial capitalism (Hardt and Negri 150), framing the issue as arising entirely from the evolution of faith in a post-industrial world suggests compositionists have remained immune from these same changes (which, I hope I have demonstrated already that we most certainly have not). What discursive developments then are creating the exigence for this focus on student faith and writing in this disciplinary moment? What makes addressing student faith so important for compositionists?

As I have attempted to demonstrate in the previous two chapters, a significant part of any development in composition involves the discursive context of composition's model of professionalization and the contradiction that has developed in that model. The contradiction between professional composition's anti-foundationalist critical method and its foundationalist critical goal threatens the very existence of compositionists' claims to professional standing. As a result, composition theorists have

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attempted to solve this contradiction by redefining the field's critical goal of an inclusive, leftist political agenda in anti-foundationalist terms—as the absence of all exclusion. Faced with such an idealization of inclusion, teachers committed to expert writing instruction must include all student perspectives as the means for advancing a leftist political agenda. But the very political goal compositionists intend to serve through the radical inclusion of anti-foundationalist critique requires an exclusion of those views and perspectives that oppose the field's preferred leftist politics. In the face of student subjectivities invested in an exclusionary, totalizing belief system, instructors must find a way both to include and also exclude those student subjectivities. The work of disciplinary composition has created an ideal that is impossible for composition instruction to enact.

Tellingly, this contradiction represents the exigence commonly constructed in scholarly considerations of student faith in composition. For instance, Amy Goodburn begins an examination of the challenges critical instructors face when including fundamentalist Christian beliefs by asking, "When students' main sources of authority are fundamentalist in nature, how can critical teachers legitimize such beliefs in relation to their pedagogical goals?" (347). Goodburn's question reflects a felt imperative to legitimize student belief while simultaneously recognizing an implicit opposition between these fundamentalist beliefs and the pedagogical goals of her course. Juanita M. Smart frames her discussion of an evangelical student in her writing class in very similar terms, writing, "The charge that I face regarding my student's evangelical discourse seems clear: Somehow I both need and want to help him claim '[his] place,' and 'the right to have [his] part matter,' without disallowing his profession of faith"

(20). Here Smart genuinely wants to integrate her student's belief into her pedagogy even as she suggests that accomplishing this integration necessarily requires her to disallow that belief. In a 2013 *College English* article, T.J. Geiger III agrees with Lizabeth Rand's call to include evangelical students into the classroom. But Geiger is careful to note, "Even as Rand presents a compelling objection to the exclusion of evangelical epistemologies . . . writing teachers who allow or bring politicoreligious inquiries into their classrooms must also account for the potential of faith discourses to exclude" (252). Geiger, like Smart and Goodburn, seems at once ethically compelled to include faith-based perspectives but simultaneously finds reasons for excluding those beliefs.

Since faith-based subjectivity represents an important identity for many students, the mandate to include all students necessarily involves legitimizing faith-based perspectives. But the exclusionary and totalizing nature of many religious beliefs, particularly those of fundamentalist Christians, mark those same subjectivities for exclusion in the effort to advance a leftist politics. These students thus pose a thorny problem for the individual instructor by foregrounding the need to include but also exclude these students' views. As such, students of faith reveal the impossibility of anti-foundationalist instruction in actual practice and consequently draw into relief the contradiction at the heart of composition's professional identity. Students of faith, then, represent an instructional problem that must be solved not only as a demonstration of the professional and ethical standing of the individual instructor, but also to ensure the systemic contradictions defining instructional expertise remain obscured. Only by

solving the "problem" of teaching students of faith can composition's professional identity perpetuate itself.

In this chapter, I will argue that pedagogies emerging from the idealization of inclusion and the professional mandate to include, yet exclude function as gatekeeping mechanisms that discipline students to accept the fluid consumer identities required by post-industrial capitalism and its increasing reliance on niche-market economics. To demonstrate this I will first describe how the saturation of existing markets has driven post-industrial capitalism to intensify market potential by fragmenting mass markets into a collection of niche markets. Drawing on the work of Chris Anderson and others to describe "long-tail" market economics, I explain how these niche markets rely on consumers embracing a fluid identity that supports both an intense association with specific niche demographics while allowing this association to be replicated across multiple niche markets. Having demonstrated this need, I then discuss how disciplinary composition's role of creating the research knowledge that makes expert instruction possible positions the discipline to pass its definition of rhetoric as anti-foundationalist and the resulting mandate for radical inclusion on to individual instructors.

Examining two examples of pedagogy that directly addresses the felt need to include and exclude students who embrace exclusionary discourses, I show that the prevailing method for escaping this bind is to encourage students embrace anti-foundationalist definitions of their identity that allow students to retain their exclusionary identities while simultaneously allowing them to embrace the course's critical perspectives. While such pedagogies resolve the contradiction facing instructors, it does so only by eliminating the foundationalist principles that marked student identity

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as different. An anti-foundationalist view of rhetoric thus allows instructors to enact the gatekeeping dynamics of assessing students' willingness to abandon foundationalist principles while ostensibly assessing students' rhetorical capacities. This pedagogical approach that derived from the emergence of post-industrialism thus enforces the fluid identities required for market intensification in post-industrial capitalism. I conclude by drawing out the implications of these developments for our understanding of composition history and the role that better understanding the discipline's history can play in mitigating composition's complicity in supporting the inequities of existing socio-economic power structures.

Niche Markets and Post-Industrial Subjectivity

The application of knowledge to knowledge that defines the post-industrial era relates to economics primarily through the increasing finance character of markets. This notion of finance as the basis for market activity involves creating profit through the intensification of existing markets, making more out of what already exists. The dominance of capitalism around the globe and the expansion of multinational corporations means that new profits and the creation of new markets that drive the expansion necessary for capitalism to work must increasingly come from within existing markets: "Capitalism today seeks to saturate and deepen—intensify—its hold over existing markets, insofar as global capitalism of the twenty-first century has run out of new territories to conquer" (Nealon 26). Post-industrial capitalism exhibits this tendency to intensify primarily through the dominance of finance in the global economy as the making of money through the manipulation of markets rather than by creating

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new commodities, products, or services.[20] But this financialization of global capitalism appears as well in consumer markets as market saturation requires new possibilities for consumption to be created within current market domains.

In consumer markets this intensification takes the form of the fragmentation of existing markets into ever more narrowly defined niche markets and boutique services. [21] The advent of digital technologies has made this intensification through niche markets possible as Chris Anderson explains through the concept of long-tail market economics. The long-tail describes the statistical representation of sales in which a line charting those sales starts at a peak on the left with the top selling "hits" and then descends rapidly as the graph moves right, flattening out as the graph moves into the less popular products down this long tail of the market. This curve, according to Anderson, determines industrial-era production and marketing because the costs of physical shelf space in brick-and-mortar stores requires retailers to only offer the hits. As Anderson explains, industrial production is "not much interested in the occasional sale, because in traditional retail a CD that sells only one unit a quarter consumes exactly the same half-inch of shelf space as a CD that sells 1,000 units a quarter. There's a value to that space—rent, overhead, staffing costs, etc.—that has to be paid back by a certain number of inventory turns per month" (9). The rigidity of mass appeal

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[20] The explosion of global financial markets as the drivers of post-industrial capitalism can be traced back to Nixon taking the U.S. off of the gold standard in 1971. The unmooring of U.S. currency from its basis on the backing of U.S. gold reserves—however tenuous that basis might have always been—made possible the wide fluctuation of currency values around the globe leading to booms and busts of various currencies and, often, the ruination of entire national economies as currency speculators deliberately devalued various currencies to increase profits.

