FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION HANDBOOKS: BUFFERING THE WINDS OF CHANGE

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A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

Kris Blair and Sue Carter Wood, Advisors

This dissertation discusses composition history treatments and the scant amount of scholarly research devoted solely to composition textbooks, though scholars such as Robin Varnum and Stephen North argue that studying textbooks cannot divulge much about the history of composition instruction. However, in “Handbooks” History of a Genre” and “Handbook Bibliography,” Robert Connors sets in motion detailed historical studies of composition textbooks. Composition textbooks can provide insight into how publishers think instructors should teach students or how colleges want instructors to teach students—merely how students should learn to write, what students should learn about writing.

Most importantly, this dissertation explores structural changes of handbooks by: first, in Chapter Three, defining the composition handbook genre as one comprised of textbooks that help instructors mark essays and help students correct essays; Second, in Chapter Four, tracing the development of purely American composition textbooks from the 1800s to 2005, namely by describing how John C. Hodges's Harbrace College Handbook has evolved since it's first printing in 1941; and third, comparing features in the most recent editions of Harbrace to features in current textbooks: The St. Martin's Handbook and Penguin Handbook. Though the composition handbook genre has markedly changed during the last century, I conclude Chapter Four by arguing that the guiding theory behind composition handbooks has not changed. New handbook chapters dedicated to writing with computers or composing in a digital age merely come with corresponding correction codes.

Though Connors argues in 1983 that composition handbooks have not changed although
composition theory has, my exploration of handbooks shows that handbooks have remained largely similar to Woolley's Handbook, first published in 1907. Handbooks have since then and still exist as tools to assist grading (instructor) and correcting (student) compositions.

Because composition handbooks still have structures similar to the 1941 edition of Harbrace, in Chapter Five I discuss hyperliteracy and propose further research into the usability of composition handbooks, as current students generally know how to navigate hypermedia though handbooks have retained their index-driven form.
To Laura Justine

-To the bluegills-

Keep on swimming
If your subject definition do need,
First briefly define it, then proceed:
Thus Education, more at large defined,
Becomes the culture of the human mind.
Next, if you can, find out your subject’s cause,
And show from whence its origin it draws:
And thus, if Education’s cause be traced,
It will be found in love parental placed.
Ancient or modern, may your subject be;
Pursue it, therefore, to antiquity:
Thus, Education will appear,
To have been the ancients’ first and greatest care.
Your subject may to distant nations roam,
Or else relate to objects nearer home:
Thus, different modes of Education yield,
To every writer’s thoughts, an ample field.
The subject which you treat is good or ill,
Or else a mixture of each principle:
Good Education ranks us with the best,
While bad degrades a man below a beast.
And ere your subject a conclusion know,
The advantage or the disadvantage show.
—J. Walker
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*Is language the adequate expression of all realities?* --Friedrich Nietzsche

Acknowledging the contributions, the urges, the suggestions of those whom have helped me complete this project comes as a boastful move on my part, as acknowledging the helpful encouragement and suggestions of those whom have played a hand in this project signifies I have accomplished something of significant merit. I'm proud of what I have produced; however, I have only skimmer the surface of a complicated, multi-modal, cross-disciplinary, rich, to say the least, topic.

Somehow, thinking of those who have fostered in me this interest of the creation and development of first-year composition handbooks, and thinking of those who have urged me to pursue this interest, generates an interminable list that reaches far into practices of the past yet grasps at current scholarship. Though I have peers who teach models and modes, Hugh Blair's eighteenth-century *Lectures* describe those very modes. In the last quarter of the nineteenth-century, John F. Genung penned some of the very rhetoric textbooks that evolved into our composition handbooks, laden with grammatical and mechanical instruction, *but* battled the Overseers, fighting against college-level grammar instruction. Composition scholars, historians and pedagogues, produced scholarship about these same struggles that have come to define Composition Studies, that have come to bring forth First-Year Composition, with its roots firmly planted within rhetoric textbooks and composition handbooks written by the likes of Abbott, Wendell, Genung, and Hill. I owe much to these scholars, Berlin, Connors, Crowley, Brereton, as I do to those who first told me to seek out those scholars, Taylor, Keller, Carter, Blair. This little project started in 1998.
I came to work on my Master's Degree in Literature at South Dakota State University in the same manner that Cool Hand Luke's Lucas Jackson ventured into the military. I guess I was just passing time. I've passed some time in the military, myself.

As a literature MA student, I really had no idea of the complexity of Composition and Rhetoric. My first glimpse into the field came at the hand of Michael Keller's Seminar in Teaching Composition. For that class, Mike asked for research about any aspect of Composition Studies. After looking at a list of possible topics, the history of composition instruction in America appealed to me merely because my mother's recollection of first-year composition is much different from the pedagogical practices my fellow graduate students and I discussed in Mike's seminar. Mom was a bit worked up when I tried to explain peer workshops, revision and instructor-student conferences to her. “What? No. No no no. We just wrote our essays, handed them in, got a grade, and tried to make our next essay better,” Mom told me.

So I began my project by photocopying course descriptions of Rhetoric 1a, 1b, 1c, and Composition in SDSU's Course Bulletins, making a paper train that marked changes in composition for a period spanning more than one hundred years. I had absolutely no idea what to do with those photocopies, so Mike directed me to James Berlin's two major composition texts which fueled my interest in composition studies, leading me to research by Connors and Crowley. For the first time, I came to realize the vast scope of Composition Studies.

Still, I didn't know much at all about composition instruction or composition instruction history. What struck me were some claims that I ran across during my historical research: Incorrect usage indicates either laziness or “an atrophy of the mind,” claims Walter Savage Landor. And with Landor's comments fresh in my mind as I sat in the Writing Center surrounded by a wall of handbooks, I, with my fellow graduate teaching assistants, began to browse handbooks. On one hand, not much of the scholarship, that I didn't know existed, taught me
much about composition instruction. One the other hand, I learned just as many composition instructors do: by studying the tools of the trade.

Those handbooks often humored the other tutors and I, as we would search through them, looking for the most depressing sample sentences: “After my father lost his job at the mine he has to work at McDonald's,” and the most pointed, institutional, demeaning instructional language.

During one of those searches, John Taylor overheard us and then came into the Writing Center with a copy of College Composition and Communication and told me to read Deborah Hawhee's article about John Hodges and the Harbrace Handbook. Now, John Taylor was the first professor of mine to listen to me talk about course topics and then put a book in my hand. Such a small gesture magnifies the importance of the concept of university, of the search for knowledge, of how we borrow other people's ideas to create our own. His interest inspired me to continue this research on my own and has also inspired me to listen to my own students and to encourage my own students to pursue issues that class discussions raise—mainly by lending them my own books.

Book Borrowing. Hawhee's article had a works cited page with sources other than handbooks. Berlin cited several sources that I could find and read. So, with further encouragement from John in his Research Methods seminar, I developed bibliographies about composition instruction history that not only identified composition history works but also indicated which libraries I would need to go to get those sources. Thus I sat with an extensive bibliography, copies of course descriptions dating back some one-hundred years, a twenty-page research project and access to student essays from the 1890s. I wrote my Master's thesis about the great American pot-boiler, Timothy Shay Arthur's Ten Nights in a Bar-Room, and what I
saw there but kept my composition history bibliography and other materials in a three-ring binder, browsing through them from time to time.

That binder led me to Bowling Green State University, where I worked on my PhD in Rhetoric and Composition. Something about that binder told me to keep going. To put aside those applications to technical writing positions in Minneapolis. I had work to finish. Oddly, that unfinished work landed me in the same uncomfortable situations that my Master's thesis landed me in. Instead of explaining the temperance novel and telling people that only *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and the *Bible* sold more copies in the 1800s than *Ten Nights in a Bar-Room*, I was telling people that there's something to say about composition handbooks. They have been doing something to all of us. But what?

I wanted to discover what those handbooks are up to. I wanted to know why those student essays from the 1890s discussed the rhetoric of stylistic elements and linguistics, not grammar and usage. Why did those students in the 1890s analyze stylistic devices and why did *The St. Martin's Guide to Teaching Writing* offer a chapter about analyzing style, ala Edward P. J. Corbett's famous fourth chapter of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*?

So when I went to BGSU, I put myself into one of those uncomfortable positions when all of the graduate students in the Rhetoric and Composition program met for the first time. On that fateful first day, I took a section out of my composition history binder—the copies of course descriptions dating back 100 years, and placed them on the table before me. Eyes glossed as I introduced myself and then introduced my little folder of research, my project and my question. Embarrassed, I aborted me treatise; however, Sue Carter gave me a warm smile and said it's great to see that I have a dissertation topic in mind. Sue has always been exceptional at encouraging students to research what interests them and in her classes. I felt more than comfortable researching and writing about historical elements of composition.
Nudging me, Sue asked if Genung really was a current-traditional rhetorician. His lectures say no. His books say no. The scholarship says yes. With Sue, the class could spend time in the archives, inhaling the scent of old paper. But other professors, Kris Blair, for example, were more akin to foster an appreciation of the scent of circuit boards, of electronics. Thus, while Sue encouraged me to look more deeply into composition instruction history and the history of rhetoric, Kris encouraged me to consider culture—to consider the technological changes that influence composition instruction and to consider the multi-modality of any textbook. Gary Heba asked me about usability and the ways people use textbooks.

When thinking of the academy, I used to think of the interplay of politics and scholarship—as many composition scholars do. The intertextuality of critique often hedged my research. However, the faculty at BGSU only encouraged my research and offered new, interesting angles and new discussions. After almost five years of discussing handbooks and composition history, I was still excited.

Of course, the inevitable happened.

After I passed my preliminary examinations, I decided to take a vacation before writing my dissertation, so I went to the Black Hills of South Dakota to hike, bike and build houses for the summer. One evening, June 6th, I went to a paleontology lecture in Hill City, a town of about 750 residents. There, friends sat me next to the local newspaper reporter (well, reporter/copy editor/ad rep/deliverer/etc.) who also graduated from SDSU, where her father is an English professor. Laura Woodard and I spent two months hanging out; in the Black Hills, that meant hiking, taking in the scenery, riding the trolley in Deadwood and going on our first real date—at the Flying T Chuckwagon Supper.

In August, I returned to BGSU to begin my dissertation. By October, Laura, beautiful, sweet, energetic, feisty and independent, won me over. I moved back to the Black Hills to court
her. I made my decision one Monday and was in the Black Hills by the next Wednesday. That decision almost killed my dissertation. As I was courting Laura, I worked for my parents, building log homes. My dissertation fell to neglect. My mother had a stroke and two surgeries. Gary Heba told me that I could not leave Bowling Green, Ohio, until I finished my dissertation I came to sorely understand his advice. Engaged and with no direction my parents and my future parents-in-law pushed me back onto the dissertation track—and into a lake cabin.

I spent the summer of 2005 in Chuck and Sarah Woodard's lake cabin at Lake Cochrane, SD. Before then, I worked for my parents half-time and tried to write half-time. Without such a job, I could not have fallen back into writing. However, without the lake cabin, I could not have finished my dissertation. I spent mornings and evenings fishing for “delicious bass,” bluegill, crappie. I spent the afternoons and late nights writing—away from wedding planning, away from hammering and nailing, away from the love of my life. That cabin and that lake did something to me, though. As I took in the sunsets, as I took in the wildlife, as I took in those still waters, I came to.

However, I could not have merely spent the summer writing my dissertation, as I sorely needed the guidance and advice of my advisors, Kris and Sue. Often, they responded to chapter drafts within days, helping me finish my work before the wedding and before moving to Louisiana. They expressed patience as I learned Open Office, which helped me handle all of the graphics files. Of course, on one fateful Sunday, John Taylor lent me over a dozen handbooks.

This is a borrowed dissertation. Without the support of my parents: the rent-free apartment and extra pay; without the support of my inlaws: the great cabin with high-speed internet access and free rides to the library; without the support of my wife: the constant encouragement; without the support of professors Keller, Taylor, Heba, Wood, Blair: the encouragement; without the support of my advisors: the speedy reading and unwarranted
patience and understanding, this dissertation would not be complete. I've borrowed and borrowed and borrowed and for that, I can only offer mere *thanks*, with the hope that some day I can reach out to a student, to a person, in the ways you have taught me.
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Chapter One

Introduction

Premise

First-year composition handbooks have taken on many forms, from etiquette guides to rhetoric honers to grammar and formatting guides, since their inception in the late 1800s. American university and political culture have affected the structure and content of handbooks, just as handbooks have affected composition pedagogy. Additionally, composition instruction’s history and its shift from a course in deliberation to a course in how to write for college, has been documented by scholars such as Berlin, Brereton, Connors, Crowley and Kitzhaber. These historians have focused primarily on theoretical and pedagogical methodologies and affectations; however, research examining how the composition handbook operates as a knowledge-delivery interface that must simultaneously meet instructor, student, cultural and symbolic needs is missing. Examining structural developments of the composition handbook can help enrich composition histories. Given the historical substance of composition courses and of historical shifts in American culture and how the composition handbook has morphed into its current form, how its interface affects meaning, and how students and instructors use (and misuse) composition handbooks, this dissertation:

1. discusses composition history treatments and the scant amount of scholarly research primarily devoted to composition handbooks, most importantly noting that some scholars argue that historically examining textbooks cannot reveal how composition has been taught, composition handbooks have changed little in the last fifty years and handbooks operate separately from composition theory;
2. discusses genre characteristics of the handbook and speculates about how usability and literacy concerns affect how those features operate;

3. describes composition handbook development from 1890 to the present, most importantly noting how handbooks have shifted from literary texts to reference texts and marking changes;

4. argues for analysis of the handbook interface and handbook usability.

On Handbook Histories

Though I describe the handbook genre in Chapter Three, briefly describing what constitutes a handbook merits attention, as instructors often use books in addition to (and sometimes other than) composition handbooks. Readers contain compositions and essays from a broad range of genres, depending on the reader. Exploring Language, for example, contains selections related to language and literacy while Signs of Life contains selections related to popular culture. Some readers focus on material from research fields such as sociology or the sciences. Regardless of the focus of a reader, readers exist to provide composition students and instructors with model writing and texts for analysis.

Rhetorics often combine the material from readers and from handbooks by providing a selection of readings and assignment prompts in addition to sections addressing invention, audience analysis, and perhaps grammar and citing sources. The St. Martin's Guide to Writing, for example, incorporates the modes of discourse by containing sections dedicated to exposition, narration, description and argument. Each section describes the type of discourse, includes a selection of modal essays from professional writers and student writers, and includes a tutorial with process-type advice about how to write a composition of each section's mode.
Composition handbooks address issues pertaining to the actual process of writing compositions and sometimes websites, business letters, and the like. Handbooks might include sections about invention, selecting topics, audience address, English as a second language, and the like. Current handbooks most certainly contain sections dedicated to explaining grammatical rules, explaining usage, how to conduct research, and citing sources using Modern Language Association and American Psychological Association styles and sometimes other styles, such as Chicago. To facilitate finding certain sections, handbooks often include coded pages and lists of those code meanings within the covers. Brief handbooks such as Keys for Writers often only include sections pertaining to usage, grammar and citing sources.

In "Handbooks: History of a Genre," Robert Connors bemoans the historical lack of development of first-year composition handbooks, stating:

Most of the important development of the handbook form was over by 1960, and since that time there have been only a few novelties in the genre. […] Through the sixties and seventies, large handbooks and rhetoric texts came to be less and less distinguishable from one another. (96)

Donald Stewart agrees, stating that after he examined several composition handbooks in 1985, he found few that address much of the developments in writing instruction pedagogy and few that indicate awareness of groundbreaking research of the compositing process by scholars such as James Britton and Janet Emig (174) (see A Guide to Composition Pedagogies [2001]). Of the primary novelties that Connors identifies are the appearance of brief handbooks in the 1960s (to combat the 500+ page concise handbooks) and a brief reemergence of rhetoric texts, which were quickly replaced by grammar-centric guides during the literacy crisis of the 1970s (96-97).
course, though, Connors and Stewart merely discuss the static content of handbooks, not the myriad ways in which instructors employ them, as since the nineteen sixties and seventies, composition pedagogy has evolved and have become fragmented into different pedagogical approaches, leaving it nearly impossible for one handbook to effectively address all pedagogical approaches; even so, as Kathleen Welch argues, textbooks generally work in opposition to theory by operating as if no composition theory exists (269). Additionally, media design has evolved, creating new ways to structure and devise print books, which in turn, can help handbook authors more effectively arrange their material.

Given the above statements about composition textbooks, I would assume that scholars have conducted an abundance of scholarship about them; however, textbook scholarship appears mostly in insignificant paragraphs, chapters, editorial comments, pot shots in pedagogy discussions, and short articles in journals. The substantive studies of composition textbooks, though, are outdated or come from education specialists who might not have thorough experience in composition theory. Some critics have cited the narrow focus of research in composition histories problematic. In addition, perhaps in response to such criticism, scholars such as John C. Brereton and Robert Connors have called for historical examinations of composition instruction that include handbooks. This dissertation exists as one such examination that includes analyses of the mechanical structure of textbooks and assumptions of how they operate as knowledge generators in a field with a clearly outlined political and pedagogical history but a lacking history of how its primary classroom tool, the composition handbook, functions.

This discussion is not to say that studies of composition handbooks do not exist. One important although dated research report about handbooks is Nell Ann Pickett's "A Comparison
of Characteristics Desired by College English Teachers in a Composition Handbook with Characteristics of Recent Composition Handbooks" (1977). Pickett conducted a study of content and physical characteristics of composition textbooks, intending her study to help composition instructors judiciously choose texts. She asked 200 panelists at the Conference on College Composition and Communication to answer a questionnaire and 170 answered (indicating an interestingly relevant study for the time). The questionnaire posed a variety of questions about twenty popular composition handbooks. A summation of Pickett’s findings:

I. Physical Characteristics: Teachers wanted an "inexpensive, concise handbook with exercises, an instructor's manual, and a workbook;" however, none of the handbooks met those criteria;

II. Textual characteristics: Only seven of the twenty handbooks fulfilled preferences for "spacing, structure, unbiased sex and racial content, and style;"

III. Subject matter: No handbook satisfactorily covered "grammar, usage, punctuation, mechanics, words, sentences, and paragraphs". (3-8)

IV. Pickett’s findings resonate Connors’s argument that in the 1970s, the literacy crisis and the increasing number of international students in America needing ESL instruction pushed handbooks from the rhetorical matters they began to reexamine and back to grammatical and mechanical matters (96-97).

Missing from Pickett's analysis are detailed usability surveys about the textbook characteristics she studies and questions about then recent pedagogical developments, such as the writing

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2 Pickett’s questionnaire includes questions about structural topics such as order of information and callout box emphasis but this discussion is limited to whether those surveyed liked or disliked the information, not whether it worked or didn’t work (32-33).
process, stylistics, and the writing situation, for instance, and how they should influence handbooks. These omissions are mere signs of the age of the study. Nonetheless, Pickett's focus hearkens Stewart's lament that not enough composition specialists edit handbooks and that current handbooks focus on mechanical details of writing and ignore composition theory.
Pickett's study focuses on instructor desires for and assumptions about textbooks. Given this focus, Diane Ravich, in "Dumb Students? Or Dumb Textbooks?", criticizes the difficulty of secondary school textbooks and asserts that instructors, in pandering to student needs and to increase standardized test scores, must demand more complex, educationally complete textbooks from publishers (118). This call, then, answers Stewart's call for theoretically driven textbooks that serve both instructor and student needs—commodities that publishing houses may be unwilling to produce because publishing such handbooks would entail large-scale changes and abandoning a revenue generator that customers, instructors, have been familiar with for several years. Pickett's study, though, moves discussions about handbooks in the proper direction by removing focus from what publishers provide to what instructors want.

Still, however, another important question arises, and that is to what extent do instructors actually use composition textbooks? In "The Recognition of Usage Errors by Instructors of Freshman Composition," John Taylor and Sidney Greenbaum critique the methods and motives that college composition instructors use to find and correct errors in student compositions by studying 27 first-year composition instructors at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. In most cases, instructors identically labeled errors; however, instructors incorrectly labeled 29.5% of the errors and did not identify 6% of the errors. In fact, each instructor in the study misidentified at least one error and many instructors reported that they felt insecure and only partially competent when marking student essays (172).
Taylor and Greenbaum's study, then, raises some pertinent questions. For one, if composition handbooks are either student-centered or instructor-centered, instructors should understand the materials within them, which would give instructors more confidence. Taylor and Greenbaum conclude by arguing that instructors should attend periodic workshops to hone their grading skills and make them, most importantly, more confident graders; still, with regards to mechanical corrections, instructors should refer to their texts. Instances exist when instructors should but do not consult their handbooks when grading. Do instructors do this because they assume texts are wholly student-centered? What would make instructors more conversant with handbooks and why have they become less familiar with the material contained within such texts? Further, does the common structure of handbooks adequately serve both instructors and students? Reconsidering where Pickett left her study and examining the structure of the handbook, then, can help answer these questions, as such a study can show how the handbook-as-static-entity has become unusable—or at least undesired—by its two audience user groups.  

Further, though, instructor insecurity has endured as a long-standing teaching issue, which has been partially affected by cultural influences such as increased enrollment and the resulting change in student needs in the late 1800s and early 1900s (Brereton 7; Miller 48-50). The modes of discourse became the prominent mode of teaching writing and by 1894, a vast majority of composition handbooks utilized the modes (Connors, "Rise" 6, Composition 53-54; Berlin, Writing Instruction 17-18). The modes endured well into the 1900s, primarily because those instructing composition shifted from trained rhetors to trained literary scholars, implying that texts did not change because instructors no longer had thorough backing in rhetorical studies and did not know what kinds of changes would most benefit students and instructors. Moreover,

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3 This dissertation will exist as a future proposal for a handbook usability study.
publishing several pedagogical variations of one textbook with the same purpose is largely financially inefficient (Connors, "Rise" 6; Berlin, Writing Instruction 60-61). Aside from cost, the formulaic nature of teaching the modes ideally suited the needs of a newly diverse student body, indicating moves to make handbooks more accessible and, thus, more usable. Teaching the modes fell out of prominence as simpler, single mode textbooks that primarily emphasize exposition began appearing (Connors, “Handbooks” 94; “Modes” 7).

Early handbooks, what Connors refers to as treatises, not handbooks, focused on improving social skills for students by helping improve conversational and social skills, which would then help students become better citizens (“Handbooks” 87; Composition 70). The they became better citizens ideology is quite important because, I argue, handbooks have historically retained their focus: to provide a reference for improving linguistic and language ability, which now will help improve student marketability in the job market (though in the 1800s, this linguistic and literary training was meant to improve social etiquette).

Nonetheless, the first composition handbooks had literary instead of lexical, index-driven structures because their Belletristic rhetoric focused on teaching students how to write letters, fiction, editorials, bibliographies, and the like, not on teaching students how to write grammatically, per say (Connors, “Handbooks” 87, “Modes” 4-6). During the late 1800s, handbooks changed focus from rhetorics to grammatics and mechanics to meet the needs of colleges' new influx of working-class students. In 1907, Woolley’s Handbook of Composition: A Compendium of Rules, was the first handbook intentionally to incorporate a wide range of grammatical instruction, with 350 rules explained (“Handbooks” 91; Composition 91-93). Land grant and public colleges, through the aid of the Morrill Act, which provided land grant college funding, spurred such change, as well as an influx in middle-class students who needed to learn
how to write well instead of how to write better (Connors, "Rise" 5; "Handbook" 91; Berlin 18). Given this, new teaching challenges exist because of technological developments. Accordingly, because modern students are stereotypically technologically savvy, handbooks should incorporate more sections about document and web design and interpreting visual texts and should have less of a menu-driven structure and more of a visually cued, graphical, linked structure that more precisely emulates the types of media that Information Age students encounter.