[21] Though my focus here is consumer markets, boutique services have been important in the financial markets as well particularly in the area of financial consultation. A 2006 article in *The Economist* noted the growth of these boutique consultation services reporting that independent boutique financial advisors "advised on 55% of the 20 biggest mergers" of 2005 when "In 2000 they accounted for less than a third, all done by just two companies" (par. Par. 4). For more see "Boutique Banks: Niche Market." *The Economist* August 24, 2006. http://www.economist.com/node/7843315

imposed by industrial production and distribution necessarily limits the potential for

profit by excluding the potential demand latent in the desires of individual consumers or

narrowly-defined consumer demographics. By attending to these more specific desires,

companies can create new markets for new goods and services expanding the potential

for profitability through a diversification that exploits underserved consumer demand.

In addition, niche markets also allow consumers to find products more suited to a

particular taste and are often willing to pay more for it—what Rogers calls "high value"

over "high volume."

As the information storage and dissemination capacities of digital

communications technologies has increased, the potential for tapping underserved niche

markets has increased proportionately. Digital technology reduces the cost of storing

songs, movies, books, or any kind of information to the extent that online retailers can

stock a seemingly infinite variety of offerings attending to niche consumer demands.

This variety and its management that online retailers like Amazon.com, iTunes, and

Netflix facilitate allows demand to keep on going "into niches that were never even

considered before—instructional videos, karaoke, Turkish TV, you name it" (Anderson

130). Because of the sheer volume of niche offerings made available by digital storage,

the relatively low sales, or even almost non-existent sales, of a particular offering can

still add up. As Anderson explains, "But what we do know is that with the companies

for which we have the most complete data—Netflix, Amazon, and Rhapsody—sales of

products *not offered* by their brick-and-mortar competitors amounted between a quarter

and nearly half of total revenues—and that percentage is rising each year" (24). In long

tail markets, the "hits"—blockbuster movies, chart-topping songs, the New York Times

bestsellers—remain "hits," but the niche markets of marginally popular or even unpopular offerings make up a greater portion of the post-industrial economic pie. In this way, the niche market consumption of the long tail accomplishes the market intensification that supports the continued expansion of a globalized capitalist economy.

While the variety and availability necessary for market intensification characterize the long tail, it functions effectively only if consumers are willing to explore down the tail and can manage the process of doing so. "Simply offering more variety," Anderson explains, "does not shift demand by itself. Consumers must be given ways to find niches that suit their particular needs and interests. A range of tools and techniques—from recommendations to rankings—are effective at doing this. These 'filters' can drive demand down the Tail" (Anderson 53). While Anderson's emphasis on digital filters and search mechanisms frames consumer niche preferences as given, niche preferences, as I noted in chapter one, are marketed as the means of demonstrating one's individuality with this commodification of individuality actually promoted as resistance to mainstream appropriation. "Different is good," as the Arby's ad goes and so "One no longer attempts to 'keep up with the Joneses' in their spending habits as much as they want to discriminate themselves, however superficially, from an abstract other . . ." (Pruchnic 68). The desire for difference and the description of difference in terms of niche market consumption serves, then, as a cultural driver helping to push consumption down the tail in the search for ever more obscure and individualizing tastes. While "The world of imperialism is, by definition, a world where 'different is bad'—otherness is an obstacle, there only to be excluded, demonized, or

assimilated" (Nealon 41), in the post-industrial world of long-tail markets, difference "isn't there to be overcome; it's there to be intensified" (Nealon 41).

The effort to distinguish individual difference supports market intensification by encouraging consumers to inhabit niche markets. The result is a kind of connoisseur logic in which individual difference from the mainstream operates as an identifier of individual intelligence or sophistication of taste regardless of what exactly it is that one is differing from the mainstream about. This is reflected as well the more intensely a particular consumer inhabits a particular niche. Customization represents the logical end of such niche market intensification providing the possibility of individual customer preferences and so has become an increasingly important part of marketing consumer products and services. For example, "Coca-Cola Co., has in recent years rolled out its 'Freestyle' machines in locations such as restaurants and movie theaters, allowing people to choose from hundreds of its soda brands, and mix flavors. McDonald's has been testing a 'build your own burger' program in California" (Krashinsky B3). Customization of market experience is also evident in the rise of guerilla marketing campaigns that employ advertising that encourages a sense of consumer agency through participation either in the form of interpretation as with corporate street art or surrealist advertising or direct action as occurs in advertiser sponsored flash mobs or campaigns that allow customers to vote.[22]

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But while customization is prized, full market intensification results from consumers being as inclusive as possible about the variety of identities the long tail allows, by inhabiting as many niche markets and, thus, as many consumer identities as possible. Consumers must be able, then, to inhabit the mainstream while still descending down the tail in order to support intensification. The dynamics of breaking out of any limitations imposed through the mass of mass consumption must likewise operate among the niches. Niche identities cannot be allowed to foreclose the possibility of inhabiting other niches. In other words, it does little good in terms of market

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intensification for a niche identity to become the consumers mainstream in the sense that it prevents continued habitation of other niches. This does not mean, as I hope to show below, that intensification depends on preventing full identification with a particular niche identity, but rather that any such identity cannot be defined in terms that potentially limit consumer acceptance of any variety of other niches. One can claim body building as one's primary identity—buying supplements, protein shakes, gym memberships, etc.—but for intensification to function fully, that primary identification must not conflict with being a Trekkie or scrabble lover. Even weightlifters have "cheat days" when they can build their own burger at McDonalds. In other words, intensification requires that customization be a fluid process that involves embracing multiple identities and, thus, customizing through a mix and match of multiple niche possibilities.

While Anderson's theory of the long tail has proven popular among a number of marketing and business professionals, recent studies have complicate the concept in important ways. One of the difficulties for long tail market theory that these studies have revealed is that providing the infinite choice Anderson suggests allows for full market intensification is not actually possible because "as the sales proceeding further and further into the long tail become so small the marginal cost of tracking them in rank order, even at a digital scale, might be optimized well before a million titles and certainly before infinite titles" (Bentley, Ormerod, Madsen 7). More importantly, these same studies have found that the hits of the mainstream continue to remain nearly as important as always. While some studies found that the statistical curve toward the tail has flattened somewhat, the blockbusters in a range of information and entertainment

formats remain not just important but absolutely dominant. For example, in their study

of keywords used in Google searches, Bernd Skiera, Jochen Eckert, and Oliver Hinz

found that at any given time about 100 primary "keywords are important for generating

the vast majority of searches, clicks and conversations" (494). Not only is infinite

choice not available as a result of technological innovation, but initial study findings

have suggested that consumers have yet to generate market intensification from the

variety that is available.

But such a view depends, as these same studies imply, on an outmoded

industrial-era distinction mainstream and niche and consumer and producer that is

becoming less and less applicable in the post-industrial context. The "hits" these days

are themselves more often than not, representations of what were once niche markets of

extremely narrow appeal. Blockbuster movies of the past several years are a list of

formerly niche titles including the *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* trilogies (fantasy

tales involving elves, goblins, orcs, and sorcerers), *The Avengers* (a superhero comic

book title), a *Star Trek* franchise reboot, and a number of films based on young adult

fiction like *Harry Potter* (wizards), *Twilight* (vampires), *The Hunger Games* (dystopian

science-fiction), and the *Divergent* series (dystopian science fiction).[24] The original

source material for the highest grossing film of 2014, *The Guardians of the Galaxy*, is

an obscure comic book franchise from the 1970s that was not even a top selling title

when Marvel studios began production on the picture. That the new blockbuster

increasingly represents a former niche suggests that the continued importance of the

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[24] These popular titles from young adult literature suggest a broader culture industry emphasizing the sense of difference from the mainstream as positive. In each of these stories an outcast protagonist becomes a heroic figure locked in an important struggle based precisely on the difference that made the protagonist an outcast in the first place.

blockbuster is part of a more complicated dynamic than simply a consumer market distinction between mass media and niche interests.

Studies themselves suggest such complexity as well by indicating the increasingly rapid turnover of what counts as a blockbuster product. Bentley, et al. point out that the top "y" number of brands in most retailer markets increasingly reflect the dynamics of consistent rotation that characterize the fashion industry noting that "although the distribution of sales may look very similar over time, taking snapshots of it at different points in time, the positions of the individual items within it will vary" (2). So while the head of the tail may still be the most important part of the statistical market curve, the turnover that now characterizes the mainstream necessitates "a reduction in the number of titles to be treated as 'blockbusters'" (Bentley, et al. 7). Likewise, Skiera, et al. reported similar findings among Google keyword searches explaining that "the set of top 100 keywords varies over time, and new keywords, as well as keywords that previously did not perform very well, may replace some of the top 100 keywords" (494). The accelerated rotation of those products marked as blockbusters by sales volume and the ever greater number of formerly niche products that become blockbusters means that "blockbuster" is not so much a static position that a given product inhabits or that it inhabits and then passes out of for good. More and more "blockbuster" represents the position held by a particular niche at a particular time and which that niche may hold again as the wildly popular "reboot" or "remake" among movies and television or the tendency to "retro" styles in fashion demonstrate.

As such the relationship between the head and the tail perpetuates intensification through innovation that results from the breakdown between consumption and

production that customization itself represents. As former niche products become mainstream hits, the willingness of niche consumers to embrace both the mainstream and the niche increases. A fan of the *Avengers* comic books will certainly go see the blockbuster *Avengers* movie. But this mainstreaming of the comic paradoxically emphasizes the difference of the niche connoisseur from the mainstream by at once making highly intensified niche consumption more culturally relevant while also providing a mainstream engagement with the niche product that highlights the connoisseur's distance from that mainstream understanding. The adjustments and exclusion of source material required to mainstream a long-running, highly fantasized title like *The Avengers* that the niche consumer recognizes provides the sense of intellectual superiority and sophistication that distinguishes him or her from the mainstream. But as Benghozi and Benhamou point out, "One of Anderson's most convincing arguments [regarding long tail markets] is that encouraging consumers to purchase best-sellers directs them towards less well-known titles through a trickle-down taste effect" (50). The sense of differentiation the mainstreamed product provides the niche consumer can also drive neophytes down the tail in pursuit of this same differentiation. The blockbuster introduces consumers to a new niche product but the mainstreaming of that product means differentiation requires descending down the long tail of that particular niche. If you want to be different by liking *The Avengers*, the sheer popularity of the franchise means you are going to have to embrace the consumer possibilities of that niche all the more intensely to define your individuality, going down the specific long tail of *Avengers* consumer product niches—comic books, collectible figures, comic book conventions.

Customization becomes a primary means of doing this very work through what Alvin Toffler has called the "prosumer" phenomenon. Prosumers are consumers who employ production itself as part of their consumption. The very digital technology that makes the long tail economically feasible has likewise democratized the technologies of production. Home computers and consumer software now enable individuals to create books, movies, music, and art that rivals in quality the slick productions of corporate publishers, record labels, and Hollywood itself. Prosumers are not generally paid for this work. In fact, as Anderson explains, "One of the big differences between the head and the tail of producers is that the farther down you are in the tail, the more likely you are to have to keep your day job. And that's okay. . . . We make not just what we're paid to make, but also what we *want* to make. And both can have value" (Anderson 78). But that value is not simply personal enjoyment. Prosumer creations can quickly become niche markets of a sort themselves with, for example, online groups forming around *Avengers* fan fiction. This customization of consumer experience through production is thus a potential source for the next blockbuster and the perpetuation of the process of mainstreaming and differentiation. As Bentley, et al. describe this process, "As innovation is increasingly encouraged by Internet blogs, youTube, music production software, and so on, the result should not only be that popular culture changes faster, but also [because innovation will create more turnover] that 'Blockbuster' stores should shrink their inventory further and further" (Bentley, et al. 7). The enormously popular book *Fifty Shades of Grey*, which has now been made into a hit movie, began as *Twilight* fan fiction.[25] It has also become the subject of numerous

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[25] The importance of digital media for contemporary communication is often called upon to support the inclusion of multimodal composing in the first-year composition course. The role prosumer multimodal

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internet memes, blog posts, videos, and more fan fiction meaning it may spawn more innovation.

The distributors and managers of these products like Amazon, iTunes, and Netflix currently take the lion's share of profits from such products and will likely to continue to do so. Prosumer innovation thus represents a windfall for post-industrial capitalism representing market innovation that pays for itself by offloading the cost of market testing onto prosumers in the form of labor and then reaping the profits garnered through the distribution of the next blockbuster such innovation produces. While entertainment products have been the focus of most discussions of the potential for intensification of long-tail market economics, the flexibility of production made possible by digital technology and characterizing post-industrialism means this process will likely continue to expand into more material production. Clothing manufacturer AM4U "enables users to design their own clothing, then have the item manufactured on-site in batches as small as one" (Farrow 54). The increasing availability of 3D printers suggests the potential for the process of customization of material products to be enacted in the same process now beginning to impact movies, books, and music. Digital storage of material designs will allow fashion, home décor, and any number of products (the first metal gun was made on a 3D printer a few years ago) to be purchased and printed at home.