One recent publication, although a popular magazine and not a college textbook, to address changing interface needs is *Cosmopolitan*, which unveiled a new structure in the October 2003 issue. Kate White, Editor-in-Chief, writes that the magazine's layout has not changed "for many years, and it was based on old-style magazine design: shorter, less-visual articles [...] This approach is extremely dated" because most people first read articles that interest them and then "skip around to whatever [they're] in the mood for. I wanted to make it a breeze to find stuff" (emphasis added) (38). Likewise, analyzing the visual structures of handbooks may likely reveal that older, linearly-driven organizational structures that begin with discussions or words and move to whole essays no longer meet student or instructor needs because, like *Cosmopolitan* readers, students and instructors should use handbooks to find answers to writing questions that they have, and would rarely need to or desire to read a handbook from cover to cover.

Relating composition textbooks to a popular magazine such as *Cosmopolitan*, then, encapsulates what I mean when I discuss *interface*. Though the term connotes imagery pertaining to computer programming and human-computer interfaces, I refer to *interface* as that space where humans, students and instructors, come into contact with composition textbooks—that "junction between two systems" (*Chicago Manual* 843). Nonetheless, in Chapter Four, I will
discuss changing conceptions of the human-book interface, how Faigley, for example, conceptualizes the Penguin Handbook as a browsable textbook.

Faigley's conception of a browsable textbook isn't new, though, as in 1933, Howard Francis Seely critiques the structure of handbooks and the tired notion that people should read print material from beginning to end. In On Teaching English, Seely invokes White’s reasoning for changing Cosmopolitan's layout and design, stating that the structure of a handbook should, by no means, signify the importance of the material. His text begins with lexical and grammatical concerns but he states:

the mere fact that this phase of our work is discussed first should not conclude that correctness in the mechanical details of language use is in and of itself [most important.] Such an assumption would be wholly contrary both to common sense and to the tenets of any sound philosophy of composition. (4-5)

In later pages, Seely states that writing within “accepted standards of usage” is important and students should master those standards but not to the extent that they lose sight of their arguments for the sale of correctness (6-7). If so, then instructors can ascertain that they may start their course with the section of Seely’s text that most aptly addresses student needs. Students can access the book per instructor recommendations and would not have to read it cover-to-cover, thus making the text wholly-important but browsable.

Handbooks, however, have been slow to change to meet changing user needs. Connors makes an important assumption relevant to my dissertation research:

Thus by the end of the nineteenth century we see a curious schizophrenia between the central tools of the writing course-the textbooks-and the actual priorities that teachers were enforcing through their paper-marking. In spite of the burgeoning
current-traditional rhetorical theory of the time, the vast majority of paper-markings were not rhetorical but mechanical in nature... (emphasis added; "Handbooks" 91)

This schizophrenia exists, I argue, because the physical structure of composition handbooks has remained largely static within the last fifty years—by prioritizing marking and correcting errors—and no longer functions to meet teacher and student interface and usability expectations because classroom practices and handbook meaning may not be commensurate.

Querying Handbooks

As previously stated, Pickett conducted valuable research by comparing what textbooks offered to what teachers wanted. However, in The Politics of the Textbook Michael W. Apple and Linda K. Christian-Smith note that although there are "thousands" of published textbook examinations, they do not cover all pertinent implications and fields. It's time to more thoroughly analyze handbooks, considering student literacy, as the tool should focus on its primary users, not generalized conceptions of how teachers instruct these users (Crerar and Benyon 50).

A definition of the handbook genre would generate a solid basis for my examination and defining composition handbooks helps signify their development. Though I move to define composition handbooks, in "Epic and Novel," Bakhtin argues that culture feeds new life into genres because genres must adapt to cultural changes lest they lose their significance and drift into obscurity—or die (3-4). Given this assertion of Bakhtin's, to take Connors's assertion that handbooks have not changed for several years would indicate that composition handbooks have little life in them because they have retained their structure for several decades.
As Bakhtin argues, components of genres share a minimal number of identifying characteristics. The novel, for example, has an unheroic, undeveloped hero, works as a means of recording cultural history and does not use poetic language (10).

Likewise, the composition handbook has an undeveloped hero (student, ironically) and records cultural history (in sample sentences and what each addresses) but does not, in its current form, use poetic language. The composition handbook explains syntactical, grammatical, rhetorical, semantic, and stylistic rules; methods of writing and documenting research; and describes methods of writing, at a minimum. In more detail, Seely defines the general aims of composition courses and, thus, the nature of composition handbooks:

- tomes that induce in students a “desire” to write competently, help students communicate within “accepted standards” (7), substantiates that language mirrors thought (9), helps students eradicate their most “flagrant and destructive errors”, fosters mastery of usage (11-12), and drives students to seek out help to correct composition problems (14).

Because politics and culture influence these characteristics in that they affect what students need, I will examine these minimums and how they deliver information.

Pickett and Nietz identify the major components of textbooks: size, bindings and paper, print and pictures, page layout and white space, teaching directions, learning and teaching aids such as tables and charts, testimonials and recommendations, subject matter specifics such as usage sections, citation sections and everyday writing sections. To this list, I could add technology sections, online components, and electronic ancillaries. But merely identifying and examining these parts will not suffice, as examining how they rhetorically and visually operate will offer insight into how teachers and students can most effectively use them. For example,
why would one publisher use plain black borders on callout boxes while another publisher uses a series of concentric lines or 3D-lookalike graphics to frame callout boxes? What effect do such stylistic choices have on users?

There are still many areas of composition handbooks to explore. Hawhee examines the authorial role and certainly fills a research gap, Connors tersely examines content within a historical framework, and Apple and Christian-Smith examine subjectivity. This dissertation, beginning with Chapter Two, moves composition research to the history of the handbook (and rhetoric textbook) and how it arrived at its current structure, usability, technology, theory, and pedagogical ideology, as the existing histories privilege the texts, the authors, and the topics but oddly neglect to address the audience—oddly because composition instructors have the dreadful habit of chirping phrases such as "what about audience addressed?" What about audience addressed? What kinds of dialog do students have with their textbooks? What kinds of dialog do instructors have with their textbooks?

Historical Utility of Handbooks

The utility of handbooks as a historical source is a topic of debate among compositionists. In English in America, Richard Ohmann argues that while historians do not need to use textbooks as historical documents, they are useful in that they are readily accessible and may lead to speculative insights about classroom instruction (143). Nonetheless, in his history, Ohmann uses composition textbooks as his primary sources. However, in examining power relations, Elizabeth Miles argues that examining only textbooks disempowers instructors and their classroom practices as a factor of composition history and favors a book-as-monolithic-static-entity. Miles derives this argument from Lester Faigley's postmodern analysis of
composition studies. In *Fragments of Rationality: Postmodernity and the Subject of Composition*, Faigley critiques Ohmann for analyzing textbooks to reconstruct composition instruction practices, stating that "[b]y considering only textbooks, Ohmann lacks data on how the books are used by teachers, and thus he has little to say about classroom practices" (133). Faigley, rather, asserts that textbooks are embedded within the history of composition instruction and that favoring them as historical sources then privileges one type of information over another (133, 162); conversely, studying only theoretical practices favors a different type of data. Researching composition textbook interface and usability design can add new perspectives to composition history and inform publishers how to construct future handbooks.
Conclusion

Although historians have documented the history of composition instruction and have examined rhetoric textbooks and composition handbooks, to an extent, this dissertation contributes to the existing discussions of composition instruction history by examining one place where students interact with course content—the composition handbook interface: the area where students, largely at the direction of their instructors, come into contact with composition course content. Changes of the structure of the composition handbook signify changes in pedagogical practices and changing conceptions of students.

Earlier in this chapter and in Chapter Two, I discuss how some scholars argue that examinations of composition handbooks do not indicate instructional practices because such examinations ignore classroom interaction between instructors and students and how instructors employ composition handbooks. However, this dissertation shows that composition handbooks have changed to meet new prevailing pedagogical theories. These wholesale changes, then, indicate prevailing teaching practices. What has not changed about composition handbooks, though, is that they have and do serve as tools for marking and correcting writing, whether they include rhetorical sections grammatical sections or both.
Chapter Organization

In this, chapter (Chapter One), I introduce the argument for conducting a historical study of composition handbooks, highlighting Nell Ann Pickett’s 1977 study of what composition instructors desire in handbooks and what Robert Connors and Kathleen Welch later call a schizophrenia between handbooks and current theory. Additionally, this chapter discusses another handbook schizophrenia by raising questions such as: how do instructors view and use handbooks? and what role do handbooks play in composition classrooms?

These questions and arguments help build the foundation of my argument, as I contend that instructors use handbooks more than they, as well as composition scholars, will readily admit, primarily because new composition instructors and even experienced, overworked composition instructors use handbooks because they quickly and easily make instructional material and assist in error marking. However, even as a static entity, composition handbooks reveal insights about how instructors have historically taught first-year composition and rhetoric when considering their origins as etiquette guides and social primers and their current status as “reference tools”. Examining these tools, then, helps to enrich existing composition histories by providing an analysis of first-year composition's primary tool.

In Chapter Two, I assess major composition histories by discussing their foci, including the transformation of Rhetoric 1A,B,C, a course in deliberation and perhaps etiquette, into first-year composition, a course focused on preparing college students for future writing situations. This discussion includes an analysis of the shift from teaching the modes of discourse to teaching a single mode, such as argument.
Additionally, I briefly discuss how college enrollment has changed after the American Industrial Revolution and after the introduction of the G.I. Bill. Colleges began to accept more middle-class students and thus needed to retool composition courses to ensure all college students write well.

As I discuss these histories, I critique the sources that their authors have used, as do other scholars. Within these histories lies an argument concerning Burkean terministic screens and how historians have privileged certain types of data. Robin Varnum and John Brereton call for historians to use as wide a range of source material as possible when writing composition histories but Richard Ohmann and Lester Faigley find fault in historical examinations of composition handbooks because of the assumption that instructor's pedagogical practices stem from knowledge of pedagogical theory and not dependence on handbooks.

Within the call for more complete histories is an argument for exploring the history of composition handbooks. Perhaps critics have faulted Connors and Berlin for using composition handbooks to help inform their histories, but a research gap still exists, as no extensive examination of composition handbooks exists. Handbooks merit in-depth analysis because such an analysis will enrich composition histories by providing a more detailed look at conceptions of the course and by connecting, for example, Berlin's claim that nineteenth-century composition instructors emphasized proper selection of words to Berlin's source material—textbooks by Quackenbos and Whately.

In Chapter Three I define the composition handbook genre and the functioning operators of the interface and how they can be applied to handbooks. Deborah Hawhee’s critique of the Harbrace College Handbook helps create a basis for defining the handbook genre, as she
discusses some major parts of composition handbooks, to include instructional sections for instructors and students and usage sections. Nietz and Apple and Cristian-Smith identify major components of composition handbooks and The Chicago Manual of Style’s chapters on bookmaking identify general parts of books. These documents help define the textbook genre by identifying major structural components, from navigation systems and sections to content sections.

Additionally, Bakhtin’s works on genre help create a basis for argument, as Bakhtin argues that a definable genre is a dead genre. Given that, handbooks and their easily definable purposes and characteristics, which have remained static for several years, need new life.

In Chapter Four I connect developments of handbooks to developments in composition pedagogy. In this history, I focus on the elements of the genre that I have discussed in Chapter Three, beginning with the development of composition handbooks unique to America and emphasizing the move to create an American composition course void of heavy British and Scottish influence.

The modes of discourse, exposition, description, narration and argument, will frame this analysis, as they have endured, whether in single mode handbooks or multiple mode handbooks. The modes also act as a foundation for examining composition instruction, as early modal handbooks show a move from lexical, sentence and grammatical pedagogies, primarily used to prime students from upper social classes and to teach students oratorical skills, to whole-composition-focused pedagogies that focus on larger arrangements of material with emphasis on concerns ranging from word choice to document arrangement to grammar and mechanics.
In this chapter, I also examine introductory materials in handbooks, the prefaces, introductions, first chapters, and sections addressed either to instructors or to students, as they help determine the focus and tone of handbooks and thus the focus of composition instruction in certain eras. These introductory materials offer insight about the focus of individual handbooks by providing grounding that indicates why the handbooks cover certain types of material and do not cover other types, such as Whately’s decision to focus on lexical and grammatical purity and relegate adorning speech to side notes or Faigley's decision to incorporate discussions of visual arguments in The Penguin Handbook.

Additionally, I examine the navigational structures of handbooks because they provide insight about the focus of composition instruction. Navigational structures of handbooks extend beyond the table of contents, order of material and indexes, as proofreading charts, correction charts and tabs also help guide students through handbooks.

In Chapter Five, I discuss how technological advances have affected media. I also examine usability and literacy, linking these issues to how students decipher media and to what types of media they can most aptly decipher. Hypermedia literacies are overwhelming media and information delivery and new textbooks, even in print, should use concepts of hypermedia to guide students to material.

For example, many current handbooks discuss issues pertaining to commas in more than one section, such as quotation, comma splice (and run-on), introductory clause sections, etc. Cross references, veritable hyperlinks in these sections, will help guide students to the comma information that they need, as students may not be likely to search the index multiple times to
find the information that they need. For that reason, in this chapter I propose a handbook usability study to gauge how effectively students use handbooks.

As I have mentioned above, in this chapter I propose a usability study for composition handbooks. The study will explore how students navigate—or fail to navigate—composition handbooks by asking students to find answers to a series of questions within handbooks. Because applying more than one usability test to an object produces more accurate results than using one test, I propose a two-part study. One part of the study comes from the student tutorial in *The St. Martin's Handbook* and asks questions about each section of the handbook. The other part of the usability study focuses on a set of problems pertaining to using and citing sources, or a focused part of a handbook.
Chapter Two:

Mapping the Winds of Change: The Handbook's Place in Composition History

*a map is not the territory it represents* (Korzybski 58)

Select Sources for Composition History

Uncovering the history of composition instruction in America has been both a popular and controversial trope in composition studies. Just as general semanticists such as Alfred Korzybski argue that “a map is not the territory it represents”, critics of composition historiographies often claim that the individual maps educational historians use—textbooks, syllabi, journal articles, college documents, and the like—do not accurately reveal how composition instructors taught students how to write for college and for careers. Tenuous ground underlies composition handbooks because experienced teacher-scholars understand that, at their best, writing textbooks exists as reference tools and remediation aids, not vessels containing methods of teaching and learning. Still, Robert Connors published “Handbooks, History of a Discipline”, his bibliography and composition handbook history, with the understanding that handbooks, rhetoric textbooks, and other textbooks, similar to course syllabi and student writing, exist as historical documents that reveal conceptions about first-year composition courses, if not conceptions about how students receive instruction both inside of and outside of the classroom.

Libby Miles bemoans that much of the past scholarship pertaining to composition handbooks merely problematizes them. “What CAN we DO?” she asks, to make them more usable within the realm of the first-year composition course (Miles, “Production”). Although such an effort seems laudable, the task might resemble trying to make a Bible members of all
religions can use. Perhaps composition pedagogical styles, with their deep roots in theory—not just theory but theories, competing theories—make the task of developing an all-encompassing, theory-neutral composition handbook too large because, as Mike Rose argues, writing is “a dynamic and highly context-oriented process” (“Sophisticated” 65). How could a single book meet the needs of a current-traditionalist, a process theorist, a Marxist-feminist, a culturalist, a post-process theorist, etc.? Given the forms composition courses can assume, what makes it possible to study composition handbooks and their history?

Writing a composition instruction history by examining changes in textbooks presents several problems because different critics differently value the historical study of handbooks. In “Coherent Contradictions: Product Analysis in a Process-Oriented Field,” Miles asserts that the study of handbooks removes power from the classroom and from teacher-student relations, and places it in the academy, with the historians. She argues that textbooks cannot represent what happens in courses because instructors use texts through the guise of certain pedagogical theories; however, she emphasizes that textbooks do reveal how publishers, how program directors, how teachers think writing should be taught (Miles, “Coherent”).

Because she discusses the relationship between textbooks and what happens in classrooms, Miles harkens Nell Ann Pickett’s study, a comparison of what handbooks offer and what composition instructors want handbooks to offer. What Pickett doesn’t do is speculate what, exactly, composition handbooks do. Do they merely serve as reference tools? Or as Miles argues, “[f]or good or ill, textbooks are the most widespread means of disseminating our theoretically-informed practices. […] Composition textbook still reach more teachers and more students than our scholarly discussions” (Miles, “Coherent”)? With a hypothetical yes, Arthur Applebee argues that textbooks train teachers before teachers train students (127) and in a cry for
more informed pedagogy, Donald Stewart characterizes the less-informed composition instructors as those who “either are never exposed to or remain untouched by the professional journals and books” (135). Thus, the adjunct instructor, for example, slaving a pen through essays generated from five sections a semester, might not have time to read scholarly journals. Most composition instructors use textbooks and require them for their courses, so they might come in contact with those texts on an almost daily basis, while they read scholarship in their spare time and on a much less orderly schedule.

Pedagogical theory, then, plays a smaller role than rhetorical theory in the composition classroom—rhetorical theory skewed to foster orderly academic writing, skewed to help students succeed in college writing and in everyday writing. Still, to operate within these means, the handbook would need to adapt to changing student and instructor needs, to meet new demands from new pedagogical approaches. Though John F. Genung's *The Practical Elements of Rhetoric* (1895) predates what we now call *composition handbooks*, in this *rhetoric textbook*, Genung argues:

> A book on so old a subject as rhetoric can scarcely hope to give the world much that is new. But old things, in proportion to their living value, need from time to time to be newly defined and distributed, their perspective and emphasis need to be freshly determined, to suit changing conditions of thought; this we find abundantly recognized in the subject before us [...] (Genung xi)

In the above quote, Genung both encapsulates the history of rhetoric instruction in America and foreshadows what ought to happen the field's textbooks. His notion of the need for periodically
redefining the field brings the Kuhnian theory to life. In a sense, Genung himself had already set in motion such change by publishing *Outlines of Rhetoric* (1893), which in Chapter Four I will argue influenced *Wooley's Handbook* (1906). Furthermore, Genung’s statement emphasizes that composition practitioners and researchers must periodically reconsider the field and the stature of its changes, or stagnations, for that matter. Specialists in the field reconsider its varying segments, from feminist viewpoints about the composing process to the history of composition to the ways handbooks delve.

Genung’s view of the importance of periodically reconsidering the field and its components, his description of rhetoric, serves as a valid starting place to reconsider composition history by considering its beginning: “the art of adapting discourse, in harmony with its subject and occasion, to the requirements of a reader or hearer” (emphasis added) (1), which parallels *Merriam Webster’s Dictionary of English Usage*, which simply defines rhetoric as “the art of speaking and writing faculties, as well as induction effectively; the art of persuasion” (820). The discipline of rhetoric involves the study and elimination of difficulties involved in adapting to one’s surroundings and audience therefore compose the discipline of rhetoric. And by employing two principles, logic and grammar, students must compose clear, forceful, factual, error-free discourse (Genung, *Practical* 1-2). First-year composition began as rhetoric, *rhetoric a* and *b*, so these descriptions help form a concept of composition handbooks: tools to help students write for a certain audience during a certain occasion.

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4 Here, then, lies another argument: whether composition constitutes a field of its own. By positing changing pedagogical practices as paradigm shifts and, in the least, revolutions, one can ground composition as a field of its own standing and merit.
Thus, composition instructors have the same basic goal: to teach students the means to write well, although they have various means to achieve such a common end. The diversity of composition instruction in America reflects many of the changes that the country. Both the country and composition pedagogy have evolved; however, no one given theory, fad or idiom completely controlled its era. The concept of competing rhetorical stances compares to competing political or ideological stances, as rhetoric signifies a society that defines itself through the ideologies of predominant sects, which highlights the composition handbook, as it reflects changes in pedagogy through the nature of its physical changes but remains mechanically focused. Additionally, in the cusp of James Berlin’s description of American romantic rhetoric instruction, the composer must ensure that their faculties and observations conform to the considered issue; “therefore, individual prejudices, ideally, do not interfere with the writer’s stance” (Berlin, Writing Instruction 1-3; 9-10).5

Giving Berlin’s definition of romantic rhetoric a broader vision, then, helps one to understand how composition handbooks have evolved. “[T]herefore, individual prejudices, ideally, do not interfere with the writer’s stance” makes a poignant statement that skews to my conception of composition handbooks.

Individual handbook prejudices, ideally, do not interfere with writing instruction. Additionally, the concept that handbooks do not influence composition instruction makes it possible to specify the basic elements of composition handbooks. Writing well, preparing students for writing in college and beyond, then, has grounding in certain elements that comprise composition handbooks. Structure and treatment of these elements makes individual handbooks

5 The discussion in Chapter Four of Quackenbos and Whately's handbooks shows one source of this argument.
different from each other. Identifying these elements that make handbooks *handbooks* stems from a broad yet specific question: I have to write ________, so how do write it? Narrow the topic, research the topic, emphasize the strongest point, organize the essay effectively, use transitions to guide the audience, appeal to the audience’s emotions and logic, and the list continues.

So how do handbooks treat such material?

The Making of Handbook History

Researching the historical development of composition handbooks highlights an argument about the validity of source material that historians use. Critics of composition histories largely focus on the relevance of scoping analyses of handbooks within composition histories because historians cannot accurately tell how students and instructors have used handbooks in composition classrooms. Alternatively, though, scholars argue that handbooks play an important role in determining instructional practices because they merely exist for a reason, to disseminate instruction for teaching students how to write, and because college administrators adopted them.

In “The History of Composition: Reclaiming our Lost Generations,” Robin Varnum calls for examinations of composition instruction from 1900 to 1960, arguing against Stephen North’s claim that the field of composition started in 1963, when Albert Kitzhaber finally published *Themes, Theory and Therapy*, a work that helped inject a mode of theoretical inquiry into composition (North 14-15). Varnum feels that scholars such as North brush aside much of the field’s developmental era. In *A Teaching Subject: Composition Since 1966*, Joseph Harris begins an examination of composition pedagogy with the 1966 Seminar on the Teaching and Learning
of English at Dartmouth College, which attempted to define English as a field and, for some attendants, formalizing its modes of inquiry (1, 7). While North emphasizes the role of theory over practice, Harris emphasizes practice over theory; however, both authors favor research within composition, believing that research helps to define the field. Varnum finds fault that composition history scholars have written little about instructional practices during the first half of the 1900s. Varnum believes that failure to examine that period has “the effect of denying the resources and lessons of portions of the past to many of us currently teaching composition.”

Further, in *Fencing with Words*, Varnum faults composition histories because of their heavy focus on textbooks (10).

Although Varnum faults existing composition histories, she does not condemn them. In fact, she broaches Andrea Lunsford’s argument that to mark our professional identity, we compositionists, and especially historians, must “compose ourselves” by examining “writing from a variety of perspectives and throughout history” (cit. in Varnum, “History”). Lunsford supports this pluralistic view, as she states that “composing entails terminologies—writings—and that, as Burke says, ‘any given terminology is a reflection of reality; but by its very nature as a terminology it must be a selection […] and hence a deflection of reality’” (cit. in Lunsford 72-73; Connors, “Dreams” 21). Thus, taking wider varieties of perspectives helps create a richer collection of histories by deflecting the smallest amount of material and including the largest.