The increasing dependence on niche markets in the process of production and consumption, even of mainstream media content and material products, demonstrates

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composing plays in the creation of mainstream corporate content suggests composition may need to take a more critical view of the multimodal turn but likewise suggests some directions critical multimodal instruction might take including helping students consider the power structures and values supported or challenged by the creation of particular multimodal and multimedia texts.

just how much post-industrial capitalism invest in consumer identity and its potential to drive consumption. The need for customization and the narrow identifications that define customization must be balanced with a fluidity of identity that ensures that consumer identification with a particular niche does not forestall the continued exploration of other niches that defines continued market intensification. The ideal consumer in such a system utterly customizes experience within a given niche but is willing, even desirous, of engaging the same full identification in a number of other niches, even those of a contradictory nature. Intensification requires consumers to consciously embrace a fluid identity that supports not only radical customization but its replication again and again in the process of turnover. Within this system consumer identification with a particular niche market must be emphasized even as identity itself must be made more fluid. That production and consumption are predicated on this game of identity and are only likely to be more so in the future means that post-industrial capitalism is playing the game of high-risk/high-reward economics that have become so commonly associated with the finance markets at the heart of post-industrial intensification.

It is thus all the more imperative that consumers be disciplined for fluidity in order to prevent the intense identification fostered by niche market dynamics from providing an identity node around which resistance to the process of innovation and intensification itself. The so-called "democratizing" of the digital tools of production allow for innovation through customization but they also represent a form of power-sharing in that they grant prosumers the potential for far-reaching impact and influence. Identifications do not take place in a vacuum but rather often depend on connections

with more traditional, less malleable identifiers such as family connections, long-standing cultural investments, or religious beliefs. Those consumers with sufficient affluence and social mobility to play the game of long-tail identity economics cannot be allowed to wield their production skills and niche identifications in a manner that threatens innovation and intensification itself. These consumers, then, must be made to retain those identifications but empty them of whatever claims to superiority they may possess for the consumer over other niches. In short, descent down the tail must not result in dissent coming back up the tail. The continued development of post-industrial capitalism depends on it. The first-year composition course as the gatekeeper to the university has developed its disciplinary relationship to the first-year course as a means of ensuring the needs of post-industrialism are met.

The New High to an Old Low

In her famous 1982 article, "The Winds of Change: Thomas Kuhn and the Revolution in the Teaching of Writing," Maxine Hairston boldly declares that the change in compositionists' perceptions of composing and how writing should be taught during the 1970s and early 1980s was so radical as to merit description as a Kuhnian "paradigm shift" in writing instruction. Drawing heavily from Young's argument that a paradigmatic crisis over invention in current-traditional rhetoric had led to the demise of formalist instruction, Hairston argues that the new paradigm of Process pedagogy emerged to address invention, leading composition instructors to try to "understand *how* that product came into being, and *why* it assumed the form that it did. . . . what goes on during the internal act of writing [and then] intervene during the act of writing [in order to] affect its outcome" (121). For Hairston, the revelations about writing that the

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process movement had brought about rendered current-traditional rhetoric indefensible by any reasonable person. Just as a Copernicus had made Ptolemy's terra-centric view of the universe impossible to continue imagining as true, so had process rendered current-traditional formalism not only obsolete but irrational for any informed person to accept.

Despite Hairston's confidence, other scholars in the field disputed her interpretation of the process movement. Critics like Sharon Crowley and Susan Miller rejected the idea that such a change in assumptions about writing had actually taken place at all. As I noted in chapter three, Crowley saw process pedagogy as an extension of current-traditional rhetoric though in a more affectively pleasing form. Like Crowley, Miller claimed that the new writing pedagogies of the time standardized the composing process to the point that it became itself a kind of product. For Miller this allowed process pedagogy to enact the traditional gatekeeping function carried out by current-traditional rhetoric whereby culturally and socially specific language norms were naturalized to preserve the social and economic status quo. Miller observes that, "For all their novelty and superiority over rote learning, these 'new' constructions of theory and practice continue our roles as agents of hegemonic selection. They encourage us to believe that we oppose established norms while instead crafting new systems that inadvertently maintain them" (9). While writing pedagogy looked different in many respects after the process movement, conceptions of writing had not really changed.

Yet, for all the obvious differences between the positions staked out by Hairston, Crowley, and Miller, the similarities that exist among them are perhaps more revealing. Miller's and Crowley's arguments tacitly enact in some ways the shift they critique

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Hairston for claiming. Crowley's and Miller's critiques of the process movement are only persuasive if some shift in focus and values had actually occurred. The denunciation of process because it replicates current-traditionalism and the gatekeeping function of the composition course is only rhetorically effective if Crowley's and Miller's audience agrees that current-traditionalism and gatekeeping are regrettable aspects of composition's historical legacy; that is, these arguments are persuasive only if the majority of compositionists accept that composition needs to move beyond current-traditional rhetoric. Assuming such an audience seems impossible if there has not been some kind of sea change, at least in the perspective on current-traditionalism among compositionist scholars. Indeed, Crowley's claim that the common habit is to oppose process and product and Miller's characterization of the perpetuation of the gatekeeping function as "inadvertent" suggest both recognize their audience's opposition to traditional instruction. Thus, while Hairston's idea of a Kuhnian "paradigm shift" may be an overstatement, Crowley and Miller rhetorically assume the change in perceptions of writing and writing instruction that Hairston claims have taken place in composition.

The turn to research as the basis for expert instruction that compositionists embraced in response to the emergence of post-industrialism in the late 1950s and 1960s had a number of effects not the least of which was dividing composition into a hierarchical relationship between disciplinary composition and the composition course. Researched knowledge as the source of effective teaching liberated composition from subservience to literary studies and the practices of current-traditional pedagogy but established the production of research as the necessary precedent to expert writing

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instruction as opposed to practitioner knowledge, or lore (North 15). This view of the relation between research and teaching positioned the discipline of composition once it was finally established as the source both of expertise (because it provided the researched knowledge that made expert instruction possible) and the advancement of leftist politics through resistance to the status quo (because research made instruction effective and effective instruction was inclusive instruction). Insofar as disciplinary knowledge had not infused the practices of composition instructors, the course remained pre-professional and so inexpert and oppressive in actual practice. The work of the discipline to eliminate the vestiges of formalist thinking in composition theory might be accurately characterized, then, as an attempt to stamp out inexpert and oppressive tendencies in the pedagogical practices of the course.

Tellingly, for Hairston what current-traditional rhetoric remains can be found in the first-year course as a result of a lack of research informing practice. As process continues to change the field, Hairston writes, "I think, however, that the people who do most to promote a static and unexamined approach to teaching writing are those who define writing courses as service courses and skills courses; that group probably includes most administrators and teachers of writing" (442). Because the course requires that they spend their time teaching instead of reading the latest research, Hairston explains, writing teachers are the ones perpetuating the old paradigm. Crowley's assertions are more damning, indicating that composition-as-course is unredeemable precisely because it is the first-year course: "The ethical technology that is the requirement, I submit, supersedes anything that specific composition teachers operating in local spaces may want to do for their students in the way of helping them to

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become writers; it gets in between teachers and their students, in between students'

writing and their teachers' reading" (216-17). Hairston and Crowley, then, that the

institutional realities of the first-year course prevent disciplinary scholarship—of which

Hairston, Crowley, and Miller's arguments are a part—from enacting its

professionalizing and liberating effects on writing instruction. In other words, the

discipline is the source of expertise and resistance to the oppressive status quo; the

course, unfortunately, was where inexpert instruction and exclusionary views of

language still reigned.

With the establishment of disciplinary structures in the late 1970s, the

relationship between the discipline and the course became similar to many other fields

in which disciplinary scholars produced new knowledge that the course was to

communicate to students. But since much of composition scholarship has and still

continues to focus on developing the most effective methods for teaching writing, this

passage of material from the discipline to the course has been as much an imparting of

knowledge to instructors as to students. Ensuring the resistant character of the course is

only possible through the implementation of disciplinary knowledge. The hierarchy of

research over teaching in composition set in place by the reforms of the 60s and 70s has

a disciplinary effect on writing instructors, a relationship Strickland notes in the

"dominance of politically based pedagogies in the 1990 and into the twenty-first century

. . ." (117). The snowball effect "among compositions scholars to *feel the rightness* of

such pedagogies" (Strickland 117) because of their proliferation has resulted in a similar

effect on instructors. Because pedagogies privileged in disciplinary scholarship "also

always circulate as managerial tools deployed by writing program administrators, they

also function, through their repetition, to seemingly persuade composition teachers of their rightness" (Strickland 117). Not only do Writing Program Administrators who are members of the discipline pursue the latest developments in the discipline in their programs and those instructors who want to be acknowledged as professional—usually those graduate teaching assistants earning degrees in composition—attend to and implement disciplinary knowledge.

The reforms that have led to composition becoming a discipline have also led, then, to the conceptual control literary studies traditionally exerted over the content and purpose of the first-year composition course being replaced by the control exerted by disciplinary composition. As a result, disciplinary knowledge has increasingly become the explicit content of the course itself, directly engaged not just by instructors who use it to improve teaching but by students as the subject matter itself. The "Writing about Writing" approach which is quickly gaining the status of an internal movement in composition and which attempts to help students improve their writing by engaging actual research from the discipline serves in many ways as a marker of this shift in the course to disciplinary knowledge. Students can only learn to write by employing the knowledge that disciplinary experts have created through research. Literature as the traditional content of the first year course worked in the past to recruit students into literary studies since every student had to take the course.[26] But with the "Writing about Writing" approach and similar efforts to make disciplinary knowledge the content of first-year composition it seems composition is slowly establishing the instructional dynamics for using the first-year course to recruit its own students. Tellingly, the

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[26] Evan Watkins has noted that the discipline of English "is always in the business of recruiting" (9). Watkins goes so far as to argue that the foregrounding of theory in English "in one way or another, under whatever name" is a result, in part, of facilitating the recruiting of students into the discipline.

"Writing about Writing" approach has been framed by the two scholars with which the movement is most directly associated, Elizabeth Wardle and Douglas Downs, as teaching first-year composition as an "Introduction to Writing Studies" course (558).

Disciplinary composition has, thus, become to the composition course what literature once was, what Susan Miller described as literature's traditional "high" to first-year composition's "low" (53). Not surprisingly, then, the relationship between the discipline and the course reflects the relationship that existed between literature and composition. Those engaged in the scholarly work of the discipline are typically tenured or work on the tenure track while those teaching the course continue to be employed contingently as graduate teaching assistants, adjuncts, or lecturers. Scholars in the discipline enjoy greater material rewards, associated as their scholarship is with the creation of new disciplinary knowledge and the ideals generated by disciplinary research. Writing instructors are often underpaid and overworked, their teaching involved in the real world of teaching and interacting with students who have not yet been initiated into the discipline. These divisions are generally obscured by the fact that composition research so often concerns itself with teaching.[27] Since scholars research

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[27] The recent claim by some scholars that composition should divest itself of its traditional focus on pedagogy in favor of theorizing writing reflects the low value that continues to be placed on the course. Sidney I. Dobrin, one of the most outspoken of these scholars has argued this position in the familiar terms of the course's oppressive character: "Theory attached to classroom practice is necessarily, always already co-opted and cannot, by definition, be emancipatory since classroom practice is sanctioned by the institution. Thus, any hope of real emancipatory work in theory, in composition studies, must be disassociated from the classroom" (Dobrin 13). One cannot help but wonder where Dobrin does his theorizing if not in and as part of the institution of the University of Florida. Watkins' points out astutely that the critical work we want students to take into the world with them is critical work that we are able to do precisely because our jobs provide the resources in time, support, and professional demand for us to do that work (3-4). One of the problems for students to enact the critical theories we supply them with in the "real world," then, is that students often do not work and live in these same circumstances. In other words, Dobrin's sense that the site of the first-year course prevents emancipatory possibilities of instruction applies just as completely to the work of theorizing writing. As I hope is clear, I see that work as supported by the institution precisely because it serves the same institutional purposes Dobrin claims apply only to first-year composition.

practices like teaching and administration, composition is commonly seen as a teaching-focused discipline—especially teaching in the first-year course—despite the fact that advancement in disciplinary composition is based on research and the "superstars" of the field are those who have broken new disciplinary ground with their scholarship. Of course, such "superstars" are assumed to be good teachers (because of the subject of their scholarship), but if you want a job in English but don't want to teach first-year composition, your best bet is to get a Ph.D. in Composition and Rhetoric.

As the high to the low of composition, literary study served to define an ideal of writing that imposed a single cultural and linguistic standard on students through current-traditional instruction. The sense of great literature expressing universal truth on which this dynamic was based was not present with the advent of literary studies in the late 1800s but emerged only as critics challenged the primarily historical and bibliographical scholarship that defined the early days of literature's professionalization (Cain 92-94). Likewise, having taken up the high position in relation to the course, disciplinary composition has spent several decades working out its disciplinary ideal through the methodological debates of the late 1970s, the social turn of the 1980s, and the anti-foundationalism of the 1990s (Nystrand, Greene, and Wiemelt 273), which it now passes along to the composition course. As I have demonstrated, that ideal is a professional mandate to composition instructors to create a radically inclusive, anti-foundationalist pedagogy in the first-year composition classroom. As the definition of "good writing" based on literary ideals and expressed by current-traditional rhetoric molded students for production and consumption in the industrial era, so disciplinary composition's definition of "good rhetoric" based on anti-foundationalist theories

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similarly prepares students for life within the framework of the dominant culture in post-industrial society. In other words, the ideal of inclusion the discipline both provides for the course and demands of instructors imposes on students the fluid identity required for long tail market economics to maximize market intensification.