The primary reason for exploring composition history from a variety of viewpoints is that doing so enables scholars and practitioners better to understand the current profile of the field. Varnum argues that “[t]he way we see history affects the way we see our present field”; however, she also criticizes composition historians for relying too heavily on textbooks and published scholarship, thereby deflecting course materials such as syllabi, student texts and
assignments. This argument stems from North’s recollection of Connors’s analysis of Susan Miller’s “Is There a text in this Class?” in which he states that before examining course material, historians should first clearly map major “currents and theories.” Lunsford makes a similar call, arguing that to know how writing was taught and learned, “we need first of all to be aware of the work of the historians, the anthropologists, the classicists, the psychologists on our subject, writing” (Connors, “Composing” 73; Varnum, Fencing 10-11 and Connors, “Dreams” 19-21) because, as James Berlin argues in Rhetorics, Poetics and Cultures, “[a]ll texts occupy a space of intertextuality, a complex relation to other texts of their own time at their initial reception and to later texts” (171)⁶. Further, Albert Kitzhaber argues that:

if a teacher is to have any perspective on the subject, [they] must know the tradition that lies behind it, know the place of [themselves] and [their] times in the tradition, and, through this knowledge, be able to put a proper value on new developments in [their] subject as they appear. (352)

In all, however, North simply argues for composition histories that utilize as broad a range of texts as possible, from student texts to handbooks to syllabi to scholarship (73-74; Stewart 134-135).

Scholars have more recourse than to criticize a history for utilizing too narrow a selection of source material. Some attacks on composition histories drawn from composition textbooks come from current conceptions of them—as research tools that sit by the computer, waiting to divulge how to cite a book in MLA format or how to unsplice a spliced sentence. One can easily

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⁶ Although Berlin discusses literary research here, he makes a valid argument, as readers can assume that the texts that play with each other can range from textbooks, to syllabi, to handouts, to class discussion, to student's texts, etc.
dispute whether or not teachers use textbooks. As Mike Rose argues in “Sophisticated, Ineffective Books,” good teachers use only certain portions of textbooks, amend what authors claim and supplement courses with handouts because “writing is simply too complex and unwieldy a process to be taught from a textbook” (70). Xin Liu Gale might disagree with Rose, as she argues that responsible teachers foster effective handbook use by students (186-187). In Fragments of Rationality, Faigley argues that despite the limitations of studying textbooks, they do reveal what program directors, teachers, and textbook reviewers consider appropriate ways to teach writing (133). Joseph Janangelo agrees with Faigley, stating that the composition handbook is important because writing programs often adopt a program-wide text and often adopt such a text for several years (93). How teachers use textbooks, or whether they do, bears little merit, David Bleich contends in “In Case of Fire: Throw In”, as “[m]any intelligent people, if they relied exclusively on the textbooks, could seem to be teaching writing” (18). This argument magnifies the prominence of textbooks and diminishes modes of practice, as composition handbooks actually reflect the desires of educators.

A critic of current-traditional rhetoric, an approach to teaching writing with a focus on mechanical correctness and the finished product, Donald Stewart implies that new composition instructors, perhaps unsure of what they want, often inherit current-traditional pedagogy. These

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7 Still, Rose hearkens “[t]hat late-60’s promotional hook ‘teacherproof materials’” [that] epitomized a misguided technological cockiness” (71) and, as Connors might argue, led handbook development to stagnate.

8 In Chapter Four, I discuss how Lunsford and Connors, handbook authors, assume some of this responsibility by coming to include in The St. Martin's Handbook a tutorial that shows students how to use the handbook.
teachers “drill their students in grammar, punctuation, and spelling” and use formulas when grading (135). Composition handbooks often provide material for drills, as they often contain exercises in each section. Although many composition scholar-practitioners refer to current-traditionalists as instructors of the past, they still exist in great numbers, as Stewart argues, and heavily use handbooks, often requiring students to read chapters and complete all exercises within them for grades.

Teachers who heavily rely on handbooks may often fall into current-traditional teaching methods because handbooks are slow to change in accordance with shifts in pedagogical theory. In “The Winds of Change,” Maxine Hairston argues that “textbooks change slowly” and appeal to “the average composition teacher [not] those in the vanguard of the profession” (81). In Chapter Four, I discuss how proofreading charts migrated to less conspicuous locations some twenty years after process pedagogy became widely popular and how handbooks like Woolley's changed the nature of first-year composition. But if Hairston's argument is true, handbooks do change to meet classroom needs instead of remaining constant for the sake of profit.

Likewise, in “The Evolution of Invention in Current-Traditional Rhetoric: 1850-1970,” Sharon Crowley argues that new handbooks merely imitate older handbooks “rather than growing out of current rhetorical theory, logic, or psychology, as did the early works” (158). Further, as Varnum posits that just as a handbook cannot entirely divulge correct classroom

* Here, Stewart partially refers to instructors who automatically fail essays with certain numbers of certain types of errors. Interestingly, Stewart wrote this article/gave this presentation in 1983, when he was at Kansas State University. In 1992, I took composition at a Kansas City, Kansas, community college with graduate student instructors from Kansas State. Students failed essays if they had a certain number of either minor errors or major errors.
practices, it cannot show how much teachers knew of theory and pedagogy and cannot show trends in that theory and pedagogy. Nonetheless, since journals dedicated to composition theory and their affiliated associations did not emerge since the mid twentieth century, composition textbooks and other class materials are the only existent materials available for historical analysis.

Despite discussions that historians must draw on as many types of sources as possible and critiques of the merits of exploring handbooks as historical documents, Connors argues that the composition handbook is “a major source of information on rhetoric and composition in the nineteenth century and a sine qua non for a serious historical investigation” (“Writing” 210); textbooks can also “tell us much about both the theory and the practice of writing pedagogy” (“Dreams” 18-19). Richard Young, in “Paradigms and problems,” argues that “one way to discover the traditional paradigm of a field is to examine its textbooks” (31). Further, Kathleen Welch argues, in “Ideology and Freshman Textbook Production,” textbooks “act as persuasive places where new teachers of writing are trained and where experienced ones reinforce the training,” thus making textbooks an important indicator of how teachers teach writing (271). In “Teaching Writing,” Lisa Ede argues that “[b]ecause underprepared and overworked teachers often rely on textbooks to structure most in- and out-of-class activities, textbooks mirror an important reality about the teaching of writing” (118-119).

The handbook has merit in composition history because of its role in teaching writing. When discussing studies in rhetoric and composition in Rhetoric and Reality, James Berlin argues that researchers must primarily consider the process of creating texts:

the concrete activities of text production [...] in keeping with the historical emphasis in rhetoric on teaching strategies for generating texts, primarily in the
form of heuristical procedures for invention, patterns of arrangement, and
principles of syntax and style. (173)

Berlin teams this argument with scholars such as Linda Flower and John Hayes, Anne Ruggles Gere and Shirley Brice Heath; I would add James Britton, et al. and Janet Emig. Though these authors discuss how students create texts in composition classrooms, they do not fully examine each of the tools they use to do so or how instructors instruct them to do so. Berlin discusses Martin Bloom’s research, tracking every move of students as they compose. Martin Bloom and Lynn Bloom argue that effectively to teach writing, there must be a visual omnipresence of the thinking process because “the teacher cannot be present throughout the composing process” (142). This presence, then, imparts upon students heuristical procedures for invention, patterns of arrangement, and principles of syntax and style, among other processes, the primary elements of a composition handbook. Connors and Crowley have identified major themes and figures in composition history and Emig and Flower and Hayes have mapped how students write. The missing element, then, is more than how the composition handbook delivers content to students and teachers.

Often, in these histories that I have just mentioned, authors draw claims from sources such as handbooks but do not directly attribute their arguments to these texts, as Berlin argues that romantic rhetoric focuses on accurately representing thought without citing materials from romantic rhetoricians such as Quackenbos and Whately. Additionally, some historians, such as Deborah Hawhee, discuss how handbooks viciously attack regional dialects in promoting Standard American English; they do not connect the argument to cultural impetuses such as the move by Americans to identify themselves (and separate themselves from Great Britain) through the language they use.
After all, as Donald Stewart argues, if those in Literature study histories of literature so they know enough of the field to teach it, then shouldn’t compositionists study the history of composition history so they know how pedagogical practices have developed, the composition handbooks one of the primary texts to study (Stewart 134)? Current histories seldom directly address composition handbooks by analyzing their structure and content in detail; further, historians need to explore handbooks not as determiners of writing instruction or of how theory has developed, but as determiners of how handbooks dispensed information to students.

For Composition History

From discussions of the merit of incorporating handbook analyses into composition histories come these very histories and the sources that form those discussions. From these histories come arguments about privileging sources, about relying too heavily on textbooks, for example. However, considering various histories not as mere terministic screens that include and exclude data, but as terministic screens that function together to paint broader pictures, scholars can readily see composition as a whole.

The tradition of rhetoric is now some 2400 years old—one of the longest traditions still represented in the modern curriculum. Teachers of composition today fail to recognize that they and their work are a part of that tradition. If a teacher is to have any perspective on [their] subject, [they] must know the tradition that lies behind it, know the place of [them] and [their] times in the tradition, and, through this knowledge, be able to put a proper value on new developments in [their] subjects as they appear. (Kitzhaber, 226)
In “Writing the History of our Discipline,” Connors refers to Kitzhaber as “the great exemplar” of composition historiography (206). Unfortunately, though, Connors also acknowledges that Kitzhaber never published his dissertation, completed in 1953, until 1990. Although this unpublished text circulated by means of photocopies and microfiche, no scholars followed up on it for some time (207). Connors further asserts, ten years after publishing “The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse,” that the documentation of composition history is still in its infancy (1981).

In “The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse” (1981), however, Connors puts in motion the drive for American composition scholars to account for the development of their field by scoping recent developments in composition history within the modes of discourse. Connors’s article, of course, could not recapitulate all of the developments in composition instruction in a meager ten-or-so-pages; what is does, however, is conceptualize composition historiography within an instructional treatment, the modes of discourse, and the instructors and authors who made such an instructional treatment popular—with oblique references to cultural and political influences.

Connors’s Composition-Rhetoric: Backgrounds, Theory, and Pedagogy (1997), provides a broader analysis of composition instruction history than “The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse” by discussing course texts, instructor environments, and discussion of the modes. But before Connors published Composition-Rhetoric, James Berlin completed the article-to-text (or monograph) cycle by publishing “Contemporary Composition: The Major Pedagogical Theories,” which evolved into Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges. These evolutions imply that, indeed, composition history still has many gaps because scholars published articles that they later further developed into books. Connors and Berlin wrote possibly
the most cited histories of the field, which help to conceptualize its magnitude and array of available source material upon which newer histories, such as handbook histories, can build by connecting course tools to histories. Texts such as *Composition-Rhetoric* and *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges* work together to create an informed documentation of American composition history; however, additional scholars such as Sharon Crowley and James Brereton have significantly added to composition instruction historiography by discussing composition’s rhetorical roots and the ways to address available sources. With these varied histories come critiques, mainly of source material, as writing history means writing from artifacts and not observation.

Berlin begins *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges* by stating that although composition instructors share the same basic goal, to help students effectively examine, assess, and report upon events, they may use different means to reach that goal (1-2). Likewise, Connors begins “The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse” by arguing that scholars have continually strove to classify rhetoric into its modes of discourse, citing John F. Butler’s claim that composition teachers “[t]each nothing but to name [a student’s] tools” (qtd. in 1), which stems from Aristotle’s classification of rhetoric into forensic, deliberative, and epideictic modes and endures to Alexander Bain’s exemplification of the modes of discourse as exposition, description, narration, and argument (EDNA), which then correlates with how American compositionists applied these modes, from then considered superior texts, in their own courses and textbooks, to James Berlin’s classification of composition into contemporary pedagogical theories and methods, all of which are ensconced within cultural ideologies. Within this evolution, Berlin argues, shifts in American culture play important roles, and despite Connors’s attempt to analyze composition history within the modes of discourse, competing
composition theories do exist much in the same notion that competing political ideologies exist. Although conceptions of rhetoric change with the ebbs and flows of society, its four main elements, as Berlin describes them, remain constant; however, rhetoric does not differ from increased or lessened emphasis on one of the following elements, but on how scholars define them. Reality, rhetor, audience, and language compose rhetoric (Writing Instruction 2-3).

Berlin works to define early American composition instruction by discussing the influence of classical rhetoric on instructional methodology, citing John Quincy Adams’s Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory, delivered between 1806-1809 and published in 1810, as an influential text (15). The components of classical rhetoric that existed within American institutions embodied the synonominity of reality and the rationale. Exposition was probably the favored mode, as students were to explore the known, consider “emotional and ethical appeals,” and then apply them to the subject by using syllogisms. Furthermore, the classical rhetoricians view language as a “sign system” wherein words distort the meaning of thoughts through abstract representation (5). However, Adams’s Lectures, and thus their classical focus, were largely unpopular, possibly because Hugh Blair and George Campbell published influential works about composition which disfavored Aristotelian logic and deductive reasoning and favored inductive reasoning (17-18) and positioned composition, not oratory or debate, as the primary component of rhetoric (Connors, Composition 53-54)

One reason for favoring simpler assignments, according to Connors, is that college enrollment rapidly grew during the first half of the 1800s, prompting instructors to find easier ways to manage their workloads. Writing exposition helped limit the breadth of grading to mechanical factors and possibly rhetorical invention (Connors, Composition 77). A result of this

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10 See Chapter Four for examples of how handbooks focused on linguistic purity.
shift, Sharon Crowley argues in “The Evolution of Invention in Current-Traditional Rhetoric: 1850-1970,” was that invention, in the classical sense, became transformed into a systematic way to compose clearly (146). This move positioned invention within the same sphere as logic, thus making faults in composition faults in logical thought, as language represents thought (147-148).

To cater to such instruction, writing textbooks included sections containing “exercises, drills, questions, and assignments to the rhetorical lessons at the heart of each treatise chapter” (Connors, Composition 73, 88).

Connors also discusses the influence of British and Scottish rhetoricians, calling Samuel P. Newman’s textbook, *A Practical System of Rhetoric* (1827), a defining text of American composition instruction because it went through sixty printings by 1860, compared to the two editions Adams’s lectures went through from 1810-1960 (Berlin, Writing Instruction 15).

Newkirk’s text largely drew upon the scholarship of Hugh Blair, Alexander Bain and George Campbell by employing EDNA. Newman, however, called expository discourse didactic discourse—that which “persuades the will” instead of the “logical faculties” (2-3). Newman’s term did not endure, as other American texts used terms such as “pathetic,” and exposition endured as the dominant form of discourse; however, the term didactic reveals how contemporary composition has roots in classical rhetoric because, for example, in *Gorgias*, Plato distinguishes between the highly esteemed, truthful legal discourse that dwells solely in the presentation of factual evidence and mere rhetoric, the linguistic trickery that rhetors use to move people’s wills (65-66, 71-71). Exposition refers to rhetoric as a metaphysical act intended to make sense of events, which etymologically has not such a clear connection to classical rhetoric. Thus, description and narration would work to classify events while didaction and argumentation
would work to influence one’s will and then harmonically balance rhetoric with two modes in both logical and pathetic appeals.

Although American higher education was greatly influenced by the Protestant work ethic and the popularity of Hugh Blair’s *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres* (1783), which emphasized practicing the types of writing a person might encounter in their daily routines, the Belletristic modes endured for only a short period of popularity. However, until the 1880s, composition students typically did not create original compositions until their third year in college, as educators emphasized the development of mental discipline and memorization of rules before writing during writing instruction began (Berlin, *Writing Instruction* 37).

Connors explains that the modes of discourse temporarily lost prominence in the mid-1800s as colleges shifted from small institutions that served those from high social standing to large institutions that served a larger portion of the populace (“Modes” 5; Composition 210-215) as Berlin discusses, the Belletristic tradition gave American compositionists the drive to create a truly American poetic (*Writing Instruction* 3-5). This shift accompanied a move from teaching mainly eloquence to teaching correctness. Belletristic rhetoric focused on teaching students how to write essays, letters, fiction, editorials, bibliographies, and the like, which did not wholly meet the needs of colleges’ new working-class students. (Land grant and public colleges, through the aid of the Morrill Act, which provided land grant funding, spurred such change.) (Connors, “Modes” 5; Berlin, *Writing Instruction* 18).

Through the Boylston model (emphasizing form and clarity over topical concerns) and an increased need to assert national individuality, American colleges shifted further from classical pedagogy during the nineteenth century by gearing toward material, rather than transcendental progress; thus, educators introduced scientific courses and electives. In the composition
classroom, that meant focusing on the structure of compositions rather than focusing on
developing the mental faculties by writing to make sense of topics. In addition, the focus of the
new American colleges became more utilitarian by advocating the skilled individual instead of
advocating the buildup of the mental faculties (Berlin, Writing Instruction 59-60). New
handbooks by Genung and Hill reflected this attitude in their focus on writing models and forms.

The pedagogical shift to emphasizing mechanical progress over mental progress helped
make the modes of discourse the prominent mode of teaching writing and a vast majority of
composition textbooks applied those modes by 1894 (Connors, “Modes” 4-6). The modes
endured well into the 1900s, primarily because those instructing composition shifted from
trained rhetors to trained literary scholars, implying that texts did not change because instructors
no longer had thorough backing in rhetorical studies and because writing instruction is largely
financially inefficient (Connors, “Modes” 6; Berlin, Writing Instruction 60-61). Evidence of
modes instruction exists in the back pages of my personal copy of Helen J. Robins (Bryn Mawr)
and Agnes F. Perkins’s (Holman School) An Introduction to the Study of Rhetoric (1907),
where a student has written:

4 kinds of composition.

1—description

2—narration

3—exposition

4—argumentative

followed by a detailed description of these types of composition.

The modes fell out of prominence as single-mode textbooks began appearing. These new
texts mainly emphasized exposition and regulated the other three modes to ancillary, if any,
positions. Also, textbooks started to emphasize thesis development, possibly influenced by Barrett Wendell’s 1891 call for compositions to have unity, mass, and coherence, the increasing popularity of communications studies, the increasing popularity of General Semantics and its concern with phenomenology, and how the modes isolated composition from other disciplines (Connors, “Modes” 7-11).

Also, during the latter part of the 1800s, college composition instructors began to teach grammar lessons, a practice Connors states does not, at the college level, “go farther back than 1870” (“The Rhetoric” 79). In 1874, Harvard instituted an entrance exam with a writing component and, as Connors reports, the English faculty were “deeply shocked” that many of the students, from some of the best schools in America, composed entrance essays littered with numerous grammatical and mechanical errors (79-80). College administrations needed to find ways to resolve this writing problem highlighted by the Harvard entrance examinations. By the 1890s, college-level writing instruction “came to be defined by error avoidance rather than by any sort of genuine communicative success,” as the prevailing theory of why college students could not write well was that students' “elementary grammar instruction hadn't 'taken'” (80-81). Additionally, some collegiate administrations, such as Harvard's Board of Overseers, sparked arguably ill-conceived studies and reports about how students couldn’t construct grammatical sentences, such as the Harvard reports of 1897. This development led to instructional and textual changes in which instructors, facing pressures from colleges, began to focus on mechanical correctness more so than developing cognitive abilities, which helped give birth to purely grammatical handbooks such as Century and Woolley's Handbook (Connors, “The Rhetoric” 79-82; Carter Simmons 331-332; Berlin, Writing Instruction 59-63).
Additionally, some compositionists argue that teaching the modes of discourse does not teach students how to devise and write arguments; in fact, teaching modes, they argue, teaches nothing but how to plug words into predetermined formats (Connors "Handbooks" 12). However, Berlin would argue with such an assertion by stating that first-year students get more than writing instruction. Critical thinking skills and the ability to distinguish between reality and illusion receive emphasis, and learning “how a language works” bears importance (2), as students will use such tools during the entirety of their college careers.

Berlin’s explanation of the benefits of composition class, whether idealized or not, conflicts with Connors’s assessment that teaching the modes of discourse does not benefit students. In the least, students must think of how to adapt certain events into certain themes and that the writing process, however rudimentarily applied, entails using cognitive powers and thus improves student critical thinking skills. Nevertheless, the focus on teaching mechanical correctness has endured and teaching the modes of discourse has resurfaced in the form of one of America’s best-selling composition textbooks (The St. Martin’s Guide to Writing [Faigley 137]).

Perhaps oddly, although Connors discusses writing instruction in the 1900s and Berlin discusses writing instruction up to the 1900s, both seem to end with a similar argument: that American composition instruction has evolved to focus on mechanical correctness instead of developing both writing abilities and the mental faculties, possibly at the direction of handbooks. Still, the two texts that I have just examined by Connors and Berlin leave gaps in historiography and show some flaws—mainly in the source material that the two authors use and the cultural and pedagogical subjectivity that the authors employ.

In his critique, Connors largely draws upon textbooks to speculate about how they inform instructional practices, a fault both ideologically and scholarly. First, scholars argue about the
merit of using textbooks as historical documents. In *English in America* (1976), Richard Ohmann argues that although historians do not need to use textbooks as historical documents, they serve a historical role in that they are readily accessible and may lead to speculative insights about classroom instruction (143). However, in examining power relations, Elizabeth Miles, in “Coherent Contradictions: Product Analysis in a Process Oriented Field,” argues that examining only textbooks disempowers instructors and their classroom practices and favors a book—a static entity. Miles derives this argument from Lester Faigley’s postmodern analysis of composition studies. In *Fragments of Rationality*, Faigley critiques Ohmann for analyzing textbooks to reconstruct composition instruction practices, stating, “[b]y considering only textbooks, Ohmann lacks data on how the books are used by teachers, and thus he has little to say about classroom practices (133). Faigley, rather, asserts that textbooks are embedded within the history of composition instruction and favoring them then privileges one type of information over another (133, 162), though he has come to publish his own handbook that very much carries on the tradition of composition handbooks and emphasizes their role as one of the two most important composing tools.\footnote{See Chapter Four, The New Arrival: *Penguin Handbook*.}

The concept of privileging data is an interesting one, as scholars have critiqued Berlin for using primarily secondary sources in *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges*. In fact, a scan through his bibliography reveals a host of journal articles and book sources, showing that he did not analyze course material but instead analyzed analyses of course materials. However, Berlin placed his text within the cultural influences that affected composition instruction, which largely substantiates his choice of source material. Perhaps,
though, Kitzhaber and Brereton avoid such questions because they identify in their bibliographies their primary and secondary sources.

Kitzhaber and Brereton, though, also provide insight about composition instruction history that Berlin and Connors do not. In Rhetoric in American Colleges, 1850-1900 (1990 [1953]), Kitzhaber examines a broadly sweeping number of factors that influence composition instruction, from instructors and textbook authors, to links between logic, philosophy and rhetoric, to instructional matter, to definitions of rhetoric. Kitzhaber begins his historiography by examining trends in American higher education before examining English studies and then the big four rhetoric instructors, Genung, Scott, Wendell, and Hill. Kitzhaber also examines the field of rhetoric and special areas that students might have studied, such as stylistics and grammar. Because his text covers several issues that have influenced composition instruction, it serves as an outline for future historians to consider. In fact, Kitzhaber’s chapter on the forms of discourse seemingly inspired Connors to examine them—both pieces have the same organizational structure. Kitzhaber’s work also likely inspired Berlin and Miller, as, with a Marxist perspective, they further develop the cultural effects upon composition studies that Kitzhaber glosses.