A Pedagogy of the Ideal

The hierarchical relationship between disciplinary composition and the composition course leads to the creation of pedagogies that impose on students the fluid identity required by the niche-market economics of post-industrial capitalism. As a reflection of composition's professional model, expert instruction must advance a critical perspective on the status quo, an effort often framed as developing students' critical consciousness. Because such pedagogies challenge views in which many students are invested, students resist the political goals of such courses. While this resistance is to be expected, it represents a crisis for professional instruction in that it demonstrates the exclusionary, and thus, unprofessional, character of that pedagogy. Professional instructors must, then, find ways to validate students' resistant perspectives while still advancing the critical goals of the course. Expert instructors must find a way to include the student perspectives that are necessarily excluded by the political goals of the pedagogy. In other words, instructors must eliminate the contradiction between the politics of instruction and students' resistant perspectives. Because the professional model of composition frames the politics of critical composition courses as resulting from anti-foundationalist critique, student resistance becomes the result of a retained foundationalist, or a-rhetorical, perspective on the part of students. The expert instructor's job becomes, then, helping students redefine their resistant identity in anti-

foundationalist terms which at once eliminates student resistance to professional pedagogy even as it allows students to nominally retain their resistant subjectivity. In this way, composition instructors embracing the mandate of the field's professional model foster perspectives on identity that serve the post-industrial economy. These pedagogical dynamics are increasingly becoming the norm in the field of composition instruction as reflected in scholarship on writing pedagogy. In her 2002 study, "Critical Pedagogy's 'Other': Constructions of Whiteness in Education for Social Change,"

Jennifer Seibel Trainor examines the crisis of exclusion that student resistance represents in the context of teaching white students whose "rhetorics of being" (637) are bound up in inequitable social systems. Trainor begins by describing how resistance by students who embrace racist systems of white power demonstrates the exclusionary character of critical pedagogies by requiring these pedagogies to position such students as "outsiders" to the ethical goals of multiculturalist critical instruction. Trainor is cognizant of the problems students' exclusionary discourses pose for her practice of professional instruction noting, "we can't include within our borders those who advocate that to which we are morally and politically opposed" (636). But, as an ethical instructor who values radical inclusion, Trainor also recognizes the need to include these students and so comes to a clearer articulation of her difficulty asking "how do we bring those outsiders in without compromising the ethical integrity of the critical project?" (637). While the ethical goals of critical pedagogy demand the exclusion of student perspectives that support existing systems of racist domination, the expectations

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of professional composition instruction require professional writing teachers to find some means of including these same viewpoints.

The mandate to include these excluded students leads Trainor to conduct her study on students' responses to the critical composition pedagogies being taught in three different writing courses. Trainor's discussion of her study focuses on the responses to this pedagogy by two white students with particular attention given to a young man Trainor names Paul who strongly resisted the critical goals of the course. As Trainor explains, in response to accounts of historical injustices perpetrated by whites, Paul objected to the "bias" of course texts offering rationalizations of patriarchy and European oppression of Africans in ways that drew heavily from "cultural discourses widely available in the United States and rightly understood as part of the cultural and linguistic apparatus that rationalizes the current social order . . ." (642). In one instance Paul criticized a course text for "'racism' against whites and the biased nature" of an author's point of view and consistently embraced, by his own later admission, "misreadings" or "simplified, resistant readings" (Trainor 643) of course texts. Through his resistance, Paul represents the exclusion necessary to advance the political goals of the course which thus positioned him "as the problematic other that vexes the practice of critical pedagogy" (Trainor 642).

As Trainor's study reveals, the source of Paul's resistance was primarily the result of his adherence to an essentialist view of his white identity. For Paul, the course texts like James Loewen's *Lies My Teacher Told Me* and Elizabeth Martinez's *500 Years of Chicano History: In Pictures* that described historical oppression and current injustices by whites were a personal attack that painted him as a racist. As Trainor

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explains, "When I asked Paul if he felt the texts or his classmates were literally blaming him, personally, for past injustices or current inequalities, his answer was an emphatic 'yes'" (643). Paul's perception of course texts and activities were thus read through a lens of a "powerful essentialism" (Trainor 643) regarding his white identity that linked him to the injustices perpetrated by whites everywhere and at any time. The result was that "Paul's strong identification with the 'bad guys' in each text made him a defensive and emotional reader, less inclined to suspend judgment or to hypothesize sympathetic intentions on the part of the writer" (Trainor 643). Paul's strong sense of "guilt by association" (Trainor 643) made him "unable to locate in the texts or discussions a positive articulation of his identity, of whiteness" meaning that for him the class represented "a negation of identity, of self, of humanness, altogether" (Trainor 645). While Paul was a major participant in the course, his subject position was conceptually excluded from the politics of the course—as it had to be—which in turn revealed the unprofessional nature of the pedagogy.

By locating the source of Paul's resistance, Trainor demonstrates that critical pedagogies that leave essentialist identities in place fail to meet professional composition's standards of radical inclusion. Truly inclusive pedagogies will "help students articulate antiessentialist identities as whites and to work through the paradoxes of constructing an antiracist white identity" (Trainor 467). While Trainor does not go into detail about how instructors might accomplish this redefinition of student identity, her study demonstrates how the radical inclusion mandated by the professional model of composition leads to pedagogies that encourage students to embrace fluid definitions of identity which disassociate students from subject positions

they have naturalized as central to their sense of self. The demands of radical inclusion create the exigence for finding ways to eliminate the foundationalist beliefs that put students in opposition to the foundationalist political ideals of disciplinary composition. In other words, the professional model of composition as imposed on instructors by the discipline encourages pedagogies that foster fluid constructions of identity in students.

As I noted in the introduction to this chapter, these dynamics are especially prominent in scholarship regarding teaching critical consciousness to students of faith. The work of Shannon Carter provides a more detailed account of how these dynamics play out in actual classroom practice. Taking up the question of student faith in her article "Living inside the Bible (Belt)," Carter begins her discussion of teaching students of faith with the crisis exclusion poses for professional composition. Carter frames her encounter with student faith by noting that "the evangelical Christianity with which a number of my students most identify functions—rhetorically, ideologically, practically—in ways that appear completely and irreconcilably at odds with my pedagogical and scholarly goals" (572). Yet while Carter admits that fundamentalist Christian students "push her tolerance for difference" (572), she laments that writing instruction in the university, by denouncing faith-based perspectives as "'anti-intellectual,' 'close-minded,' and even counterproductive" (Carter 578), encourages students to surrender their faith-based identities, "something we absolutely want to avoid" (592). She goes on to denounce "the hostile ways in which [students'] Bible-based reasoning was received [in the academy] forced them to keep their Bible-believing identities 'in check'" (576). Even as Carter pursues pedagogical goals with

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which her students' faith-based perspectives often conflict, Carter feels compelled to find ways to validate students' evangelical identities.

To address these conflicting demands, Carter turns to the concept of rhetorical dexterity. Derived from New Literacy Studies and activity theory, rhetorical dexterity "calls upon students to effectively read, understand, manipulate, and negotiate the cultural and linguistic codes of a new community of practice based on a relatively accurate assessment of a more familiar one" (579). The concept of literacy on which rhetorical dexterity operates is expansive and figures literate practices as highly contextualized. As Carter explains, "Literate practices, at least as I am seeing them here, are those sanctioned and endorsed by others recognized as literate members of a particular *community* of practice" (579). This includes the values and beliefs that particular communities hold making literacy "both a set of socially sanctioned, community-based 'skills' and *content* that is validated, produced, and reproduced within that same community of practice" (Carter 579). Consider literacy in these terms reveals the claims of faith-based perspectives to be a literate practice linked to a particular community. As Carter argues, "As in any community, the literate practices of evangelical traditions of Christianity are those sanctioned and endorsed by other literate members" (579).