In The Origins of Composition Studies in American Colleges, 1875-1925 (1995), John Brereton largely de-emphasizes any power over the source material he collected mainly by presenting it. Aside from a twenty-five page introduction and brief introductions for each chapter, he does not add any commentary to his source material. Instead, he presents the documents that have helped to shape composition instruction, letting researchers and readers draw their own conclusions and avoiding making assumptions about how instructors used such materials in the classroom (xii). In his preface, Brereton levies a veiled attack on previous historians, noting that there is no secret in finding the documents, “student essays, course syllabi,
lecture notes, and teaching material,” that have shaped composition instruction (xv). To this list, I would add course catalogs and yearbooks, in addition to public documents held in college libraries and archives. In this sense, a historian could consult a university bulletin or course catalogs to see which texts instructors used during a certain period, go to the archives to find student essays, if they exist, and then draw correlations between course catalog descriptions, textbooks, and student essays12. Brereton allows researchers to make such connections within his text but perhaps the literary desire to define archetypes influenced him, as he presents vast amounts of materials about Harvard, the institution that possibly began first-year composition.

Aside from source material, the embedded discussions that Connors and Berlin place in their histories merits attention. Connors only vaguely discusses cultural currents in his examination of the modes of discourse, largely citing the influence of Scottish rhetoricians in American composition courses; however, Berlin largely dedicates discussions in his text to cultural influences, from the strive for an American identity to literacy issues brought on by growing colleges and new students from the working class. These cultural currents play a large role in composition history because of the ways in which culture affects college curriculum. In Rhetoric and Reality, Berlin continues his discussion of how cultural influences affect composition by discussing post-war college enrollees, burgeoning class sizes, and the move to standardization. These discussions are important and have affected future scholars and they ways in which they map composition histories.

In A Teaching Subject, Joseph Harris begins by examining what happened at the now infamous 1966 Dartmouth Conference, where British and American scholars debated issues

12 For example, see the South Dakota State University H. M. Briggs Library Archives: <http://lib.sdstate.edu/archives/ua/ua52_2.html>.
about composition such as standardization, teaching rules, and considering writing as a tool for intellectual growth and development\textsuperscript{13}. Likewise, Connors started his history by discussing the impact of the modes of discourse, Berlin began his history with the decline of classical rhetoric’s popularity and the influence of Scottish rhetoric (and the modes of discourse), and Brereton began with A.S. Hill’s tenure at Harvard. All of these beginnings mark major developments in American composition instruction history, as I have discussed, and Harris’s beginning marks the era of process theory, which he groups in to growth, voice and process theories, much in the same way that Berlin divides instruction into the following theories: classic, Scottish, romantic, and current-traditional. To this list of developments, my discussion of composition handbooks in Chapter Four will add the move to largely grammatical handbooks and the return of rhetorical contents to handbooks.

In \textit{Composition in the University: Historical and Polemical Essays} (1997), Sharon Crowley and in \textit{Textual Carnivals: The Politics of Composition} (1991), Susan Miller continue discussions of how culture has impacted composition instruction by expressly discussing conflicts between high and low culture and the long-lived goal of composition: to make students into better citizens by increasing their cognitive and elocution skills. Miller greatly contributes to Berlin’s discussion of growing college enrollments by examining institutional adaptations, as does Crowley. Aside from discussing the developments of composition studies, Miller adds a political twist by scoping composition within the Bakhtinian carnival, as composition emerged from an apparent need for remediation and grew into an independent study field. The early focus on mechanical correctness and more recent focus on writing processes have further transcended

\textsuperscript{13} Like North, who begins his discussion in the mid-twentieth century, Harris places much emphasis on composition as a mode of inquiry rather than a college course.
composition from a remote field of study to one valid throughout the university disciplines (1-2, 128, 145).

Crowley discusses much of the same matter but adds to the discussions of standardization, which most likely will resurface in this era of economic uncertainty, and the military influence upon composition. In *Rhetoric and Reality*, Berlin discusses how the G.I. Bill helped more students enroll in college and the ensuing need to help veterans, who might never have attended college without the G.I. Bill, improve their writing skills to military standards (92-96). But perhaps the G.I. Bill only helped increase college enrollment during the move for standardization that the general education movement prompted. In *Composition in the University*, Crowley interestingly merges the drive for standardization with post-war militarism, which invigorated the humanist aim of colleges to make productive students who can contribute to the development of their nation.

Making Meaning

Connors and Berlin certainly did not write complete histories in that they did not engage in the following components of modern historiography:

1. hermeneutic, based on documents and textual analysis, 2. historicist, depicting the present as distinct from the past but a necessary component to understanding the present, 3. not teleological, meaning that the goal of history cannot and need not be known [...], 4. broad in scope [...]. (Wilson 15)

Instead, Connors and Berlin wrote focused histories by attending to certain aspects of the field; and their peers have also written focused histories. From Brereton, we can read primary sources; from Berlin, Harris, and Connors, we can explore instructional trends; from Crowley and Miller,
we can explore social and political influences; and from Cremin, we can explore religious
influences on all of education.

Perhaps Berlin and Connors privileged certain types of information and thus wrote
skewed histories, but they did popularize composition history, which will help us make sense of
our field and why it changed in the ways that it has by providing different angles of historical
analysis. Additionally, although some critics fault Connors for largely deriving his histories from
handbooks, he does not directly analyze the texts and the manner in which they deliver
information, thus leaving a historical gap that I address in Chapter Four.

Composition historians can thus generate a more complete, complex map of
developments in composition instruction by drawing connections between existing historical
research and composition handbooks. For example, Connors has devoted much research to
tracing the development of the modes of discourse as an instructional tool in first-year
composition classrooms but has used little direct textual evidence in his research. In Chapter
Four, my examination of the modes of discourse makes composition history more hermeneutic
by investigating development of the modes, examining both Connors's “The Rise and Fall of the
Modes of Discourse” and actual composition handbooks, to include student inscriptions in the
front and back covers.

Further, given the collection of scholarship about composition history, it is large enough
to design courses around, showing that composition instruction history has evolved into its own
sub-field of Rhetoric and Composition, with branches into cultural studies, pedagogy and
handbooks, among others. These branches share the same connection to the classroom, and in the
classroom, the handbooks helps deliver knowledge.
Chapter Three
Hawhee and the Harbrace: Defining Composition Handbooks

“Mom,” my brother said, “take Bernie to obedience school. Dogs like and want to be trained.”

Finding a Place to Start

Although few detailed analyses of composition handbooks exist, Debra Hawhee accurately explains how composition handbook production operates. In “Composition History and the Harbrace College Handbook,” Hawhee presents an institutional critique of composition instruction as seen through the lens of John Hodges’s Harbrace College Handbook by examining how the text places students within the power differentials of college composition instruction, claiming that Hodges poached student writing samples and vaulted them only to use them to create a textual tool of classroom oppression and instruction. Hawhee effectively documents student subjectivity by arguing how Hodges objectifies student writing, stating that students must endure Foucaultian disciplinary measures of classification to learn new communication methods for survival and, for the most part, her methodology is firmly grounded and helps create a starting point for defining first-year composition handbooks.

In her analysis of Hodges’s resistance to change his handbook, Hawhee illuminates Connors’s criticism of the handbook industry—the refusal to adapt to pedagogical, theoretical and cultural shifts and, thus, the refusal to meet the needs of current students.

During my second semester as a Master’s degree student, I began drafting my first letter to College Composition and Communication, the journal that published Hawhee’s criticism of Hodges’s handbook. I did not agree with most of Hawhee’s criticism and considered
composition handbooks as nurturing classroom tools that help students succeed in varied academic environments, not as oppressive assimilation tools. Surely, Hodges appropriated student writing to construct his handbook, I thought, as how else could one consider how effectively to address student writing needs? I had never finished my letter and rightly so, as at that time, I never read Moffett’s criticism of textbooks—that they stymie intellectual growth during the early stages of writing by trying to prevent students from making errors before writing instead of helping students learn through making errors (200-203). (Even here, I note that handbooks currently operate as correctives instead of reference tools that help guide students to effective writing.) Hawhee, then, effectively shows how Hodges’s textbook adheres to current-traditional pedagogy by explaining how Hodges conceptualized the text and its genre during its inception and creation.

Marking the Archetype with Hodges

In the previous chapter, I addressed critiques of composition histories by scholars such as Connors and Berlin because of the narrow breadth of their sources—either textbooks or journal articles and book chapters. I emphasize either-or because, as I discussed, most critics focus on the misuse rather than the use of sources. In her research, though, Hawhee assembles an array of information from several types of sources that help support her assertions about the Hodges handbook, nonetheless all handbooks:

[Hodges’s] personal library […]; old student themes; Hodges’ statistical notes on student enrollment and students’ writing habits; several manuscripts of various editions of the Harbrace; galleys of the fifth and sixth editions; correspondences
between and among Hodges and his editors and later his co-authors; Hodges own
class notes and syllabi. (505)

As Hawhee states, such a collection of source material provides great insight in to the assembly
of the textbook, much in the same manner that Brereton’s *The Origins of Composition Studies in
the American College, 1875-1925* provides scholars with in-depth source material with which to
create a composition historiography.

By examining letters of correspondence with Hodges’s editors, Hawhee could see
Hodges’s steadfastness and refusal to change. In this sense, Hawhee uses “null sources,” those
used to create the primary sources that she examines. Nonetheless, in the midst of dwindling
sales because of competition and promoting outmoded teaching practices such as diagramming
sentences, we can see Hodges’s authorial purpose in a letter to editor William Jovanovich: “to
make correction of written work as clear and easy as possible for the student [and to] make
marking of student papers as easy as possible for the instructor” (qtd. in Hawhee 509). Hodges
simply did not want to change the structure of his handbook so he would not alienate teachers
(most notably, those who then used his handbook), who often depend on it as a static
instructional reference; but Faigley gives a more concrete reason: “[o]ne can hardly expect the
publisher to change radically the content of its best-selling book” (148; Miles, “Instructional
Critique”).

In addition to Hawhee’s examination of how Hodges did not want to extensively alter his
text, her analysis of how *Harbrace*, and thus Hodges, approaches literacy and student subjectivity
uncovers valuable insight about composition handbooks. In “The Problem with Speech Genres,”
Bakhtin argues that style and genre are inseparable, so style functions within the communicator,
the document of utterance (the textbook), and the genre of the communicator. Candor and
addressivity function within style, also, as they reflect within the tone of their utterances (neutral, formal, informal, objective), the attitude the author bears about their audience and how they conceive the audience’s reaction (“The Problem” 87, 93-94). Utterances, then, function as parts of particular genres, which the function of the utterance reflects in, its style, its theme, and the rhetor’s conception about audience. Utterances and their linguistic style become important because they help identify the subject positions of handbooks and their readers. In this sense, handbook readers need instruction on how to write well.

Hawhee examines the perceived need for students to submit to handbook material by examining the parts of the introduction addressed “to the instructor” and “to the student” (these sections are not in the 13th, 14th or 15th editions, but the Preface in each of these editions addresses both instructors and students, as indicated by subject headings). In “Marxism and the Philosophy of Language,” Bakhtin discusses how social situations shape rhetoric, stating that the “immediate social situation and its immediate social participants determine the ‘occasional’ form and style of an utterance” (1216). Hawhee explains the social situations of the text, teachers, and students by noting how Hodges uses the passive voice in the section addressed to instructors, showing submission, and then uses the active voice in the section addressed to students, showing domination. The section to the instructors ensures the usefulness of the text, focusing attention on it. However, the student section pelts “student-readers with a barrage of military-like instructions” that tell them how effectively to employ the textbook (516). As Hawhee states, the section trains students how to use the text, not how to write effectively. Such authorial moves by

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14 John Nietz argues that textbooks often have separate introductions for students and teachers because of insufficient teacher training (6).
Hodges, as Faigley puts it, make the student the subject of correction, thus putting the “subject” in “subjectivity” (Fragments 140).

Likewise, Hawhee examines how Hodges approaches literacy issues by noting that “Hodges never entertained the notion, for example, that different teachers and students might cultivate divergent writing habits [or] geography” (512) and thus homogeneously considers the entire American student populace as “rational, coherent, and unitary” (Faigley, Fragments 153). The division of Harbrace’s usage guide into the sections labeled formal, colloquial, dialectical, and illiterate help make the omission of a stylistics section relevant, as Hawhee places usage errors within sociocultural contexts, arguing that Hodges unfairly targeted his students and appropriated their errors, and their sample themes, used them to inform the methodology of his text, and applied them to America’s entire student body (512)\(^\text{15}\), thus applying Foucaultian normative judgments (Miles, “Institutional Critique” 4). With this application of normative rules, Hawhee argues that Hodges attempted to “eradicate specifically the Appalachian dialect” in the “questionable idioms” section, which listed “‘where at,’ ‘would of’ and ‘you was,’” for example, as “‘illiterate corruptions’” (emphasis added) (qtd. in 512). Trying to eradicate such usage, as Hawhee states, fixes the hicks and, as Michael W. Apple and Linda K. Christian Smith state, civilizes at least their language use and subsumes them into the dominant culture (7). Hawhee makes a valid assertion about Hodges’s attempt to silence regional dialect, but in the nature of composition instruction, the move to instruct students how effectively to communicate in college, Hodges aptly suggests that students use Standard Written English.

\(^{15}\) These themes come from Hodges's home institution, in Tennessee, and thus largely come from Southern writers.
The tone of Harbrace has changed from edition to edition, however. Hawhee cites the above example from the 1946 edition; the 1998 edition does not specifically identify Hawhee’s examples and merely advises against using colloquialisms and regionalisms because of their informality (144-151; G-1). Hodges, however, is not the first handbook author to tell students to eschew regionalisms and informal language. In fact, the instructions in the usage section have endured in many forms. In The Principles of Rhetoric and their Application (1878), A. S. Hill advises students to use only current English words (322-323). In The Practical Elements of Rhetoric, with Illustrative Examples (1885), John F. Genung advises students to avoid clichés and colloquialisms, as well as “rhetorical vanity” (331).

This discussion of usage guides helps make connections between textbooks and student assignments, although some critics state that handbooks cannot reveal much of use about instructional history. In an 1894 South Dakota Agricultural College (Now South Dakota State University) student essay, C. Oscar paraphrases Spencer’s “Philosophy of Style,” stating that essays that use mostly Anglo words are easier to read than those are that use mostly Latinate words (3). Additionally, student inscriptions in the back of Henry J. Robins and Agnes F. Perkins’s An Introduction to the Study of Rhetoric (1903) have “Shall and Will!: Examine” written just before “difference between novel and romance.” A student's notes in Century (1922) also explain shall and will (Figs. 1 and 2, below).

16 The tone in early usage sections most likely reflects changes in university culture, as Hodges most likely encountered new waves of students attending college with the aid of military tuition assistance, just as earlier composition instructors encountered new students at the hand of the American Industrial Revolution and the Morrill Act (See Connors, Composition 69, 79-84).
Fig. 1: Student notes inside the cover of Robins and Perkins’s *An Introduction to the Study of Rhetoric*.

Fig. 2: Student usage notes in the revised edition of *Century* (1922).

Even though usage sections may silence students' voices, with their regional dialects, in attempts to prepare them to write for college, Hodges may have simply adapted some sections similar to those of his predecessors, as evidenced in his markings in older textbooks within his archive (Hawhee 519). Another argument to keep language pure comes in Genung’s criticism of prevailing sadomasochistic attitudes in writing classrooms: “To submit one’s work in composition to rules is to regulate the free creative impulse by critical processes; and this, until the writer gets used to it, is apt to check and chill the flow of thought” (331).
As stated earlier, examining the inscriptions that Hodges wrote in his books can reveal insights to his conception of students. For example, Hodges read Chester Noyes Greenbough and Wilson Cheney Hersey’s *English Composition* (1917) and marked passages within the paragraph section. Greenbough and Hersey state in their text, “For the beginner the … method of opening and closing paragraphs—of surrounding them, so to speak, by a frame—is perhaps safest” (qtd. in 519). Hawhee explains that Hodges “underlined the opening qualifier ‘For the beginner’ with dark pencil twice” (519). Further, Hodges commented upon a section of Howard Grose’s *College Composition* (1926) in which Grose argues that students may write sentence fragments for particular stylistic emphasis. Hodges’s marginal comment states that such stylistic freedom is “Dangerous for [the] young writer” (qtd. in Hawhee 519). Such comments reveal the subjectivity in which Hodges placed his students—as people who need such severe remediation that any stylistic freedom is too complex for them to grasp, which explains the lack of a stylistics section in his own handbook.

Hawhee also argues that the *Harbrace’s* proofreading symbols constitute a way of employing coded language to discipline students. Hawhee critiques the proofreading symbol chart and its “military language” that begins each student’s “training process”17 with brief, clear instructive injunctions (516-517). Much worse tautologies exist in the form of huge, imposing, violation checklists, than marks such as “cs—3” for comma splice. Surely, Hawhee makes a valid assertion by implying that an instructor may mark essays only with cryptic proofreading codes—which is not good tautology. Conversely, proofreading marks are somewhat standardized symbols that help authors make mechanical corrections and have existed in handbooks as early as Quackenbos’s *Course of Composition and Rhetoric* (1864) (424-426). In fact, the

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17 Given the folk etymology, my favorite symbol is “frag.”
proofreading symbols listed in The Chicago Manual of Style (93), the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (246), the Merriam Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (943), and Harbrace (back cover) are all relatively commensurate to each other and to those in Quackenbos’s text (Also see Connors, “The Rhetoric of Mechanical Correctness.”).

Hawhee’s research reporting helps to see how Hodges conceived the handbook and how it would work in the classroom, but her research primarily reports upon the texts that help speculate about how Hodges conceived the Harbrace. As composition practitioners and scholars, Hawhee’s audience could most likely make connections between her document and current-traditional rhetoric; however, because Hawhee states that she had access to Hodges’s lecture notes and course syllabi, she could extend her argument to show how Hodges used his own textbook and conducted his own class sessions. Libby (Elizabeth) Miles argues that textbooks do not reveal what happens in classrooms and Richard Ohmann argues that scholars who study only textbooks, even though he does so, might not correctly conceptualize classroom practices because many composition instructors have the skill and training to teach independently from a textbook, using it as a reference tool for students. But handbooks can help conceptualize classroom activities (143). However, John Nietz argues that because teachers often received inadequate training, textbooks largely can define classroom practices (1). Nietz’s argument is relevant because Hawhee discusses how Hodges intended that instructors learn from the textbook and Kathleen Welch argues that textbooks impose the same normative structures on both students and instructors (271-272).

Further, Hawhee limits her examination of composition history, if we are to hold her to her title’s promise, by examining only one textbook. She states that in 1966, before the sixth edition of the Harbrace College handbook was printed, other texts became popular, such as
Prentice Hall’s Handbook for Writers (4th ed.), Scott-Foresman’s Handbook of Current English (2nd ed.), and Macmillan’s Handbook of English (508). Harbrace is now in its 15th edition, so what gave the text its staying power? By the twelfth edition (1994), the text sold some nine million copies—more than any other college textbook (505). Why? To answer these questions, Hawhee could have more thoroughly examined the textbook itself, compared its contents to existing textbooks, and made judgments about its popularity.

Looking at the structure of handbooks merits attention, as that structure reveals hierarchies within course material. As Hawhee notes, Harbrace begins with the parts of speech, moves to sentences, then paragraphs, and eventually discusses research. She also identifies the index and tables immediately within the covers and then argues that they help decenter student texts and emphasize the handbook. Nonetheless, examining the structure of textbooks helps to identify their genre. The Chicago Manual of Style (13th ed.) and Frederick Becker’s The Making of a Textbook identify the general structure of books, from title pages to indexes, but composition textbooks can vary in how they present information and in what information they choose to present. For example, what could one draw from comparing the beginning of Faigley’s

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18 Diana Hacker’s A Writer’s Reference assumed Harbrace’s title in 1995-1996 and currently reigns as the “most widely adopted” textbook, “Class-tested by over 2,000,000 students at over 1,500 schools” (“Writers”).

19 I include sales figures for textbooks to show their importance in terms of sales and dollars, implying that high sales numbers and more editions/printings indicate a textbook's popularity and arguably importance in the field. These numbers, though, should be taken with a grain of salt, as they come from publishing company promotional materials. The Industry Statistics from the Association of American Publishers costs $1,150.00 (“Association”).
Penguin Handbook, which begins with discussions about visual rhetoric and the rhetorical situation and the beginning of Harbrace (15th ed.), which starts with “Sentence Sense” and the parts of speech? The texts reveal starkly different pedagogical aims grounded in the differences between current-traditional pedagogy and growth theory.

Moving to a Definition of the Handbook Genre

Hawhee might leave unanswered questions, but to attempt to examine the entirety of the textbook genre in one article is an insurmountable feat, as Michael W. Apple and Linda K. Christian-Smith note that the thousands of existing textbook examinations could not possibly cover the vast array of textbooks and their various uses, which echoes Bakhtin's claim that genres develop and adapt to culture by developing as culture develops because genres that no longer adapt to their cultures die (3-4).

Nonetheless, minimal identifying characteristics ensconce genres. The novel has an unheroic, undeveloped hero (as does the handbook), works as a means of recording cultural history (as does the handbook), and does not use poetic language (as does not the handbook) (10). Additionally, the composition handbook explains syntactical, grammatical, rhetorical, semantic, and stylistic rules; methods of writing and documenting research; and describes methods of writing, at a minimum. In Chapter Four, I plan to examine these minimums and how they deliver information.

20 A future study involving quantitative usability research would much enhance this research. Reversing Hawhee’s examination of Hodges’s conceptions of students by examining students as they navigate different handbooks to try to find different material. This research would create a sort of dialectic between handbooks and students and reduce the space between author, text, and
In 1977, Nell Ann Pickett published “A Comparison of Characteristics Desired by College English Teachers in a Composition Handbook with Characteristics of Recent Composition Handbooks,” a study that examined the physical characteristics of composition handbooks and reported what information teachers want composition handbooks to contain. Pickett found that:

Teachers said that an English composition handbook should do these things: emphasize that the English language is constantly changing, give reasons and background for usage practices, describe conventional usage, emphasize that there are various levels of acceptable usage, and present various acceptable practices regarding language usage. Teachers said that an English composition handbook should not do these things: prescribe correct usage, explain that there is one correct grammatical standard for all users of American English, and in 1977, be essentially the same as an English composition handbook in 1957 or 1997\(^2\) (10).

Pickett conducted valuable research by comparing what textbooks offered to what teachers wanted\(^2\).

Pickett and Nietz also identify the major components of textbooks: size, bindings and paper, print and pictures, page layout and white space, teaching directions, learning and teaching aids such as tables and charts, testimonials and recommendations, subject matter specifics such as reader.

\(^2\) Connors asserts that handbooks are, indeed, the same in 1990s as they were in the 1950s.

\(^2\) Revisiting this study might be in order, but with the addition of what students desire in a handbook, as usability should focus on users (Crerar and Benyon 50). See Chapter Five for a usability test proposal that would focus on how effectively students can use handbooks.
as usage sections, citation sections and everyday writing sections. To this list, I would add technology sections, online components, and electronic ancillaries. But merely identifying and examining these parts will not suffice, as I want to examine how they rhetorically and visually operate. For example, why would one publisher use plain black borders on callout boxes while another publisher uses a series or concentric lines or 3D-lookalike graphics to frame callout boxes?

There are still many areas of composition handbooks to explore. Hawhee examines the authorial role and certainly fills a research gap, Connors examines the material, and Apple and Christian-Smith examine subjectivity. Handbook research now needs to examine historical developments of composition handbooks to help identify how instructors have used them and how theory and pedagogical ideology have impacted their development, as the existing histories privilege the texts, the authors, and the topics but oddly neglect to address the audience—oddly because composition instructors have the dreadful habit of chirping phrases like “what about audience address?” What about audience address?

The Composition Handbook as Genre

Genres are not just forms. Genres are forms of life, ways of being. They are frames for social action. They are environments for learning. They are locations within which meaning is constructed. Genres shape the thoughts we form and the communications by which we interact. Genres are the familiar places we go to create intelligible communicative action with each other and the guideposts we use to explore the unfamiliar. (Bazerman 19)
Genre and interface seemingly work synonymously, as a genre embodies a lexicon of rules, albeit differing rules, depending on the person classifying the rules and the genre. The interface is the area where those genre rules come to life. From such a standpoint as above, and from viewing genres as venues for learning through communication, one can see specific interfaces as tableaux meeting specific rules, models, specifications, or structures that interface designers must follow to effectively communicate; genres must contain specific interface elements to meet the needs of specific rhetorical situations. Such a conception, then, brings to light the first-year composition handbook and how its interface elements help form its genre.

In “Situated, Social, Active: Rewriting Genre in the Elementary Classroom,” Maryln Chapman argues that genres entail more than forming a set of guidelines for communicators to follow, as they also entail the “cultural resources” that writers draw upon to create discourse (469). Freedman and Medway provide a detailed conception of genre, stating that it is: “(a) primarily literary, (b) entirely defined by textual regularities in form and content, (c) fixed and immutable, and (d) classifiable into neat and mutually exclusive categories and subcategories” (2). Chapman adds that genres also work as ways to work within communities and, drawing upon Bakhtin, states that cultural context also affects genres because all language constitutes dialog between signified, signifier, symbol, and culture.

By encapsulating genres and their interfaces in social interaction, they become: 1) situated by growing from “contexts and spheres of activity” (the composition course acts as a sphere of activity and the handbook has several usage contexts, from reference to corrective); 2) social (the handbook often works as a mediary between instructor and student), because people study aspects genres to effectively interact; and 3) active (different instructors and contexts lead handbook usage in different directions. The handbooks lack of change also inhibits effective
interaction), because genres “are dynamic, flexible, purposeful, and useful and are learned through engagement” (Chapman 471). Chapman specifies her description by stating that “genres are viewed as social actions situated particular types of contexts within a discourse community” (471). Then, Jeff Shire states, as social actions, genres prompt authors “to assume ‘the eyes of the genre’ to see his or her contemporary space time through a specific genre or world view.” In doing so, the composition handbook author cannot overlook the guiding tropes of the handbook genre, thus mandating specific interface design effectively to meet their purpose. Likewise, drawing connections between handbooks and other examinations of composition instruction history will reveal how composition and rhetoric instructors from different eras taught composition.

In Outlines of Rhetoric (1893), John F. Genung describes rhetoric, as conceived by a textbook author, as “the art of expressing our thoughts with skill [. . .]” (2); and expressing thoughts entails using some sort of verbal communication. Composition instruction, then, includes discussions of verbal activity, whether spoken, written, or visual—its primary text, the composition handbook, as a result, functions within its genre and establishes the rules that ideally delineate academic writing.

Conceptualizing the composition handbook genre draws upon Bakhtin’s discourse in “The Problems of Speech Genres,” in which he states that the style, structure, and “content” of the language a group uses defines that group’s goals. Style, however, refers to both the structure and the content of the text and its interface; rhetors cannot separate it from themselves and their utterances, the most basic forms communication takes, whether personal style is dominant as in primary speech genres, “unmediated speech communication” such as diary entries, notes, letters, and everyday conversation, etc. or whether personal style is highly subsumed, as in secondary
speech genres, novels, drama, research, government documents, textbooks, etc. (“The Problem” 86-87).

Because style and genre are inseparable, style functions within the communicator, the document of utterance, and the genre of the communicator. Candor and addressivity, according to Bakhtin, function within style, also, as they reflect within the tone of their utterances (neutral, formal, informal, objective), the attitude the author bears about their audience and how they conceive the audience’s reaction (87, 93-94). Utterances, then, function as parts of particular genres, which the function of the utterance reflects in its style, its theme, and the rhetor’s conception about their audience.

Bakhtin states that teaching genre rules, or features, constitutes a near impossibility because:

we know our native language—its lexical composition and grammatical structure—not from dictionaries and grammars but from concrete utterances that we hear and that we ourselves reproduce in live speech communication with people around us. (The Problem 90)

Bakhtin seemingly problematizes his own conception that genres fit into rule-bound categories in the above statement, as some initial works must have spawned the genres—the first novel or the first handbook, for example. Nonetheless, Bakhtin asserts that the novel is the only genre newer than “writing and the book” (“Epic and Novel” 3), as even the Greek orators verbally delivered rules for argumentative discourse. The composition handbook originated, then, from discourse

23 For example, the rules for epic novels are: they discuss the “absolute past” within a framework of “national tradition” and they distance the “epic world from contemporary reality” (“Epic and Novel” 13).
rules to a set of rules for writing; showing that genres exist within classifiable structures that may change because “the novel inserts into [. . .] other genres an indeterminacy, a certain semantic openendedness, a living contact with the unfinished, still-evolving contemporary reality (the openended present)” (7) and handbooks must then evolve as culture does.

In this sense, then, since genres constantly change because of interaction with cultural factors, one cannot set down concrete rules for students to learn because culture will always alter, however slightly, the rules. In the case of the novel, shifting rules may result in new tropes within the genre, such as the sentimental novel or bildungsroman. As Katerina Clark and Mike Holquist state in Mikhail Bakhtin, genres exist as devices that “fix the world view of the ages from which they spring” and contain “narrow literary context”; thus, genres embody a historically specific idea of what it means to be human”—much like a chain reaching into eternity—each link represents the conception of a genre at a given pint in time (275).

Considering the handbook genre as a chain with different yet interconnected links helps open the possibility for conducting a historical analysis of handbooks, as Genung’s nineteenth-century composition texts and Lunsford's twenty-first century text do not share many structural qualities aside from their intent to help students write better.

In “Epic and Novel,” Bakhtin further argues that once someone can describe a genre in its entirety, that genre dies (3-4). He further states that the novel, the royal genre, feeds life and change into the other genres and thus keeps them alive, but I’m afraid the composition handbook genre lays on its deathbed, as it has developed little since the middle of the twentieth-century. Hope, though, lies in the history of the composition handbook with its varied past and new technology that promises new structures and new methods for education students.
As Bakhtin argues, a minimum number of features identify components within a genre. The novel has an unheroic, undeveloped hero, works as a means of recording cultural history, and does not use poetic ("imaginative") language (Bakhtin, “Epic and Novel” 10) and the composition handbook explains syntactical, grammatical, semantic, and stylistic rules; methods of writing and documenting research; and describes methods of writing, at a minimum. In addition, style, structure, and themes figure in defining the handbook genre, as do the planning, motives, audience adaptation, response to situation, and persuasion seeking elements.

Theme, which Bakhtin relates to content, perhaps denotes the easiest aspect of the composition handbook genre to identify. Further, as Robert Connors argues in “Handbooks: History of a Genre,” handbook content often reflects cultural attitudes and ideologies. In the mid-to late-nineteenth century, handbooks such as Andrew Peabody’s *Handbook of Conversation: Its Faults and Graces* (1855), focused on improving conversational skills, which would in turn help students become better citizens. Such handbooks contained usage sections and some information on grammar, but Connors refers to them as “handbooks of linguistic gentility” (87), which signifies their place on the bookshelves of upper-class students because lower-class citizens would not need linguistic skills to speak with factory shift leaders and other members of their social class and they certainly would not attend college.

The texts and their focus on giving students the means to become better citizens is quite important in defining handbooks as a genre because they have historically retained the same central ideological focus: improving student linguistic and language ability will improve student marketability in the social and workplace arenas. In the late 1800s, Albert Kitzhaber’s big four, John F. Genung, Adams Sherman Hill, Fred N. Scott, and Barrett Wendell, the people credited with establishing composition textbooks in college curriculums, primarily focused their texts on
rhetorical strategies and modes of discourse. In fact, Genung refused to teach and publish basic grammar rules, making it clear that he taught rhetoric, not grammar.

The handbooks of the big four, however, merely reflected cultural circumstances, which makes the late-nineteenth-century inception of the handbook an important one, as Bakhtin argues that analyzing genres from specific times in history will help conceptualize those times. The typical college students in the late nineteenth century came from the upper classes because such people could afford such an education. Not until after the American Industrial Revolution began did previously underprivileged and lower-class citizens begin to have the ability and financial means to attend college. Sons and daughters of immigrants, many of whom did not know English, began to attend college—and the professorate noticed the undereducated nature of this new class of students. An increasing number of students needed to learn basic composing skills and the rudiments of mechanics; thus, although early handbooks such as Edwin A. Abbot’s How to Write Clearly (1874) describes a meager fifty-six proscriptive rules about writing, it was not until Woolley published his Handbook of Composition: A Compendium of Rules (1907), with 350 numbered rules, that the composition handbook began to take a standard shape.

Connors notes that Woolley’s handbook was instructor-centered, as Woolley intended it to “be used ‘for reference at the direction of the instructor, in case of errors in themes’” (qtd. in Connors 92; Woolley iii) 24. Thus, we see cues of addressability developing, as handbook authors serve as disseminators of writing knowledge, acting as benevolent entities who only wish to help students become better writers. Further, the handbook genre responded to a specific

24 Also see Woolley, Scott and Tressler’s Handbook of Writing and Speaking (1885), which focuses on the “minimum essentials” (v); Quackenbos’s Course of Composition and Rhetoric (1854) (8); Kellogg's Text-Book on Rhetoric (1896) (4).
situation to adapt to a newly formed audience—shifting to rule-centered texts from literary texts was a response to help make all students effective students.

At the same time, however, first-year composition classes actually started to become first-year composition classes—not rhetoric classes that entailed instruction about many forms of discourse, such as speech, writing, and journalism, or classes that focused on literature. The new lower-class students needed separate speech communications and written communications classes to close the educational gap with their upper-class counterparts. Moreover, Woolley’s textbook became not only a popular text, but also the archetype for modern composition handbooks. In 1918, Garland Greever and Easley S. Jones copied Woolley and published *The Century Handbook of Writing*, and the two texts sold well, which spurred other publishing houses to copy them. By 1927, 85% of Midwestern colleges used composition handbooks and 45% of those colleges’ writing programs only used handbooks (Connors 94), which made way for a profitable new segment of the textbook publishing industry.

In 1941, then, James McCrimmon announced that “instructors not only consult the handbook they are using, they are likely to con it, get it by heart, and not infrequently, pledge indiscriminate devotion to it” (qtd. in Connors 94). Concordantly, by this time, most major publishing houses printed their own handbooks. Nonetheless, a shift occurs here, as at the turn of the century, many first-year writing programs focused on grammar and form, in the current-traditional mode; however, the textbooks did not provide grammar and usage sections, to a large degree. In the early 1900s, texts began to provide instructors with all of the needed tools to teach their new class of students. Subsequently, the success of Hodges's *Harbrace College Handbook* (1941) hallmarks the success of teacher-focused handbooks, which became publisher-focused handbooks as a particular model sold well.
Composition handbooks have largely remained unchanged since the mid-1900s. In the 1970s, process and expressivist pedagogies made headway, with force, into composition classrooms and instructors began to pay more heed to rhetorical strategies than to grammar. Indeed, I received plenty of grammar instruction in my first-year composition classes in the early 1990s, but realize that I am one of few. Some publishers began marketing their rhetoric textbooks and some began to publish grammar textbooks such as those by Diana Hacker; however, the only major changes to composition handbooks are the inclusion of technology sections and moving proofreading charts from the back cover to the last page or so, as I will discuss in detail in Chapter Four.

Nonetheless, new handbooks, with technology sections, process sections, and visual rhetoric sections, simultaneously comprise and represent their genre. Crafting a totally new composition handbook would be pointless in Bakhtin’s case for a few reasons. First, if publishers recreated handbooks with each printing, instructors would not know which ones to adopt or which ones fit their students’ needs or their teaching styles because the genre would become fragmented. Second, by remaining somewhat unchanged, handbooks provide publishers with a consistent product. What if publishers changed their books each time composition instruction theory changed or each time a new theory developed? What if different colleges used differently theoretically grounded textbooks? For one, colleges wouldn’t produce a stable, reasonably assimilated crop of new workers to fuel the economy. By remaining somewhat rule-centered and broadly focused, handbooks can aptly serve as many students and teachers as possible while keeping production costs at a minimum by producing one text instead of several different versions of the same text.
Also, handbooks, publishers and authors, continued to respond to cultural stimuli, like true representatives of their genre. Keeping their focus on rules, handbooks and their publishers reacted to higher college enrollments, thanks to the open admissions policies many colleges adopted in the early 1900s, the Morrill Act, the GI Bill, and an economically upward population, which continued to filter students with varying degrees of grammatical and syntactical knowledge into colleges. Handbooks responded to the process movement, albeit twenty years too late. From 1996 to 2000, the \textit{St. Martin’s / New St. Martin’s}, \textit{Scott, Foresman}, and \textit{Century / New Century} handbooks, among others, moved their correction/proofreading symbol charts from inside the back cover to one of the last pages. The \textit{New St. Martin’s} handbook still includes substantial material on stylistics, classical rhetoric and tropes, and the \textit{Scott, Foresman} publishers, assuming students would rather surf the Internet, have omitted parts of their handbook, such as portions of the MLA and APA style guide sections and replaced them with internet addresses—despite the fact that the MLA and APA charge visitors to search their online style manuals ("APA Style", "What is").

Handbooks also share a common style, making them easily identifiable with the genre as a whole. Woolley and Scott’s 1926 version of the \textit{New Handbook of Composition} includes charts on the inside of the cover that indicate which sections of the book contain information about specific writing rules, as does the 1999 version of \textit{The Scott, Foresman Handbook for Writers} (and the vast majority of existing composition handbooks). The 13th edition of the \textit{Harbrace College Handbook} (1999) has almost identical structure as the fourth edition (1956), with the exception of the new editions of a glossary and extensive documentation guidelines (the 1956 edition predates the MLA style sheet by eight years) and the removal of the section entailing diagramming sentences.
The 1956 and 2001/2002 editions of the *Harbrace College Handbook* begin with sentence level concerns and build up to a fully-researched essay, as do most current handbooks, although some may include topic search sections before discussing sentence-level concerns. The later editions include brief sections about document design as well as usage glossaries. Woolley’s *New Handbook of Composition* (1926 ed.) begins with word diction, moves to sentence structure, then to arranging entire discourses. Additionally, the last section of the text includes a usage section. Regardless, composition handbooks contain sections describing grammar rules, usage, syntax, research, documentation, and formal argumentation. Almost all handbooks in the genre share these content themes.

Handbook producers’ responses to cultural stimuli help vivify the handbook genre as well as respond to Herrick’s conceptual terms for rhetoric. They all have the same motive: to make effective college-level writers; they simultaneously adapt to an audience and a situation: students who need to learn how to write in specific manners; they have persuasive natures in that they teach students how argumentatively to write and persuade them that they need to know the information contained within the covers. *The Scott, Foresman Handbook for Writers*, for instance has a section entitled “To the Writer” that says the editors “have tried to write in a friendly, informal tone,” have “applied a problem-solving approach” so students can address areas that they need to work on, use “sample papers” from real students, and “discuss the entire writing process” (xxx-xxxi). The authors try to convince their audience that their textbook will, as painlessly as possible, help them become better college writers.

However, composition handbooks also employ structure to help convey meaning. Topics affect the deep meaning of interfaces, but the interface structure of composition handbook interfaces also merits attention. In the most general form, *The Chicago Manual of Style* outlines
the basic components of an informational book such as a textbook. These parts are not only important as parts of the textbook genre, but also as different interface operators. The major divisions of a book are the preliminaries, the text, and the end matter, which the manual further separates into subdivisions (3-4).

Typically, the preliminaries of a first-year composition handbook contain rudiments such as the title page, the table of contents and copyright data, but the preliminaries often contain lists of contributors and, most importantly, brief sections, addressed to students and to instructors, which offer advice about how to use the text at hand; sometimes these sections include brief sections on the most used sections of the textbook. Some handbooks also include chapter summaries in the front and back covers and rhetorical book divisions that instead of listing the contents in a linear mode list them topically under headings such as mechanics, research, getting started, etc.

The text of a book has simple conceptual structure—as it is simply the text, the primary content of the book. Yet, there are deeper meanings within the textual interfaces and their organization. Tabulated guides, indexes, menus graphics, graphical forms, and color help convey meaning to textbook users. Also, as Hawhee argues, the organizational structure reveals hierarchies within course material. As Hawhee notes, Harbrace begins with the parts of speech, moves to sentences, then paragraphs, and eventually discusses research. She also identifies the


index and tables immediately within the covers and argues that they help decenter student texts and emphasize the handbook, but composition textbooks can vary in how they present information and in what information they choose to present. For example, what could one draw from comparing the beginning of Faigley’s *Penguin Handbook*—discussions about visual rhetoric and the rhetorical situation—and the beginning of *Harbrace* (13th ed.)—discussions of “Sentence Sense” and the parts of speech? These two texts reveal starkly different pedagogical aims grounded in the differences between current-traditional pedagogy and rhetorical theory. In addition, do other interface aspects such as tonality and callout boxes reveal authorial conceptions of student readers? Do handbooks that begin with grammatical rudiments address students with similar tones as textbooks that start with rhetorical tropes?

The back matter of composition textbooks remains somewhat static, from text to text, with only minor variations. Aside from standard components such as an index and bibliography, composition handbooks often have appendixes that include usage guides, brief grammar guides, reference lists for further study, an editing/proofreading marks guide, and thematical guides to the textbook.

Change from Culture

Considering the constant nature of handbooks, we can draw upon Bakhtin’s assertion that “if we had to originate [genres] during the speech process and construct each utterance at will for the first time, speech communication would be almost impossible” (“The Problem” 90). If publishers did not build from Woolley’s model, many handbooks may be drastically different from others and some may not address issues that students need to study. By remaining malleable yet unyielding, handbooks have been able to survive and remain to comprise a living
genre, ensconced by rules of form, style, audience needs, and argument. Nonetheless, because handbooks have topically changed little in the past forty years, their interface structures have become compromised because the information, tone and interface structures do not reach to student and teacher readers because they reflect retro modes of address and themes. By examining attitudes about composition textbooks, interface and information design in a variety of textbooks, from the founding textbooks by Genung, Wendell, Kellogg, and Hill to current popular sellers such as St. Martin’s 5, The Scott, Foresman Handbook, Harbrace, New Century, and Bedford, one can identify the structural needs for an effective, current composition textbook.
Chapter Four

Mapping Changes in Composition Handbooks

*Your theme lacks unity, you will have to learn to compress and condense, you will have to learn to emphasize certain ideas, do you see, and your spelling and grammar . . . well, you will profit from practice, and have you gone to the bookstore yet to get the Handbook? That will help you a great deal, why, I consult the Handbook myself, it’s invaluable.*

(Joyce Carol Oates; cit. in Pickett 1)

The Birth of the Handbook

I begin my analysis of rhetoric textbooks and composition handbooks by comparing the British and Scottish-influenced American rhetoric textbooks of the early 1800s to America’s defining rhetoric textbooks from the 1880s and 1890s, when rhetoric textbooks that addressed solely pedagogical needs began to appear. What I refer to as the rhetoric textbooks of the early 1800s had more to do with discourse, clear expression of thought, in general, than written composition and had largely cultural as well as pedagogical roles, as they also served as elocution guides, manners guides and usage guides, according to Connors (“Handbooks” 87). Additionally, these early rhetoric textbooks promoted correctness as a form of “mental discipline,” as usage errors commonly represented errors in logic in addition to hampering the formation of purely American English (“Handbooks” 3; Berlin, *Writing Instruction* 13; Crowley, “Evolution” 158).

These early rhetoric textbooks merit analysis here because they gave birth to composition handbooks. Both genres discuss, describe, explicate and correct Standard Written English, but
composition handbooks have simply distilled the information about writing from rhetoric and developed it into a textbook of its own. Although the 1891-1892 South Dakota Agricultural College Course Bulletin describes the first section of the Rhetoric sequence as Composition, it merely indicates a focus on punctuation and mechanics drills in addition to recitation and writing outlines. This course description represents a significant move from the 1885 description of Rhetoric, which includes “exercises in elocution.” Textbook authors began to address this change in instructional material by publishing rhetoric textbooks that address rules for writing.

In the 1880s and 1890s, rhetoric textbooks by authors such as John F. Genung and Adams Sherman Hill prompted students to write under modular guidelines. These guiding tropes and rules have come to resemble current handbooks and their rule-driven nature (“Handbooks” 89-91). Rules, though, have not always dominated texts in writing courses, as the modes of discourse have endured as a basis for composition instruction, with its rhetorical roots of teaching students how to for certain situations. In fact, Connors asserts that in the 1890s, student textbooks addressing the modes dominated the field (“Rise” 6). These rhetoric textbooks, with their combined focus that ranges from lexical to whole-composition issues marks a shift towards written composition in rhetoric textbooks, as does Brainerd Kellogg's ([1896]) blurring of the distinction between written and oral modes of discourse.

Current handbooks, however, have retained organizational structures focused on coded rules in the form of correction codes popularized by the earliest handbooks, Abbott's How to Write Clearly, The Century Handbook and Woolley’s. With their emphasis on marking and correcting written compositions, Greever and Jones's Century Handbook of Writing (1918) and Woolley's Handbook of Composition (1907) mark the birth of the composition handbook, proper. Hodges’s Harbrace Handbook (1941) and its simplicity made rule-driven handbooks
standard, though new handbooks, including new editions of Harbrace, have returned to composition’s rhetorical roots by including sections that address writing as a process rather than writing as a product and by including brief discussions of the modes of discourse in sections dedicated to writing situations or writing with a purpose or types of paragraphs. New handbooks also retain an easily identifiable rhetorical nature while looking to culture for influence by incorporating discussions of how to persuade and involve audiences as well as discussions of how to incorporate hypertext and iconography into writing.

After discussing how rhetoric textbooks came to embody the modes of discourse, I examine their shift to rule-driven texts iconic of their current form. Because Harbrace dominated the handbook genre and has come to exist as a living archetype some sixty-five-years old, I discuss some major changes that the handbook has gone through and then compare the current Harbrace to two of its current competitors, The St. Martin’s Handbook and The Penguin Handbook. In this discussion, I conclude that although current handbooks still share the same goal of the first Harbrace, to teach students how to write effectively, instructors have come to all but expect new pedagogically and culturally-driven sections that address topics ranging from English as a second language to technology to writing as a process. Given this, I examine how these three handbooks disseminate course material and approach students.
The Modes of Discourse

Quackenbos and Whately

Early rhetoric textbook authors such as Quackenbos merely mention the modes of discourse, instruction beginning with teaching students how to write exposition, description, narration, and argument, rather than using them as the founding principles of their texts. In fact, in An Advanced Course in Composition and Rhetoric (1854), Quackenbos dedicates some ten pages to description and only a total of two pages to narration, argument, exposition and an added speculation27 (Fig. 3, Appendix28).