The disconnect obtaining between the teaching of a critical academic discourse and student faith for Carter thus results from a foundationalist view of literacy. Explaining that the disconnect between academic and faith-based literacies is "not something to be glossed over as given and irreconcilable" (581), Carter argues that academic claims that faith-based perspectives are a result of false consciousness or a

result of ignorance fail to recognize the contextualized character of their own literate

practices. From the perspective of an anti-foundationalist conception of literacy, the

hostility toward the Bible that Carter's students experienced "may be better understood

as a dispute over appropriateness" (Carter 580). When academics reject students' use of

the Bible in their academic writing, these academics are, in fact, asserting the literacy

practices privileged in the academic community. Students who use faith-based

arguments in the academy are working from the assumption that the literacy practices of

their evangelical community are a "universal, portable skill-set and/or content," (Carter

588) applicable in any situation. Conflicts arise because both academics and

evangelicals embrace a view of literacy as autonomous and a-contextual. In other

words, the assertion of one truth over another, for Carter, represents a separation of

truth from literacy practices which reflects a failure to understand literacy.

Because academic literacies are privileged in the academy and the academy

represents the path to social mobility, the assertion of academic literacy as a universal

practice can lead students to abandon their faith-based perspectives as Carter notes

happened with a student she calls "James" (588). Carter bemoans her failure to help

James retain his evangelical selfhood, expressing the influence of composition's

demand for radical inclusion by asking, "How are we to give students like James some

control over [the academic] environment so that they don't commit heretical acts within

this community of practice that considers the Bible heretical yet aren't required to give

up that Bible entirely as their 'primary sense of selfhood?'" (586). Carter's answer is to

have evangelical students develop rhetorical dexterity by examining the literate

practices of their faith-based communities of practice to demonstrate the contextual

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nature of the community's literacy skills and content knowledge. Having recognized these practices as thoroughly contextualized, students will be better able to understand how academic literacies also operate as a context dependent and "dynamic sign system and academic discourse [functions] as an experience of overlapping communities of practice" (Carter 588).

By revealing situated character of evangelical and academic truth claims, Carter argues that rhetorical dexterity can help prevent students from feeling the need to abandon their Bible-believing identities. Discussing the implications of her conception of literacy and truth claims as context-specific, Carter explains that rhetorical dexterity means that "instead of one literacy's being inherently more significant or valuable than another, their respective worth is determined by appropriateness to context" (579). The flattening of the hierarchy between academic and non-academic practices that an anti-foundationalist perspective provides means students need not stop being Bible-believing Christians even as they enact a more appropriate academic literacy in the university. The two are not incompatible or in conflict because neither practice can claim a universal truth that functions as more legitimate than the other apart from the context in which it is practiced. As a result, Carter concludes that taking and teaching the perspective of rhetorical dexterity allows students to "maintain both their faith-based and their academic literacies without being required to substitute one for the other" (574).

Carter's concept suggests the limits of academic literacy's claims to superiority over non-academic practices, but it accomplishes this feat only by imposing the same limitations on faith-based practices. In other words, Carter's pedagogy encourages

students to define their faith-based identities in anti-foundationalist terms that deny the claims of faith-based literacies to be "inherently more significant and valuable" than other literacies. As with Trainor, the need to include students that characterizes professional composition instruction developed in response to the emergence of post-industrialism leads Carter to develop a pedagogy that accomplishes that inclusion by defining a student subjectivity that could limit the number of niche markets evangelicals might inhabit as a fluid, anti-foundationalist practice that carries no such restrictions. Tellingly, Carter explains that an anti-foundationalist perspective on literacy positions evangelical identities alongside community practices like fantasy football, plumbing, and computer programming (574) as well as factory work, fishing, Xerox repair, midwifery, and academic work in composition (580). The potential for such a pedagogy to support market intensification is hard to overlook. That this results from the ways in which Carter's pedagogy aligns with the outcomes of the historical process I have described in previous chapters only further suggests this connection.

Revising the Story of English

The emergence of post-industrial society and the globalized, niche-market capitalism with which it is associated has meant that the story of post-industrial higher education is, in many ways, the story of the decline of literature's institutional place in the university. As Bill Readings notes, in Anglophone adaptations of the German Research Model, literary studies once served an important role in unifying the disparate specializations of the university by functioning "as the major discipline entrusted by the nation-state with the task of reflecting on cultural identity" (70). Literary Studies and the English department that housed it did the serious work of ordering the disciplines in

service of the nation-state by reminding everyone of their shared culture. The unifying core of the university as culture is no longer a viable one in the face of the social fragmentation and globalization of post-industrial society because post-industrialism undermines the very concept of a monolithic culture. Readings observes, "The economics of globalization mean that the University is no longer called upon to train citizen subjects, while the politics of the end of the Cold War mean that the University is no longer called upon to uphold national prestige by producing and legitimating national culture" (14). As persons increasingly align themselves with more individualized sources of identity and the culture of the nation-state becomes less important as a source of identity or collective action, the usefulness of cultural reproduction in the university becomes more difficult to argue for.

The collapse of literature as a profession and the elimination of its culturally unifying role in the university means that the conceptual and ideological basis it provides for current-traditional rhetoric is no longer viable as a selection mechanism for the dominant culture. Literature, in short, can no longer serve as what Susan Miller has called the "high" to the first-year composition course's "low" (53). It can no longer be tasked with providing the ideal that disciplines student subjectivity precisely because the monolithic culture embodied in that ideal no longer serves the interests of the dominant culture. The resistance to current-traditional rhetoric disciplinary composition pursues and which it imposes on the composition course amounts, then, to a rejection of a position now generally abandoned by the dominant culture and which is, in fact, counterproductive to the needs of domination in a post-industrial context. As Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri have demonstrated,

When we begin to consider the ideologies of corporate capital and the world market, it certainly appears that the postmodernist and postcolonialist theorists who advocate a politics of difference, fluidity, and hybridity in order to challenge the binaries and essentialisms of modern sovereignty have been outflanked by the strategies of power. Power has evacuated the bastion they are attacking and has circled around to their rear to join them in the assault in the name of difference. (138)

The very resistance to the mainstream that disciplinary composition imagines itself as enacting is, in fact, what drives the economic systems by which the status quo remains in place. With the definition of anti-formalism expanded to anti-foundationalism, disciplinary composition embraces the rejection of modernist principles which itself supports the dominant culture in a post-industrial society.

As disciplinary composition has instantiated its hierarchical relationship with the course and its role in providing the ideal with which to enact the gatekeeping function of the course, composition programs have increasingly become separated from English departments and made into "stand alone" programs. Even within many English departments composition programs continue to develop an increasingly autonomous character with expanding numbers of faculty in composition taking greater control over English department writing programs in the form of curriculum development and program administration. Literary study remains prominent in most English departments, of course, despite falling numbers of majors and its increased marginalization in the corporate academy that values the creation of marketable research commodities. Literature's continued importance is in part a result of the inertia of existing conditions but is also a reflection of its role in recruiting exploitable labor to staff composition courses. For while composition—the discipline and the first-year course together—can increasingly carry the burden of enacting the gatekeeping apparatus without literature,

what it cannot yet do is generate enough composition graduate students to staff the sections of the first-year course.