Quackenbos’s coverage of the modes, though, comes at a turning point for composition instruction, as composition instructors began to favor the logic of a standard form over Aristotelian persuasion. Edward Channing, Harvard’s Boylston Rhetoric Professor from 1819-1851, called for discourse that “must be the natural light of truth, not the false brilliancy that startles and blinds” (qtd. in Douglas 112). In this sense, the modes and their focus on form gives students grounding in merely writing for occasions, not necessarily writing to convince by using what Whately (as well as the sophists) calls trickery (4), stating that he does not cover “Rhetorical Artifices” because:

The adulterators of food or of drugs, and the coiners of base money, keep their processes a secret, and dread no one so much as him who detects, describes and proclaims their contrivances, and thus puts men on their guard, for “every one that

27 An anonymously abridged copy of Hugh Blair’s Lectures on Rhetoric (1822) devotes a mere seven pages to the modes.

28 With the exception of figures 44 and 49, all figures referenced in this chapter are located in the Appendix, pages 168-227.
Whately further emphasizes his distaste for ornament in his style section, where he covers perspicuity, energy and elegance—elements related to efficient, not elaborate, writing (Figs. 4 and 5)—far cries from Quackenbos’s discussion of stylistic contrivances such as amplification, simile and figurative language. This emphasis of form over style helped usher in the modes as the dominating rhetoric textbook topic.

Whately’s *Elements of Rhetoric* (1828) has what compositionists would call today a single-mode focus, as it dwells solely within the realm of composing logical argumentative discourse (3-6, 60-61) and expressly eschews discussions of tropes or ornament, making it a utilitarian text. Whately explains that his text exists to help rhetors effectively construct arguments because even people “*not deficient in natural powers*” might commit logical errors (6). In this sense, then, Whately conceptualizes his text as a sort of reference text for skilled writers and as an instructional text for less-skilled writers.

Quackenbos moves away from Whately's conceptions of composition at least by addressing modes of discourse and by explaining rules. In his Preface, Quackenbos describes the ideal course of study as outlined by his text, with a progression from studying vocabulary to studying punctuation and grammar to studying rhetoric to studying types of compositions, to include “description, narration, argument, &c.” (6-7). Of note, Quackenbos refers to invention as the process of dressing thought with words, giving light to Berlin’s claim that early rhetoric courses focused on logic, which Quackenbos highlights in his claim that the “reasoning faculties” govern people (12).
Further, this text highlights Connors’s assertion that early rhetoric textbooks focus mostly on “‘correctness’ and gentility” (what Quackenbos refers to as “clearness and simplicity” [7]) (Fig. 6 for a list of these topics as outlined in the table of contents). But by discussing formal correctness, Quackenbos introduces some corrective elements adopted in later textbooks, even though he explains his reasoning, stating that he wanted to produce as “complete and thorough” a “system” for writing as possible (6). As I have discussed earlier, the mid-nineteenth century move from belletristic rhetoric instruction to instruction focusing on mechanical correctness helped form a new American poetic. Quackenbos seemingly nods to this notion, stating that he has drawn much of the influence for his text not only from the likes of Blair and Burke, but also from “modern English publications” (8), as his text begins the transition to mechanically-oriented texts.

Hill and Genung

By the end of the nineteenth century, the modes of discourse became prominent in composition instruction, as indicated by the popular rhetoric textbooks of Hill and Genung (Connors, “Rise” 6). John F. Genung’s *The Practical Elements of Rhetoric, with Illustrative Examples* (1885) focused on the modes of discourse, covering them in four chapters spanning 122 pages (Fig. 7). Additionally, *Outlines of Rhetoric* (1893) entertained the modes in a final chapter spanning nineteen pages. The first printing of Adams Sherman Hill’s *The Principles of Rhetoric and Their Application* (1878) contained no mention of the modes of discourse but the

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*29* Whately also calls the contents of his text a “system” that outlines the method for composition (7). System, like *unity, mass, coherence*, has an unexplained compositional quality, as future numbered rules became new *systems* and the writing process became mangled into a *system*. 

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text started to sell fewer copies in the early 1890s (Connors, “Rise” 5). The second edition, published in 1895, includes a discussion of the modes that spans a massive 153 pages of the 400-page text (Fig. 8). The new modes rhetoric textbooks both contested previous rhetoric textbooks and enforced their focus on rules by focusing on the whole composition, instead of language, and focusing on rules for writing certain types of compositions.

Adding force to this shift of emphasizing the modes of discourse, accentuating concerns pertaining to whole compositions, comes Hill’s assertion (via Walter Savage Landor) that “’There is [...] a fastidiousness in the use of language that indicates an atrophy of the mind’” (Principles 3). In Outlines of Rhetoric, Genung calls for a study of writing that equally emphasizes sentence-level, paragraph, and organizational concerns, stating that while writers cannot “be so off-hand about the words [they] use and the manner [they] put them together [...]. Nor] will it answer to throw out our ideas at random just as they chance to occur to us” (1-2). Here, Genung (and Hill) focus on the nuances of arrangement by critiquing those who may teach in the style of Quackenbos or Whately by focusing primarily on lexical issues. Hill and Genung’s texts still contain sections dedicated to barbarisms, improprieties, solecisms, choice of words and the like; however, they have evenly divided space between word and sentence-level concerns and whole-composition concerns.

James Berlin calls rhetoric textbooks and handbooks by those such as Genung and Hill “mechanistic” because they embody a current-traditional approach to writing by focusing on the modes and thus the proper arrangement of materials (Writing Instruction 65-66). However, Berlin mostly looks at the table of contents and a few sentences from the beginning of sections of rhetoric textbooks and handbooks. A look at the prefatory materials presents different authorial conceptions about writing, as in The Practical Elements of Rhetoric, Genung argues that as an
art, rhetoric makes “discourse effective in the accomplishment of an end”; as a science, rhetoric “is systematized knowledge; if then the laws and principles of discourse are exhibited in an orderly system, they appear in the character of a science” (qtd. in 328). Genung further argues that when operating in the realm of art, rhetoric relies on “natural aptitude” that must be exercised and developed (qtd. in 330). Additionally, Genung argues that focusing on which rules to follow will “check and chill the flow of thought” (qtd. in Brereton 331). These statements of Genung's do create somewhat of a mechanistic, current-traditional aura, but they also show that Genung urges student writers to critically think about their writing—to consider how best to persuade their audience(s) by thinking beyond the word to conceptions of the whole composition and, importantly, about audience.

Hill, in *The Principles of Rhetoric* (1878), though, provides more commentary about the state of rhetoric, stating that it “is an art, not a science: for it neither observes, nor discovers, nor classifies; but it shows how to convey from one mind to another the results of observation, discovery, or classification; it uses knowledge, not as knowledge, but as power” (qtd. in 321). Effective writing thus rests in the methods that writers use and science rests in what writers convey. In *English Composition, Eight Lectures Given at the Lowell Institute* (1891), Barrett Wendell adds to the concept of how rhetoric operates as an art by stating that it entails mastering a general set of rules rather than focusing on “the correction of erratic detail” (qtd. in Brereton 333). Further, Wendell explains that rhetoric and grammar are separate entities, as rhetoric focuses on the best usage for a certain situation and grammar focuses on the most correct usage for any situation (cit. in Brereton 334). These conceptions work together to show how the founding current-traditionalists considered rhetoric as more than a set of grammatical rules and considered composition as more than writing to a form.
Hill and Genung’s emphasis on the paragraph also shows pedagogical moves from prioritizing lexical matters to prioritizing matters pertaining to whole compositions, as Quackenbos’s *Advanced Course on Rhetoric* devotes little time to explaining paragraphs, merely describing the paragraph mark in the section devoted to explaining marks used in composing and printing (150), thus iterating that selecting the correct words to shape thoughts bears more importance than organizing thoughts. Hill and Genung, however, include detailed sections devoted to the paragraph. Interestingly, Hill discusses *unity* in his paragraph section, emphasizing that paragraphs should have a unified, fluid focus (Foundations 305-306) while Quackenbos discusses sentence *unity* (309-310) (Figs. 9-10). The space in rhetoric textbooks devoted to structures such as the paragraph may indicate the types of writing assigned to students, as discussing sentence unity would apply most to daily theme writing while discussing paragraph unity would most apply to writing longer essays (Figs. 11-12). These changing texts also indicate a move to ask first-year Rhetoric students to write compositions rather than to recite models.

In a conflicting move because they argue against what their rhetoric textbooks do, Genung and Hill further depart from their predecessors by distinguishing the difference between rhetoric and logic and grammar. For example, Hill states that rhetoric’s “rules are not absolute” while those who have “mastered the mechanics of language have great advantage over one who cannot express himself correctly” (Foundations, v-vi). In *The Practical Elements of Rhetoric*, Genung explains that rhetoric and logic are inextricably linked; however, rhetoric exists to make logical discoveries cogent, attractive, etc. (cit. in Brereton 330). Genung also emphasizes that writers should practice their art, calling the desire not to practice *indolence*, and thereby giving writing an active rather than a corrective quality. Hill and Genung’s predecessors would argue
that words simply dress thought and choosing the correct words would win over audiences, not using the best words organized in a pathetic manner. Thus, while approaching writing homogeneously, the two authors still promote rules for writing.

Kellogg

Although Connors argues that the modes of discourse became prominent in the 1890s, not all composition handbook and rhetoric textbook authors used the modes to determine the organizational structure of their textbooks. Kellogg’s *Rhetoric* (1896)\(^3\), like Genung’s *Outlines*, does not extensively cover the modes of discourse, but unlike Genung’s text, which contains brief sections devoted to the modes-as-compositions, *Rhetoric* contains sections that discuss the modes of discourse as components of expository types of writing. The table of contents does not mention the modes in any form (Fig. 14).

Kellogg’s Preface indicates why he does not devote sections to the modes, as he states:

No professor of music—text-book as well as instructor—sits down with his scholar, expounds the principles on which the music rests, [...] instances model performers, warns the pupil against the errors into which he is liable to fall, and then goes away imagining that under such training the youth is likely to become a musician. (3)

Kellogg continues the paragraph, attacking the idea that a rhetoric textbook should exist to help writers correct errors. Further, Kellogg argues that rhetoric instruction cannot teach logical thought, which authors of earlier texts would argue. Thus, the preface exists to tell readers that

\(^{30}\) In the preface, Kellogg indicates that this edition is the second, as the first edition was printed in 1884 (6).
the text will help writers best *learn* how to express their thoughts, not *tell* them how to express them. Kellogg merely fails to promote practice in his assault on other texts by seemingly assuming that those whom read his text will instantly digest his rules and know how to write well.

Kellogg’s preface, though, levies less than a veiled attack at Genung’s *Practical Elements of Rhetoric*, from the instances when Kellogg uses *principles* to the language in the quote above that he uses to attack the use of models. Just as Kellogg attacks the implication that presenting rules and models will help students write better, Genung proudly announces that his text, with its rules, models, and exercises, will help students write better (qtd. in Brereton 332; Genung Outlines). This attack indicates that presenting modes of discourse as types of writing to con, then, does not constitute good pedagogy, in Kellogg’s case.

Kellogg’s apparent attack on teaching the modes of discourse does not mean that he neglects to discuss them in his text. Kellogg discusses “kinds of discourse,” both oral and written, by categorizing them (224-225). Kellogg defines exposition in the section dedicated to oral discourse (225-226) but he does not relegate it to oral discourse. Instead, he defines exposition as the major component of all discourse—that which helps rhetors make notions or concepts intelligible to an audience. *Definition* comprises part of exposition (225; Fig. 15).

31 From Kellogg’s text, I cannot ascertain that he did or did not intentionally attack Hill and Genung. Most importantly, Kellogg simply champions his own handbook over competing handbooks. This difference between texts show that composition instruction as a field has involved competing pedagogies for some time, just as today, Faigley's *Penguin Handbook* and its heavy influence from visual rhetoric pedagogically competes with other handbooks, such as the *Writer's Harbrace*, that maintain a textually-centered focus.
Argument, Kellogg states, is the “extemporary” oral discourse of deliberation by lawyers (235-236). Narration, according to Kellogg, is written prose that recalls events. Kellogg defines narration in two sentences and then uses (perhaps in contrast to his preface) a lengthy model passage from Macauley to model it (242-243).

By categorizing discourse into more components than the four modes, Kellogg indicates an awareness for the writing (or the speaking) situation. Kellogg's divisions constitute a more elaborate schematic—rather than a different schematic—than the modes, as a rhetoric textbook author could characterize history writing as a subset of descriptive writing; however, by characterizing exposition as the method of making an “intelligible assertion,” Kellogg emphasizes critical thinking and argumentative writing over writing in certain formats (225).

Nonetheless, although Kellogg does not allocate instructional space to the modes of discourse, the modes do appear in the section containing paragraph exercises. Lessons 22-26 model argument (lessons 22 and 24), exposition, narration and description (61-68). I emphasize model because, once again, Kellogg attacked instruction that outlines rules and models in his preface. However, Kellogg’s attack most likely commensurates with Genung’s previously discussed premise that rules and models alone will not make a good writer, as not practicing how to write well is insolent.

By embedding discussions of the modes of discourse in discussions of paragraphs and types of oral and written discourse, Kellogg’s text merely emphasizes writing well, not writing to fit certain models or occasions. Further, the manner in which Kellogg treats the modes of discourse indicates that advanced students as well as basic students can use the text to refine their writing. Also, Kellogg incorporates thematic exercises in his text, which make it more applicable to writing-intensive composition courses during which students write daily themes and familiar
to the nineteenth century (Fig. 16). Most importantly, though, in *Rhetoric*, Kellogg does not clearly distinguish between oral and written communication, which signifies a shift in the nature of college-level rhetoric courses. In the next section of this chapter, I discuss how colleges and secondary schools used some of the same textbooks and how these textbooks came to pull composition from rhetoric to help create a new course of study and thus, a new genre of textbook.

**Taking the Modes to Secondary Schools: Robins and Perkins and Tanner**

Genung’s *The Practical Elements of Rhetoric*, with its focus on the modes of discourse, was the most widely adopted rhetoric textbook in the Eastern United States (Brereton 327), but although Hill and Genung chose to use the modes of discourse to organize their rhetoric textbooks, not all rhetoric textbook authors of the time followed suit and employed such methods. In “The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse,” Connors notes that only four of the twenty-eight rhetoric textbooks published between 1893 and 1906 that Kitzhaber analyzed did not mention the modes of discourse (6).

Four of twenty-eight, or about fifteen percent not directly employing the modes of discourse, signifies that the modes of discourse were *wildly* popular; however, the modes were most likely more popular than rhetoric textbook numbers signify. Additionally, modes instruction most likely seeped into high school and preparatory school instruction, as indicated in Helen J. Robins and Agnes F. Perkins’s *An Introduction to the Study of Rhetoric* (1903) and William M. Tanner's *Composition and Rhetoric* (1922), composition textbooks intended for, as Robins and Perkins state, “a direct preparation for college” (vii).
Robins and Perkins's and Tanners's textbooks most likely resembled texts by Genung and Hill not because of their prominence as textbook authors but because Genung designed Outlines and Hill designed Foundations for use in preparatory schools and high schools. However, as I discuss later in this chapter, some colleges, such as South Dakota Agricultural College, used Genung's Outlines and Hill's Foundations in both their preparatory schools and in their college-level Rhetoric courses, most likely as workbooks. Considering how these textbooks have crossed school boundaries amplifies the shift of composition textbooks from rhetoric texts to composition texts.

As I have discussed earlier, Kellogg's Rhetoric, as do earlier rhetoric textbooks, discusses both oral and written discourse. In Outlines, though, Genung makes a distinction that would come to perpetuate the rhetoric textbook genre. Genung begins the Introduction of Outlines by stating: “To write an essay or any formal kind of composition seems to most people, and doubtless is, a much more difficult thing than to converse. [...] If we could [...] feel perfectly at ease with a pen in our hand, composition would cease to be the bugbear that it now too often is” (1).

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32 Also, though Robins and Perkins's text does not imitate any college-level texts or texts by prominent authors such as Genung and Hill, instructors lectured students about material covered in these other textbooks.

Colleges may have used Genung and Hill's simpler texts because both authors emphasize the rhetorical nature of grammar instead of providing students with concrete rules and black-and-white instructions (See my discussion earlier in this chapter and Genung, Outlines 4; Hill, Foundations iv-v).
This bugbear, composition, has come to need individual attention apart from speech and even journalism (Hill's Foundations uses some examples for correction from journalism because the odd usage of the field could wrongly influence young minds). Addressing composition as an independent course of study, a bugbear to master, drew upon earlier textbooks and their emphasis on choosing the correct words but sharpened that focus by discussing how to connect those words to make sentences, paragraphs and whole compositions. These lower-level textbooks borrow material from their collegiate counterparts and combine discussions of modal discourses and lexical correctness to make textbooks that would develop into current rhetoric textbooks. Further, Genung and Hill's move to publish secondary school-level textbooks indicates that composition began to develop into its own course of study that merits preparation in secondary and preparatory schools.

Although in Outlines Genung begins with a discussion on word selection and ends with a discussion of the whole composition and the modes of discourse, his text does not have sections dedicated to correct punctuation and the parts of speech, as do many other lower-level rhetoric textbooks. However, Genung does simplify Outlines for a secondary school audience in how he arranges his text with numbered rules and corresponding exercises. Even though both Hill and Genung promote the merits of rhetorical style, Genung's text begins with exercises in sentence writing and ends with exercises in composition writing while Hill's text begins with explanations of the parts of speech and ends with exercises in paragraph writing.

Hill, Robins and Perkins, and Tanner, though, write different textbooks than Genung by focusing on lexical issues in a more rudimentary nature than do prevailing college texts. These textbooks focus on the parts of speech, sentence writing, and perhaps paragraph or whole composition writing, including several exercises much like a contemporary workbook (Fig. 8 and
Fig. 17). Hill's *Foundations*, for example, show Hills's emphasis on basic writing skills, as he discusses the parts of speech in both pages 1-20 and in pages 32-159; in the preface, Hill quotes Swift, who argues that good style comes from “Proper Words in Proper Places” (iii). Robins and Perkins did not write their textbook for college students and I cannot speculate about where the copy I have was used, but the text does reflect practices popular in college writing, and the text, with its college preparation goal, could have been used in preparatory schools. A student’s inscriptions make this text an important one in documenting historical trends in composition instruction, as among notes describing the differences between a novel and a romance, notes about the course schedule and notes about *shall* and *will* rest notes describing the modes of discourse (Figs. 18a-18c). The notes about the modes of discourse emphasize their wild popularity, as Connors discusses, but they also indicate that instructors could have incorporated discussions of the modes in their lesson plans even if they used non-modal rhetoric textbooks, much in the same manner that contemporary instructors who use abridged rhetoric textbooks might supplement their rhetoric textbook material with handouts or lectures.

Like Robins and Perkins’s text, Tanner’s *Composition and Rhetoric* (1922) is not a college rhetoric textbook, per say, as the preface states that its aim is “to promote self-cultivation in correct and effective speech and writing” (iii) much in the sense that the earliest rhetoric textbooks were etiquette guides. Further, the text has several illustrations and uses the term *pupil*, which indicates that it most likely was an elementary or high school text. Tanner, though, taught English at Boston University and The University of Texas and wrote the rhetoric textbook, most likely, to prepare students for college writing.

With its inclusion of large sections dedicated to the modes of discourse, Tanner’s text helps substantiate Connor’s argument that the popularity of teaching the modes of discourse
lasted well into the twentieth century. Additionally, student notes in the front and back pages of the text (one page has been removed) indicate the move to, as Connors notes, group the modes of discourse with the triad of unity, coherence, and emphasis (Connors, “Rise” 6) (Figs. 17a-17b). Notes in the front cover read “composition—four classes” and notes in the back pages record an assignment dedicated to narration. With about ninety pages devoted to the modes, as well as sections on oration, letter writing, grammar, and paragraphing, Tanner’s rhetoric textbook largely resembles Hill and Genung’s college-level rhetoric textbooks.

Just as these secondary school textbooks and the courses where they were used have come to use more complex discussions of the modes of discourse, college-level textbooks have come to incorporate discussions of the rudiments of grammar. Just as South Dakota Agriculture College used both Outlines and Foundations in Rhetoric a, the material in those textbooks combined, evolved into the college-level rhetoric textbook.

The Decline of the Modes of Discourse

By the mid-1930s, the popularity of the modes of discourse began to decline. One reason that the modes even lasted until the 1930s, Connors argues, is because most composition instructors during the first part of the twentieth century, literary, not composition scholars, were followers of the likes of Hill and Genung and thus modeled their instruction after theirs (“Rise” 6). What the modes texts accomplished, though, was to usher in rhetoric textbooks with concrete rules pertaining to several aspects of composition, from language use to writing transitions to paragraphing to essay unity, for example.

The downfall of the modes came at the hand of newly focused composition handbooks that emphasize one mode such as exposition or argument or handbooks that focus on thesis
development and thus a new way to consider writing instruction. Organizing texts in accordance
to the modes of discourse, or unity, mass, and coherence became sidelined as this new breed of
textbook, composition handbooks, began to focus on compositions that expand from one central,
“master idea,” the thesis. Just as Connors argues that thesis texts existed (among modes
textbooks) since Barrett Wendell’s English Composition (1891) (7-8), Woolley’s New
Handbook of Composition (1906) surfaced as a nonmodal handbook in the heyday of the modes.
But Woolley’s text did not just appear, as with the thesis text; it became the driving force behind
future changes in composition handbooks.

Woolley’s handbook expanded upon the idea of numbered mechanics and grammar rules
made popular by textbooks such as Genung's Outlines and Edwin A. Abbott's How to Write
Clearly (1874). Abbott wrote his text, with its fifty-six numbered rules, to help British students
master translating Latin into error-free English. American colleges adopted the textbook to help
provide Rheotoric students with easily digested, numbered grammar rules (Glenn xix). Of
writing—or utilizing—a textbook that focuses on grammar instruction, Genung bemoans, “It is
strange indeed if we, as teachers of rhetoric, have nothing higher to do than correct bad spelling
and clean up slovenly sentences” (“The Study” 149). Woolley, on the other hand, indicates a
sort of pleasure in correcting grammar, as he states that “a hard matter is not made easier by
shortening the rule” (vii). Still, though, Woolley draws from new considerations about
composition, eschewing the rhetoric-as-an-art/rhetoric-as-a-science debate in favor of a
grammar-as-utility debate by arguing that good writing is not “scientific,” but “practical,” as he
intends students to use his text as a reference too that provides information about “good usage”
(qtd. in Brereton 359-360). According to Connors, grammar-centric texts like Woolley’s
signified the end of the age of *rhetoricians* and the beginning of the age of *compositionists* (“Handbooks” 18).

Rules quickly became the focus of instruction because instructors could apply rules to any student regardless of writing ability and because correcting rule violations makes quicker work for instructors than making rhetorical comments. In *How to Write Clearly: Rules and Exercises on English Composition* (1875), Edwin A. Abbot classifies clear writing as an art that “can be reduced to rules” (qtd. in Brereton 316). “Force, elegance, and style are more difficult to learn” and occupy “a much higher power” than what rules can provide (qtd. in 316-317).

After rule-centered handbooks like Woolley's became prominent, few modes handbooks survived and when the modes do appear in handbooks, they appear in frames of how to develop arguments, as in Kirszen and Mandell’s *The Holt Handbook* (1986) section covering patterns of development (Fig. 20). Nevertheless, even *The Holt Handbook*, like Kellogg's *Rhetoric*, discusses the modes as ways to frame sections of larger arguments, not as models for developing entire discourses. In fact, the fifth edition of *The Holt Handbook* (1999) relegates a discussion of exposition to the section describing literary terms (866) and description and narration appear in the Patterns of Paragraph Development section along with other argumentative frameworks such as comparison and contrast and cause and effect (127-133)\(^3\). Thus composition handbooks have developed into the type of current-traditional rhetoric textbooks that Berlin discusses in *Rhetorics, Poetics and Cultures*, where he describes current-traditional rhetoric as devoid of any

true types of invention, because instructors emphasize how to “arrange the materials [...] in accordance with the highest standards of grammar and usage” (29).

Though Berlin places this discussion within the modes of discourse and their prevailing emphasis on form, newer forms of current-traditional rhetoric show themselves within handbooks that draw from grammatics, such as Woolley’s *New Handbook of Composition* (1906). These grammatically-focused handbooks focused current-traditional rhetoric by transforming it from a vague pedagogical practice of ensuring students wrote to meet a formulaic standard to a pedagogical practice of correcting student's grammatical and mechanical errors. Though both forms of current-traditional rhetoric entail proscriptive, corrective methodologies, the newer form, with its focus on grammar and mechanics, rather than form, largely ignores the invention process by fostering a concept of instructor-as-audience.

Numbered Rules: Woolley and Greever and Jones

Although Woolley popularized handbooks with lists of numbered rules, Genung’s *Outlines* (1893) first employed the concept (Fig. 21). What makes Woolley’s text different comes in the material within the text. Genung’s text discusses rhetorical material while Woolley’s text discusses mechanical material. The rhetorical focus of Genung’s text helps preserve its literary structure (which I will discuss later in this chapter), meaning that students should begin with the first rule and progress through the text. Conversely, Woolley states that his text “may be used, first, by students of composition for reference [...] in case of errors in themes” (emphasis added; iii). Thus, Woolley helped further develop Kellogg's notion of the rhetoric textbook-as-reference tool.
A look at Woolley’s Appendix A, a glossary dedicated to grammatical vocabulary, breathes life into Connor’s assertion that Woolley’s text helped usher in large-scale changes in composition instruction, as the entry for rhetoric states: “See Grammar” (310). The entry for grammar then tells readers that grammar indicates how writers may inflect words and rhetoric indicates how writers should use words, thus reducing rhetoric to the grammatical arrangement of words, not the art of persuasion (302-303).

As Connors states, Woolley’s text became widely popular and within a matter of years, other handbooks began to focus on mechanical correctness and coded rules. Connors identifies Garland Greever and Easley S. Jones’s Century Handbook of Writing (1918) as Woolley’s first major competitor. The Century Handbook employed 100 numbered rules, as opposed to Woolley’s 350 (Figs. 22-23). Like Woolley, Garland and Jones identify their text as a reference text; however, Garland and Jones also identify their text as an ancillary to a rhetoric text (i). These books and their numbered rules, like their predecessors and their focus on lexical accuracy, emphasize the static nature of knowledge and a writer’s need to merely record knowledge as accurately as possible.

The introduction of numbered rules helped to usher in a new way to mark and correct themes. The Century’s section addressed To the Student indicates how students should employ the text by telling students that if their instructor writes a number in the margin of a theme, the student must “turn to the article which corresponds to the number,” thus making the process of correcting deficiencies more efficient. A diligent student, then, would turn to the appropriate rule, read its explanation and then complete the included exercise(s). The apparent advantage of

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34 The revised Century Collegiate Handbook (1939) reduces the number of rules to 55.
the *Century Handbook* over Woolley’s text comes in its inclusion of exercises for every rule, thus preserving the act of recitation (Figs. 24-25).

The success of handbooks with numbered rules and corresponding exercises influenced future texts, as Woolley, Scott and Tressler’s *Handbook of Writing and Speaking* (1944) employed the same structure (Fig. 26). However, in 1941 John Hodges ushered in a new system for cataloging composition rules in his *Harbrace Handbook of English*, which I will discuss later in this chapter. These texts helped reverse the order of composition instruction from recitation then composition (first to learn how to write before doing so) to composition then recitation (to correct writing through recitation).

**Correction Charts**

Woolley’s handbook (1926) and the *Century*, with their numbered rules, also introduced composition instructors and students to a handbook component that still exists: correction charts nestled within the covers (Figs. 26-28). Although Woolley does not mention his Tabular View of Principal [sic] Rules in his introductory materials, Greever and Jones make note of their charts (the chart appears in the inside of both the front and back covers), stating that instructors can use them to quickly ascertain which number to write in the margin of a student’s theme.

These correction charts were not new to composition handbooks, though, as they just came to replace implements that students sometimes inscribed within the covers of their handbooks. Just as nineteenth-century composition instructors gave their students theme correction cards with proofreading symbols written on them, some students wrote their own keys to proofreading codes. I found a 1907 edition of Woolley's handbook with codes written in the
Correction charts not only help make grading easier, but they also help indicate the purpose of composition—to help students write better. Students can write better by reading symbols in the margins of their essays and then reading the sections of their handbooks that focus on the symbols. Instructors can employ the correction charts quickly to identify how each student should improve their writing.

The popularity of correction charts and numbered rules partly comes from the workload of composition instructors. Connors recalls a lament of Fred Newton Scott, who taught at the University of Michigan. Scott states that in one year he corrected some 3,000 themes written by 216 students (“Rhetoric” 83). Additionally, in the *Mechanics of Writing*, Woolley states that instructors must use a form of short hand when correcting hundreds of weekly themes. Handbooks, then, especially those with numbered rules and quick-reference correction charts, help instructors quickly sort through themes (cit. in Connors, “Rhetoric” 89). The Dark Ages of composition entailed hours of toiling over student themes, but the new handbooks with their emphasis on quickly marking themes helped free instructors’ time while simultaneously ushering in a new era focused on mechanical correctness.

Future handbooks, to this day, include correction charts in various forms, whether in the back cover or within the last few pages. These correction charts appear just inside the covers most likely because students wrote such codes in those locations. However, the location of these charts also reveals the corrective nature of handbooks. Correction charts most likely appeared directly inside the covers not only because students used to write their correction codes there, but because instructors could easily access the lists while correcting compositions. This indicates a
shift from the standard of simply including a standardized proofreading chart within the handbook's pages. Albert H. Marckwardt’s *Scribner Handbook of English* (1940) features a correction chart in the front cover and charts highlighting “Common Problems” and “Proof Marks and Correction Symbols” in the back cover (Figs. 30a-30b). John Hodge’s *Harbrace Handbook of English* (1941) (Fig. 31) includes correction charts in both covers, with blank spaces so students can enter codes at the direction of their instructors. The second edition of Leggett, Mead and Charvart’s *Prentice Hall Handbook for Writers* (1954 [1951]) features an extensive correction chart in the back cover, and brief topical correction charts in the front cover (Fig. 32). To jump ahead in time, Lynn Quitman Troyka’s *Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers* (1987) includes correction codes in the front cover, and lists of correction symbols and a topical guide in the back cover. Kirszner and Mandell’s *Holt Handbook* (1986) includes a list of correction symbols in the front cover and a detailed listing of its numbered rules in the back cover (Fig. 32). Chris Anson and Robert A. Schwegler’s *The Longman Handbook for Writers, and Readers* (1997) includes proofreading symbols in the back cover and correction codes in the front cover. In fact, every post-1940 handbook that I have studied incorporates some type of correction chart within easy reach of the front or back cover. Including these charts for correction, proofreading, peer review, and so forth indicates that authors write handbooks as reference tools because the charts guide users to specific parts of the text, but more importantly, the inclusion and location of these charts indicates an emphasis on expediting the current-traditional themes of both marking and correcting compositions.

35 The fifth edition (1999) of this text simply reverses the order of these charts, placing the proofreading marks in the back cover and the list of rules in the front cover.

While correction charts moved to less easily accessible locations for the sake of promoting process over product, the basic structure of composition handbooks has remained the same. This relocation comes at the hands of post-process compositionists who rebelled against prescriptive writing instruction and came to grasp the notion that students should have the freedom to choose their own topics, the freedom to develop their own academic voice, and the freedom to write in their own messy, organic ways so they can learn their own messy, organic writing processes, as writing exists as a “messy, organic, recursive from of discovery, growth, and personal expression” (Tobin 4). These correction charts, with their ideal location in the back covers of handbooks, impeded process theorists, and the new location within the last few pages creates the illusion that handbooks favor process theory over current-traditional theory.

These correction charts—or their still easily accessible location—reinforces current-traditional pedagogies that conceptualize composition only as a technique to perfect. Maxine

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36 In this section, when I discuss locations such as the second to last page, I mean the part of the last sheet of paper facing the body of the text, not the last numbered page.
Hairston, in “The Winds of Change,” argues that current-traditionalists condense writing instruction into teaching students how to describe, narrate, write exposition, and then argue; assume that “competent writers know what they are going to [write] before they do so”; conceptualize writing as a linear, step-by-step process; and that “teaching editing is teaching writing” (5). Correction charts exist as the mechanisms for facilitating teaching-writing-as-editing.

This concept of teaching-writing-as-editing bodes well given the current (1960-present) educational climate. At the 2002 Conference on College Composition and Communication, Paul Heilker, a theorist known for sharply criticizing the overtly patriarchal, masculinized way current-traditionalists teach formal correctness and promoting teaching writing as a feminized attempt to find and create knowledge, discussed how his school adopted a custom-made, standardized textbook that all first-year composition courses will use. After mandating use of this standardized textbook, the English department received increased allocations and instructor slots—all for the sake of standardization (Heilker). This discussion of curriculum standardization relates to Maxine Hairston's assertion that instructors teach current traditional modes of writing because the practice:

seems to be based on some idealized and orderly vision of what literature scholars, whose professional focus is on the written product, seem to imagine is an efficient method of writing. It is a prescriptive and orderly view of the creative act, a view that defines the successful writer as one who can systematically produce [compositions]. (5)

This order, then, hearkens to scientific orderliness, the idea that writing merely works as a form of calculus: we report upon knowledge by inserting words into a certain rubric for each situation
that we may encounter. In fact, this description of current-traditional rhetoric relates to classical concepts of how rhetoric functions as *techne*, in that Plato and Aristotle argue that standardized methods of creating arguments merit attention. Proper presentation of fact will persuade an audience.

Further, colleges emphasize formal correctness and skill development because of America's changing economy after the American Industrial Revolution. As I have discussed earlier, the expansion of the economy allowed more students to attend college and the new view that colleges serve the professional workforce, which demands effective writing, led to a reformation of college-level writing courses. Harvard, again, was at the forefront of this evolution. In 1897, the college deemed the composition class as the only course required of all students (Berlin 59-60), as rhetoric skills become synonymous with social success. Harvard administrators, who in Berlin's view did not have experience as writing instructors, when critiquing writing, focused on spelling, grammar, usage and handwriting, which led to the promotion of cursory correctness and the advent of the current-traditional pedagogical model (Berlin 60-61).

Still, despite these shifts from focusing on a final product to focusing on writing-as-a-process, process compositionists do not loathe writing products. From their perspective, students need to learn formal correctness, but this knowledge would just come through becoming comfortable with writing, not anxiously laboring over the exercises in section 31a of the handbook; and current traditional writing, “the canned, dull, lifeless student essay that [seems] the logical outcome of rules-driven, teacher-centered curriculum that [ignores] student interests, needs, and talents” outlives its expectancy (Tobin 5). Given the concept of academic freedom,
process theory works as an artistic teaching method, largely devoid of class sessions filled with sentence parsing, grammar drills, and five-paragraph themes.

Newly Numbered Rules and the New Handbook

Though Woolley’s and the Century’s numbered rules came to dominate composition handbooks, Connors states that competing handbooks used different rule numbering and marking systems, which made the system “multifarious” (“Handbooks” 21). As I discussed earlier, Woolley’s glossary defines rhetoric and grammar in the same entry, making no clear separation of the two, and Connors notes this confusion in addition to the then-prevailing confusion about what, exactly, to include in handbooks. For example, do handbooks need sections dedicated to both letter writing and library research? No, Hodges would answer, as letter writing morphed into more technical or business writing that would help students in their professional careers.

Connors credits Hodge’s Harbrace Handbook of English (1941) for revolutionizing and simplifying the handbook genre, mainly for its “well-planned minimalism” and clear distinction between rhetoric and grammar (“Handbooks” 21). After Harbrace appeared on the market, other handbooks quickly followed suit.

Of note, though, Marckwardt’s Scribner Handbook (1948 [1940]) incorporated one of these differing yet intuitive methods of identifying rules (Figs. 30a-30b) by using symbols such as “S” to indicate sentence concerns or “G” to indicate grammatical concerns. Ideally, students would comprehend these symbols and immediately know what to correct, reducing the chances, instead of needing to refer to their handbooks to decipher a number.

The Harbrace included a coding system similar to the Scribner Handbook but also included a list of alphabetically arranged correction symbols in addition to the correction chart
which mapped out general corrections such as “gr’ for grammar and “m” for mechanics (Fig. 31, above). Perhaps at the influence of Century and Woolley’s numbered rules, Hodges still incorporated a numbering system, though, so instructors could use a variety of correction codes on student essays; thus, an instructor could write either “2” or “frag” in the margin of an essay and the student could find the corresponding codes on the header of the pages that address sentence fragments. Additionally, instead of marking a possibly confusing but general “S8” for a comma splice or “Sp8” for doubling a final consonant (Scribner), an instructor could write “cs” or “cs-3” or “3” in the margin, thus streamlining marking and correcting. The numbers help streamline the process, as Scribner’s does not arrange its rules in alphabetical order and different general rules have subdivisions with the same numbers—so students would have to consult the correction chart or index to find the pages of the handbook they need to consult. In the Harbrace, each rule has its own corresponding number, so the only section marked with “3” is the comma splice section.

As I have discussed in Chapter Two, college enrollment burgeoned with an influx of World War veterans, ushering in new breeds of college students with varying degrees of writing skill. The new handbooks, with their correction charts and numbered rules made them more accessible to a wide range of students by providing large amounts of both grammatical and rhetorical material. Connors states that handbooks like Hodge’s still incorporated rhetorical material, but in a mechanical manner (“Handbooks” 22). This mechanical nature signifies the end of the purely rhetorical text with its literary structure and the beginning of the handbook as reference tool.
Saying *Goodbye* to the Old Literary Handbook Structure

Before addressing new handbooks and their current structure, *a la* Hodges, I must discuss how handbooks of the past have been used, as the new handbook and its coded navigational structure radically departs from texts such as Hill’s or Genung’s—what Connors refers to as the original composition handbooks (“Handbooks” 16, 18).

As I have discussed earlier, the budding handbooks of the nineteenth century did not exist to correct faulty English, as:

They present proper models for imitation; they point out the principal [sic]beauties which ought to be studied, and the chief faults which ought to be avoided; and consequently tend to enlighten Taste, and to conduct Genius from unnatural deviations into its proper channel. [...] On the contrary, entire insensibility to eloquence, poetry, or any of the fine arts, may justly be considered as a bad symptom in youth; and suppose them inclined to low gratifications, or capable of being engaged only in the common pursuits of life. (Blair vii-viii)

In the tradition of an 1822 abridgment of Hugh Blair’s *Lectures on Rhetoric*, the texts that spawned composition handbooks merely served as *guides* to help cultivate youth—to make them more respectable citizens through the art of graceful, *tasteful*, discourse. Thus, a text such as Hugh Blair’s *Lectures on Rhetoric* employs a literary organizational pattern because readers should read the book by starting with the first chapter, to cultivate *taste* in language, then proceed to learn of the origins of language, then learn how to write different forms. The text attempts to build an appreciation for language before instructing how to employ language.
This same type of literary structure endured for over one hundred years, until texts structured like Woolley's and the *Century*, texts that focus on finding ways to correct errant mechanics instead of cultivate high culture, began to dominate the market.

Although Quackenbos does not focus on taste in his *An Advanced Course* (1854), his text incorporates a structure similar to Blair’s Lectures by first working towards cultivating an appreciation for the English language by delving into its history. Quackenbos’s chapter organization seems intuitive, as it parrots the structure of an essay by beginning with general comments about the history of the English language to create audience interest, then focusing, in order, on vocabulary and the parts of speech, sentence arrangement, punctuation, rhetoric, and prose composition, in various forms (Fig. 37).

Just as the preface to Blair’s lectures emphasizes cultivating taste, the language in the preface to Quackenbos’s text indicates how students should read *An Advanced Course* (Fig. 38). For example, after Quackenbos’s ends his description of the rhetoric chapter by stating, “A thorough preliminary course on these important subjects was thought necessary before requiring the student to write original exercises” and begins his description of the section about rhetoric, he begins a description of the section about prose composition by stating, “Thus prepared, the pupil enters on the subject of prose composition” (6).

Ensuing handbooks, including those by Genung and Hill, followed a similar format, with similar aims of cultivating an appreciation for English or rhetoric before instructing students how to use words, sentences, then paragraphs to create whole compositions. In *Outlines*, Genung

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37 Here, I remember my Chapter Two discussion of Seely’s argument that chapter organization does not emphasize importance, but his argument comes during the advent of the composition handbook as reference tool.
argues that students should practice writing sentences and paragraphs before tackling whole compositions (iv-v).

Although Hill and Genung do not explicitly proscribe a progression from chapter to chapter in the introductory materials of their handbooks, Kellogg does so. In the To the Teacher section of *Rhetoric*, Kellogg tells instructors that if students have mastered the sentence, they can grace over sections 3-20 before learning how to construct paragraphs, lessons 21-30. A section on style and then a section on types of discourse follows the instruction concerning paragraphs (10).

In “The Study of Rhetoric in the College Course” (1887), Genung describes how a composition course should progress. The first term of the course should focus on stylistics, to include grammar and mechanics in addition to figures of speech, sentence structure and paragraph structure, all with recitation exercises properly to balance discussions of theory with practice (149-150). As I have stated, part of this introduction to English studies should cultivate interest in the subject. Genung states, “And because the work is apt to be dry, a special duty lies on the teacher to make it interesting; for, as we have seen, the love of the work counts for much in composition” (150).

The second term should include discussions of invention, from finding and planning discourses to studying the modes of discourse. Students then replace exercises in recitation with studies of models and practice composing whole essays (151). When instructors grade these student compositions, they should focus on “the subject; and the predominating object at first should be to gain freedom with the pen and confidence in one’s own powers of portrayal”(152).38

38 Though scholars argue that current-traditional rhetoric and its focus on mechanical correctness developed in the late nineteenth century, Genung’s course of study and grading
Aside from introductory materials of handbooks and essays by handbook authors, the South Dakota Agricultural College Bulletin offers commentary about how instructors have employed handbooks in composition courses. The 1891-1892 bulletin describes the composition course (Fig. 39). During the first term of the first year, students study Composition:

It comprises thorough drills in the use of punctuation marks and capitals, and in sentence and paragraph structure. By numerous exercises in paraphrase and reproduction, the student is led up to original composition. Instruction is given in the analysis of themes, and in writing by topical outline. (25)

During the second and third term of the first year, students take Rhetoric:

The design of this course is to cultivate a critical taste in the use of language and in the study of literature, and also to afford constant exercise in composition work. Literary styles are carefully analyzed; and extensive selections from standard authors, illustrative of the various qualities and elements, are stated critically. Great stress is laid on the process of invention, such as the choice of subject, determination and analysis of theme, and the collection and arrangement of material. Four original essays are required in connection with this work. (25)

In addition to using language quite similar to Genung’s language in “The Study of Rhetoric in the College Course,” published four years earlier, the course catalogs indicate that the South Dakota Agricultural College followed Genung’s advice by progressing through the first year of Composition and Rhetoric in the manner that he prescribed.

The 1897-1898 Bulletin hints at why the college structured its first-year courses as so, as the course descriptions indicate that students taking Rhetoric a used Genung’s Outlines (89) (Fig. recommendations scarcely resemble current traditional rhetoric.
Additionally, the 1901-1902 Bulletin indicates that Rhetoric a students will use Genung’s Outlines as a framework for the course and then utilize exercises from Hill’s Foundations and Scott and Denny’s Composition Rhetoric. These bulletin descriptions help indicate how instructors employed handbooks and indicate that, indeed, past instructors used handbooks as course guides. These courses and their movement, from cultivating an appreciation for English, then moving from small to large concepts, show a marked change from current handbooks, with their correction charts and emphasis on correcting English—whether students appreciate it or not.

The Advent of a New Form

Growing college enrollments and the advent of new rule-centered textbooks helped shift the focus of composition instruction from largely rhetorical concerns to grammatical and mechanical concerns and helped reconfigure how students would come to use the handbook. Handbooks such as Woolley’s and Century helped usher in this new structure, which Hodge’s Harbrace would come to dominate.

The introductory material in the changing handbooks also offers instructions for use. As I have discussed earlier in this chapter, the preface to the first edition of Woolley and Scott’s New Handbook of Composition (1926) indicates that students should use the handbook as a reference tool: “It may be used, first, by students of composition for reference, at the direction of the instructor, in case of errors in themes. Second, it may be used for independent reference […]” (iii).

The Century Handbook (1922) offers more stringently toned instructions for students: “When a number is written in the margin of your theme, you are to turn to the article which
corresponds to the number. Read the rule (printed in bold-face type), and study the examples.”

The explanation continues, signifying influence from earlier textbooks that included recitation exercises: “When an r follows the number on your theme, you are, in addition, to copy the rule. When an x follows your the number, you are, besides acquainting yourself with the, to write the exercise of five sentences.” The instructions even cover instructor oversights and emphasize practice by telling students to follow the instructions in the book if the instructor does not provide explicit instructions (Greever and Jones).

The section addressed To the Student in first edition of Hodge’s Harbrace (1941) echoes the directions in the 1922 edition of Century Handbook: “A number (or a symbol) written in the margin of your theme calls for correction. If a number is used, turn directly to the boldface number at the top of the page” (Hodges, 1941 v), indicating that the handbook operates as a reference tool to help instructors mark themes and to help students correct them, not as a text to cultivate an appreciation of the English language and to model how to write for certain situations (Also see Leggett, Mead and Charvat vi.).

As I have discussed earlier, the advent of handbooks as reference tools came as handbooks that canvass the modes of discourse began to lose their popularity. Discussions of research and grammar replaced discussions of the modes in these new textbooks. Although the first Harbrace still incorporated a section dedicated to letter writing, it also included a new section with a detailed discussion of how to research and write a term paper. Though Connors attributes Hodges with first incorporating a section devoted to a library-researched term paper (“Handbooks” 22), the revised edition of the Century (1939) handbook included such a section in addition to a new section with instructions for writing letters—two years before Harbrace's publication.
The second edition of the *Scribner Handbook* (1948), like the *Harbrace* and *Century* (1939), also included a section devoted to writing researched term papers and relegated letter writing to an appendix (Fig. 43). Letter writing has remained a part of handbooks, though the topic primarily occupies a section devoted to business or real-world writing, depending on the handbook. These shifts, like shifts from covering lexical issues to covering whole-composition issues, indicate that writing assignments in composition courses have steadily become larger. Also, the research sections solidify a move from expository writing that ornaments knowledge to argumentative writing that discovers knowledge.