While literary studies is no longer capable of serving as the cultural hub of the university, that traditional role remains appealing to a niche market of students. The sense of cultural refinement and a critical perspective that provides those who "get" works of literature and dense literary theory with a strong sense of difference from the general public retains its power to attract enough students to serve as composition instructors. As Marc Bousquet points out, the abysmal job market for literature graduate students means that the work of teaching composition as a MA or PhD student can no longer be described as an apprenticeship for a faculty position in English, but is instead all the career most literature students will have (13). Bousquet explains that this circumstance is not an accident, but how the system is meant to operate in order to keep labor costs down and undermine faculty influence. The notion that graduate study in literature is a dead end has become a part of the black humor of graduate student life in English departments across the country. But these conditions only reinforce the sense of critical perspective and cultural refinement that the study of literature allegedly represents. For the graduate student seeking a sense of distinction from the mainstream, the fact that the study of literature is not valued as a profession by an increasingly corporatized university or the broader culture is only a mark of its incompatibility with an uncritical and unjust society.

The conditions of contemporary English and the relative standing of disciplinary composition, the first-year composition course, and literature reflect the shifts that have taken place from an industrial to a post-industrial educational model. But the changes in

the socio-economic context that position resistance to current-traditionalist pedagogies as no longer resistant are precisely what the binary master narratives of composition history obscure. Composition's historical master narratives accomplish this feat by embracing a wide perspective of the history of the course, wide enough to link its creation with the industrial revolution, anxiety over immigration and dialect degeneration, the creation of land grant universities, social upheaval, and the development of the research university. This perspective is useful because it demonstrates the links between the creation of the composition course and the needs of the dominant class to maintain an oppressive status quo that serves their interests. In contrast, histories of the discipline take a narrow perspective wide enough only to frame composition's emergence into academic legitimacy as the result of intellectual developments in research on language or, at its broadest, the result of grass roots movements on the part of the politically, culturally, and economically marginalized. The abrupt narrowing of historical perspective that characterizes the shift from the history of the course to the history of the discipline excludes the significant role played by post-industrialism in order to elide the potential complicity with the dominant culture in the post-industrial context and frame disciplinary composition as the heroic struggle of compositionists resisting the injustices of the status quo. Reintroducing the post-industrial context into composition history thus breaks down the binary master narrative, revealing that the history of composition is not simply the long quest to liberate composition from its devalued status in the university by pursuing a more rhetorical or liberatory approach to writing instruction.

Instead, composition's secondary status in the pre-professional era and its increased academic legitimacy in the professional era reflect two different forms of gatekeeping serving the dominant culture in two different contexts. Composition's history can thus be defined as a process of adjusting language instruction to serve the needs of the dominant culture in shifting socio-economic contexts. Though this revision suggests the ways in which the allegedly resistant work of disciplinary-era compositionists has been complicit with capitalist structures, it reflects the distinction between intention and outcome as well as the ways that resistance and complicity articulate a vexed and complicated relationship. This provides, perhaps a useful perspective on the past by complicating as well the idea that figures like A.S. Hill and Charles William Eliot of Harvard were only trying to exclude working class and minority students from the university. Eliot's lament about men "leaping from farm or shop to court-room or pulpit" (Qtd. In Douglas 126) might be read not just as an expression of the anxieties of the dominant class but as a genuine desire—if thoroughly classist in its assumptions—to educate such men to ensure the prosperity of the nation. Such re-readings of the past that the revision presented here enables suggest as well that our own work does not always result in the liberatory outcomes we desire. Composition historians likely naturalized the narrowed perspectives that framed disciplinary composition as resistant because, at the time, much of what they were doing to reject current-traditional practices was resistant.

This perspective also reveals the rhetorical situation of an imagined literacy crisis as the means by which democratic educational intentions are fully appropriated in the service of the dominant culture. Compositionists in the 1960s embraced anti-

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formalist pedagogies in response to the demands of post-industrialism, and in many ways advanced an expanded access to higher education by doing so. This anti-formalism invited a more rhetorical and process-oriented approach to writing instruction that seemed to genuinely improve, if nothing else, student experience in writing classes and the sensitivity of writing instruction to the differing dialects students brought with them to the classroom. The literacy crisis that attended the drop in test scores that resulted from expanded access threatened the continued use of these resistant pedagogies. The crisis expresses, then, the anxieties of the dominant culture in the face of widespread socio-economic change and, because it is expressed by those in power, it requires a rhetorically effective response. As a persuasive act, the response to literacy crisis embraces perspectives of the dominant culture—the cultural refinement of literature in the 1870s, the claim to professional expertise in the 1970s—and thereby amounts to a politically directed development that favors the expectations of those in power. In other words, writing instruction that results from response to crisis is necessarily dependent on a perspective of writing and rhetoric that is limited by the acceptability of that response to the anxieties of the dominant class.

The response to the crisis of the 1870s thus amounted to a reductive view of rhetoric as attention chiefly to matters of style reflecting the emphasis on writing as an expression of taste. Certainly style is part of writing and rhetoric, but it is not the fullness of rhetorical practice. Figuring style as that fullness served the political ends of emphasizing cultural taste to naturalize the dialect of the upper classes in first-year composition courses. The response to the literacy crisis of the 1970s was a claim to professional expertise. Academic expertise, particularly expertise framed initially in the

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scientific discourse of cognitivist psychology, was a rhetorically acceptable response, invested as the dominant culture has been in expertise since the end of the nineteenth century. But this claim to expertise positioned professional composition in direct opposition to traditional formalist pedagogies that, combined with the continued search for a demonstrably disciplinary-specific knowledge to position composition as beyond the reach of public tampering, led to an anti-foundationalist definition of rhetoric. The fact that the widespread and enthusiastic acceptance of anti-foundationalism in composition derives from a response to the literacy crisis that the dominant culture found rhetorically acceptable suggests that the anti-foundationalist views of rhetoric we employ are the source of our complicity.

A richer historical perspective on composition's disciplinary history does not, then, only change our view of the past forty years but raises important questions about current practices. By challenging the binary master narrative of composition's history, a history that includes the post-industrial context provides the opportunity to critically appraise current practices. Since resistance to current-traditional rhetoric can no longer act as the basis for a liberatory pedagogy, the inherently resistant nature of constructivist and anti-foundationalist perspectives must now be called into question. The pedagogical efforts to eliminate dissensus in the classroom that result from an anti-foundationalist perspective on rhetoric prevent the inquiry that arises from engagement with student difference. Instead of always presuming that an anti-foundationalist theory will ensure the emancipatory character of our work, we must now take the responsibility of choosing what perspectives we need to take to advance the inclusive goals of our pedagogy in the shifting contexts of the world around us. A broader view of our

disciplinary history means we have difficult decisions and challenging developments

ahead. But difficulty decisions are what rhetoric was made for.

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