The transformation of the composition handbook to a reference text, coupled with new coded structures, set the stage for *Harbrace*’s future dominance of the handbook genre. In one sense, developments of the genre came to a point of contestation between *Harbrace* and *Century* even though Hodges used the *Century* handbook in his own classes and to assist his research for the *Harbrace* (Hawhee 510). Just as *Century* shortened its number of rules from 139 to 55 in the revised edition, *Harbrace*’s first edition contained just 35 rules. Just as *Century*’s revised edition contains a section dedicated to research writing, *Harbrace*’s first edition does so. Both books includes exercises and correction charts. The *Harbrace* is 424 pages long and the *Century* is 370 pages long and both texts are pocket-sized. *Harbrace* incorporates sentence diagrams throughout the text while the *Century* does not. *Harbrace*, like *Scribner*, incorporated a splash of red ink in the correction charts; *Century* did not.

*Something* enabled the *Harbrace*, making it the dominant, archetypal composition handbook. Connors attributes *Harbrace*’s success, its apparent win over *Century*, to planning, stating; “Hodges’ book was (and remains today) a masterpiece of well-planned minimalism. There was no complex rhetoric-grammar overlap, no hundreds of rule numbers to confuse
readers. Hodges had done his homework well” (“Handbook” 21). In fact, Hodges had completed extensive homework, as he formulated his original 34 rules from twenty-thousand marked student themes from across the country (Hodges, 1941 iii). As Connors states, “Hodges’ rules have tested time, as they remained the same through nine editions” (“Handbooks” 22). In fact, the rules have endured for an additional six editions, for sixty-five years, which amounts to quite an accomplishment, considering the amount of change that handbooks have gone through in the sixty-five years preceding and following the birth of Harbrace.

Though Hodges’s 34-35 rules and six major divisions have remained largely the same, they have undergone minor changes that reflect theoretical concerns, as shown below in Figure 44. Hodges’s rules arguably have not, thus far, needed to undergo major changes, as Connors and Lunsford’s list of the twenty most common grammar errors are quite similar to, at least, the grammatical part of Hodges’s list of 35 rules (Fig. 45). Nonetheless, Connors and Lunsford would argue this point, as they structured St. Martin's around their own research of 21,000 student essays (“Ma and Pa Kettle do Composition Research”).

39 Connors and Hawhee state that Harbrace began with 35 rules (“Handbook” 22; Hawhee 510) but the first edition contains only 34 rules because Hodges purposely included “Sentence Sense” as a supplement to the second section, Sentence Fragment (Hodges, 1941 iv).
Most likely as a response to process theory and to post-process theory, Harbrace underwent a major change with its 2001 release of The Writer’s Harbrace Handbook, a text that subverts the traditional organizational structure of Harbrace by restructuring the order of material. The 2001 edition relocates the mechanics section to the rear of the text and instead first emphasizes whole compositions. Because English-speaking people typically read books by beginning at the front and moving to the back, the new structure signifies that the text prioritizes good writing over correct grammar, in a rhetorical move most likely responsive to the process or post-process movements. Conversely, though, the fifteenth edition of the text, Hodge’s Harbrace Handbook (2004), preserves much of Hodges’s original plan by once again beginning the text with grammatical matters and progressing to sentences, paragraphs and whole essays.
(“Hodges”). Nonetheless, moving the order of materials comes as an arbitrary move because handbooks, as Hodges states, have morphed into reference tools intended to make marking and correcting themes easier (cit. in Hawhee 509).

Just as novels have historically told stories about people and continue to do so, handbooks help students correct errors in themes and help instructors mark those errors, thus telling their story of remediation. Given this, the mechanical focus on handbooks should not have drastically changed (and its order should not matter) unless the goal of first-year composition has changed. In Chapter Three, I discussed Bakhtin’s assertion that culture should breathe life into genres. Given this, handbook changes should not come from theory, as theory happens in the delivery of course material, not the presentation of course material. Instead, handbook changes should come from cultural shifts, just as they became grammar honers to address the needs of new middle-class and military veteran students who may not have had the grammar skills of their upper-class predecessors and cohorts.

The Composition Handbook

The Harbrace exists as an accurate tableaux of the composition handbook although it cannot accurately portray the entirety of handbook development because other handbooks with differing emphases have entered the market, others ceased publication, and others include different material than the Harbrace; however, the longevity and popularity of the Harbrace make it an ideal focal text for my examination. Like other handbooks, Harbrace has two institutional purposes, as it exists as the site to reveal important composition materials to students and to instructors and to shape the student-teacher relationship as a subjective, corrective one (Hawhee 504).
Thus far, then, we have a conception of the composition handbook from the 1940s: a reference book that assists instructors with their grading and assists students with their correcting. Correction charts and coded rules help instructors mark compositions and help students find the sections of the handbook that they should consult to correct errors. Because handbooks operate as tools that aid in composition correction, their contents heavily focus on grammar and mechanics, sentence structure and composition organization. Their structure incorporates layered navigation systems (charts and coded rules and indexes) that help users find corrective references.

In this section, I will depart from the description above and describe some major handbook changes from the last sixty years. I will analyze these changes within the Harbrace because it comprises the genre’s current archetype and because it is the best-selling college textbook. In addition to the Harbrace, I will examine the St. Martin’s Handbook and The Penguin Handbook, handbooks that compete with Harbrace and address composition in differing ways. To frame my discussion of changes in composition handbooks, I will examine the sections addressed to the teacher or to the student and other prefatory materials, approaches to technology, approaches to writing as a product, and inherent conceptions about student writing.

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40 Co-authored by Robert Connors, composition historian, and Andrea Lunsford.
41 Authored by Lester Faigley, postmodernist and former anti-textbook movement personae.
42 Introductions and prefaces, addressed to a general audience, also merit examination here.
Tracing Developments through Harbrace

In The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College, 1875-1925: A Documentary History, John Brereton includes the prefatory material of old handbooks to help scholars better understand composition history, as he states that many historians have neglected to examine handbooks, the place where theory and practice intersect in the classroom (xiv-xv). The introductory materials in handbooks exist as effective indicators of composition instruction because most handbooks, at the least, include a brief prefatory passage explaining their purpose or intended methods of use.

The prefatory material in some handbooks explain how to use the texts and also soften new pedagogical turns by explaining to users new additions or subtractions. As I have discussed earlier, the first edition of the Century includes a section addressed to the student that explains how to use the rule numbering system. However, the section also addresses the very fact that the Century is composed of grammar and mechanics rules by emphasizing that adhering to the rules will help students write correctly and also by stating that textbook authors, "humans" who catalog rules formed on widely accepter usage, do not “invent rules” (Greever and Jones, 1918). Though the revised edition of the Century does not include a section addressed to the student, the preface describes how to use the text and states that the handbook, with its rules and exercises, helps bridge the gap between theory and practice—if students accept “the responsibility of teaching” themselves (Greever and Jones, 1924 v). Here, in the prefatory materials exists influence from previous handbook authors, such as Genung, who call eschewing practice indolence.

In the preface to the first edition, Woolley also concedes to the rigidity of his rules, agreeing that although they are “dogmatic,” they help students write correctly by showing them
one way to do so for each rule, as explaining multiple ways to correct one mistake could lead students astray (1926 iii-iv).

These handbook authors arguably could have written mere instructions for students and instructors to follow, explaining that they are the most correct rules; however, they do not do so, largely because, at that time, many handbooks still had rhetorical focuses, indicating their texts explain acceptable ways to write, maybe the best ways to write, but most likely not the only correct ways to write. Though these texts contain concessions to rhetorical theory for the sake of their own composition theory, they mark the turn of handbooks, as Connors states, from rhetorical tools to composition tools (“Handbooks” 22). Though Connors passes this comment without much discussion, it reveals much about the nature of composition instruction, how instructors conceive composition instruction, and how theory impacts composition instruction, as much theory is rhetorical in nature, not compositional in nature. Thus by ignoring the rhetorical importance of grammar by, for example, not explaining how a writer could use the passive voice or sentence fragments for stylistic emphasis, handbooks of the time promote one standard, which has evolved into college writing.

Like Woolley and Century, the introductory material in the Scribner Handbook makes a concession to the rule-centered focus of the text, although to a lesser degree. To lessen the appearance that the text focuses primarily on mechanical correctness, Marckwardt states that he reorganized his handbook so it focuses first on whole composition issues before moving to grammatical issues and also emphasizes the importance of correct informal English as well as “the merit of intensive corrective drill on a relatively small number of language habits” (v-vi). This move helps mark the handbook as not only a reference tool for students but also as a

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43 This shift also signifies an identifiable component of the advent of academic writing.
reference tool for all writers, to include those whom might need assistance revising workplace writing.

Into the 1940s, handbook authors continued to make concessions for the new mechanical natures of their handbooks, but at the same time included correction charts and coded systems for finding errors, thus making easier the move to less rhetorically focused composition handbooks such as the Harbrace.

In the first edition of Harbrace, the To the Instructor section states that the Harbrace will help streamline the process of marking student themes, as the 34 rules are drawn from the ten most common student errors: comma, spelling, exactness, agreement, superfluous commas, pronoun reference, apostrophe, omission of words, wordiness and good use (Hodges, 1941 iii). In To the Student, Hodges instructs student how to use the handbook, telling them: “Study the section to which you are referred—the whole of the section if necessary—until you understand thoroughly the correction that should be made” (v). These sections make no mention of whether the rules are representative or concrete, thus making the textbook one focused on efficiently marking and on efficiently correcting themes. In the fourth edition, Hodges expands the section telling students how to correct themes, noting that he bases his rules on current usage; thus, marks such as “right” or “wrong” indicate expectations drawn from usage, not rules fermented in a think-tank composed of composition instructors (1956 iv).

Considering the Harbrace a tool for marking and correcting themes indicates that the handbook does essentially exist as a corrective; however, even the prescriptive Harbrace advises students to revise their compositions (if they have time)—both before handing them in and after receiving corrected themes (1941 vi, 106). This advice from Hodges, though, cannot indicate any pedagogical practices, as the nature of each composition classroom dictates whether
instructors ask for student revisions or simply mark corrections on essays so students can improve future essays. However, as I discuss below, this section, as it appears in later editions of *Harbrace*, does reveal changes in response to theoretical influence as *revision* comes to dominate *correction*—whether or not a writer has time to revise.

Hodges also indicates in the section addressed to the instructor that the drill material comes from actual student themes (1941 iv). Incorporating errant student material to correct helps to make handbook material more accessible, as previous handbooks, with their heavy focus on recitation and model material from literary figures may have made the purpose of composition texts seem too lofty—to make all students into great writers instead of effective writers. The prefatory material for the fourth, eighth and ninth editions emphasize the popularity of the *Harbrace* as a tool for writers, in general, stating that it’s a “reference guide for the individual writer” as much as for the college student (1982 v). Handbooks that wholly use literary sample sentences have become a rarity.

The prefatory material in the ninth edition of *Harbrace* (1982) remains much the same as the fourth edition but does discuss changes in the text that have come from changes in pedagogical theory. It indicates new conceptions about process pedagogy by stating that some instructors may wish to begin with The Whole Composition while others may wish to begin with The Paragraph or the sections pertaining to sentence structure (v). The library research section includes new information about using computerized library card catalogs and The Whole Composition includes a discussion of “essay writing as a process” (vi). The section addressed to the student still instructs students to look for coded correction marks in the margins of their compositions and then consult the appropriate sections of the handbook but, as a whole, the prefatory material indicates the handbook has come to reflect current theory, as I discuss below.
If I were to adhere to Connors's assertion that composition handbooks have remained unchanged since the 1960s, I would need to ignore the new breadth in section 32: The Whole Composition (Hodges, 1982 379-419), which reintroduces EDNA as the underlying purposes of student writing (379-380), as students could classify most writing assignments as one of the modes. Additionally, the ninth edition of Harbrace includes invention discussions concerned with finding and limiting topics (385-395) and audience (395-397). The section also walks students through the creation of a sample essay that undergoes three drafts before the student hands it in to the instructor (405-419) and provides a revision checklist, indicating a departure from the fourth edition's suggestion that students revise their writing if they have adequate time. Thus this section alone indicates that Hodges was aware of not only student needs but of prevailing process pedagogy and the types of research that instructors have come to ask of students in addition to the types of professional research that instructors read.

Harbrace still largely focuses on correcting mechanical infelicities, though, as section 8: Manuscript Form asks students to catalog their errors with a chart so they can most easily identify their trouble areas and concentrate on alleviating those infelicities (105-106). Nonetheless, the section emphasizes that students conduct peer reviews, revise their compositions before handing them in, and revise them after instructors correct them; thus the central focus of the handbook, correcting errors, remains essentially unchanged. Hodges writes “One of the best ways to learn how to write is to revise returned papers carefully,” adding “The purpose of this type of revision is to help you not only to understand why a change is desirable but to avoid repetition of the same mistakes” (103). Though correction remains focal, Hodges comes to acknowledge that knowing why to make corrections will help students write better.
As Hawhee argues, the section addressed to students uses firm language when telling them how to use the handbook, but the sections describing how to correct and avoid mistakes, with its explanation of why they should correct mistakes “not only to understand why a change is desirable but to avoid repetition of the same mistakes” (103), makes the text sympathetic to student needs and thus somewhat nurturing, hearkening Connors’s schizophrenia.

Later editions of Harbrace continue to evolve by responding to pedagogical and theoretical drive, markedly in The Writer’s Harbrace Handbook (2001) and its apparent response to Hawhee’s criticism of the order of material in the text and in relation to the ninth edition’s statement that different instructors may want to begin the semester by assigning different sections of the handbook.

Here, we also come to an interesting point in the commodification of composition handbooks, as The Writer’s Harbrace (2001, published by Harcourt Brace) makes drastic structural changes while the fifteenth edition (2004, published by Wadsworth) preserves the original structure of the handbook by reverting to a plan similar to that of the original Harbrace. These changes may have come at the hand of preserving tradition or of addressing theoretical concerns, but they also may have come at the browsable nature of reading hypermedia. Thus Harbrace now survives in two editions with distinct formats.

As I have discussed earlier, the new structure of Writer’s Harbrace signifies an authorial or editorial motivation to make the text more appealing to instructors. To think of these changes as genre changes would make Absalom, Absalom! and its nonstandard organizational structure a

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44 From this point, I will refer to this edition as Writer’s Harbrace.

45 An interesting note of the fifteenth edition is that it relegates Hodges’s name to the title while listing a new writer, Cheryl Glenn, as the primary author.
non-novel because it uses a not-often-used narration strategy. What matters when considering the handbook genre, then, are changes in content, responses to the changing collegiate student body, responses to changes in theory, and changes in structure, not order of material.

To return to the prefatory material within Writer’s Harbrace is to return to a text without sections addressed to the instructor and to the student for the first time in sixty years. The first paragraph of the preface tells readers that the handbook, while preserving traditional elements, has theoretically evolved:

A compact yet comprehensive guide, The Writer’s Harbrace Handbook responds to the demand for a “writing first” handbook that offers the ease of reference and attention to detail that have made the Harbrace Handbook a standard of reliability since 1941. While drawing on that tradition, especially in the discussion of grammar, style, punctuation, and mechanics, The Writer’s Harbrace emphasizes the importance of writing [as a] process and discusses a diverse range of writing assignments.\(^4\) (v)

The Preface still identifies Writer’s Harbrace as a reference tool for all writers, and in this statement, it moves from Hodges’s purpose statement emphasizing correction and emphasizes “writing with a purpose” (emphasis added; Hodges, Miller, Webb and Horner v). With clacks of the keyboard, the text has transformed from a reference tool for correcting themes to a guide for writing well, giving the book sustainability yet once again. With this rebirth comes not just reorganized numbered rules but new and newly titled numbered rules, Reading and Writing Critically, Planning and Drafting Essays, Revising and Editing Essays, Document Design,

\(^4\) Like the ugly Volswagen Beetle, the Harbrace has become “a standard of reliability” (see Hawhee).
Writing Arguments, Research: Finding and Evaluating Sources, Research: Using and Citing Sources, and Writing about Literature (These are rules 1-9), *Writer's Harbrace* restructures its inherent pedagogy and tone to one of aiding writers instead of remediating them, as the chapters dedicated to grammar and mechanics come after those dedicated to composition-as-a-whole, “demonstrating that attention to grammar is part of the writing process rather than a separate subject that must be mastered before someone can draft an essay” (vii-viii).

In addition to the new post-process pedagogical theory that drives *Writer’s Harbrace*, the text includes new sections to assist a growing subset of college students. A supplementary English as a World Language Index helps guide international students and nonnative speakers of English, to sections that can most help them (I-63 to I-68); and sections in the Document Design, Research, and Writing for Work chapters dedicated to navigating and creating electronic documents prepare students for communication in a hypermediated culture.

Additionally, Chapter 5: Writing Arguments contains rhetorical sections that address logic and logical fallacies and help locate the *Writer’s Harbrace* closer to the rhetorical roots of composition handbooks by focusing on how to persuade a certain audience for a certain situation. Chapter 8: Writing under Deadlines helps writers manage time and write in testing environments. The text still incorporates student writing to model writing situations that actual students may encounter.

In its new form, the *Writer’s Harbrace* has come to address new demands of not only writers, but also college writers, indicating an awareness that students, not themes for correction, exist. The fifteenth edition of *Hodges’ Harbrace* continues this trend to address student needs by incorporating chapter 41: Writing Academic Discourse, which meets the growing writing across the curriculum and writing in the disciplines subsets of composition; it also expands its English
as a second language coverage. “Beyond the Rule’ callout boxes discuss the rhetorical nature of grammar by exploring the “evolution of standardized English and academic discourse.”. Thus, we see an expanding handbook that has reconnected with its rhetorical roots, maintained its focus on mechanics and composition and has grown to address growing issues pertaining to the world economy and digital literacies; we also see conceptions of handbooks as grammar-curmudgeonly tomes and see a way to shift blame for current practice on long-dead current-traditionalists by focusing research on the corrective nature of handbooks rather than on the presentation of that material.

Looking into the Critic’s Den: St. Martin’s

Because of the nature of composition studies—the drive to connect theory and practice—in this dissertation I have the opportunity to critique a leading critic of handbooks, Robert Connors, as he and Andrea Lunsford authored St. Martin’s. Oddly, Connors has pronounced the handbook genre a stagnant one, though he has co-authored a handbook that follows much in the footsteps of the often-cited target of his critique of handbooks: Hodges. Nonetheless, as Connors argues in “Handbooks: History of Genre,” Hodges created a masterpiece-quality handbook that has proven itself for, then, over forty years and now almost sixty-five years. Given that, it’s not surprising that Lunsford and Connors have emulated some features of Harbrace, such as researching the most common student errors and asking students to catalog their errors and then framing the text around those.

As I have discussed earlier, the To the Instructor section of the first edition of Harbrace includes a list of the ten most common student errors that emphasizes the handbook's purpose as a corrective (Hodges, 1941 iii). Likewise, Hodges also comes to suggest students keep a record
of their errors to help them more readily identify their problem areas (the handbook also spawned from a cache of 20,000 graded themes). Lunsford and Connors continue the practices that Harbrace began both by including a list of the twenty most-common errors and by encouraging students to keep a written record of the errors in their compositions\(^\text{47}\) (Connors and Lunsford, 1995 I-14 to I-29; 1999 I-12 to I-27). In the third edition of St. Martin’s, the most common errors (or the most commonly cited rules, then) section occupies a sixteen-page chunk of the Introduction (Fig. 48).

After identifying the twenty most common errors, Lunsford and Connors provide brief explanations of the corresponding rules and cross-references to the appropriate section of the handbook. For example, in the third edition, the three-quarters-of-a-page long explanation of the second-most-common error, *vague pronoun reference*, ends with a reference to the handbook’s section 13c, which discusses clear pronoun references (1995 I-17; 1999 I-14). Though the material in this section is repetitive because Lunsford and Connors cover it in more detail in the body of the handbook, it operates as a quick grammar reference and thus reinforces the handbook’s missive as a corrective reference manual.

In the Preface to the third edition of St. Martin’s, Lunsford, Connors and Glenn state that their research began in 1983 (two years after Connors published “Handbooks” and bemoaned a lack of handbook development), when they sought to discover how student writing, and error, have changed since the 1930s. They note that they needed to begin their study in 1930 because Hodges last massively studied student error when conducting research for Harbrace. If no

\(^{47}\) As Hodges’s list of the ten most common rules, and Harbrace, came from studying 20,000 student compositions, Lunsford and Connors studied 21,000 compositions to help inform their text (1999, ix).
extensive studies of student writing surfaced since then, and if *Harbrace* influenced all future
composition handbooks, *St. Martin’s* with its newly researched grounding would break the
handbook mold. In many ways, though, *St. Martin’s* resembles the standard handbook with
sections devoted to correcting mechanical and grammatical errors.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Lunsford and Connors’s Twenty Most Common Errors</strong></th>
<th><strong>Hodges's Ten Most Common Errors</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Missing comma after an introductory element</td>
<td>1. Comma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Vague pronoun reference</td>
<td>2. Spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Wrong word</td>
<td>4. Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Missing comma(s) with a nonrestricting element</td>
<td>5. Superfluous commas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Wrong or missing verb ending</td>
<td>6. Reference of pronouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Wrong or missing preposition</td>
<td>7. Apostrophe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Comma splice</td>
<td>8. Omission of words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Missing or misplaced possessive apostrophe</td>
<td>9. Wordiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Unnecessary shift in tense</td>
<td>10. Good use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Unnecessary shift in pronoun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. sentence fragment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. wrong tense or verb form</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Lack of agreement between subject and verb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. missing comma in a series</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. lack of agreement between pronoun and antecedent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Unnecessary comma(s) with a restrictive element</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Fused sentence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. misplaced or dangling modifier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Its/it’s confusion</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 49: Twenty most common errors from Lunsford, Connors and Glenn's *St. Martin’s* (1995 I-15) and ten most common rules from *Hodges’s Harbrace* (1941, iii).

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48 Faigley’s *Penguin Handbook* also makes note of the most common writing errors but relegates that discussion to its companion website.
Lunsford and Connors’s discussion of error in the introduction, then, would indicate a rule-driven text; however, they soften their focus by conceding that writing with surface errors often disrupts reading. They further explain that correctness relies, to some degree, on context, indicating a rhetorical attitude towards grammar; and in a patriotic move of sorts, they explain that in the post-revolutionary America, Americans strove to “distinguish American English from British English,” thus raising correctness to a matter of national identity (1995 I-14, I-15; 1999 I-12, I-13). Additionally, in the Preface, Lunsford, Connors and Glenn emphasize that although helping students recognize and correct grammatical errors is important, it’s also important for instructors to give students “extensive practice in writing, and in writing that is compelling and powerful” (1995 vii). Considering Connors's claim in “Handbooks: History of a Genre” that handbooks have remained unchanged for decades raises the question of how handbooks should change, if they should. The corrective focus, it seems, would remain as a handbook constant, given that Lunsford and Connors have worked to preserve and enrich that element in St. Martin's.

Classifying handbooks as error correctives, though, comes all too easily, as handbooks were born from the need to identify and correct error. Looking between the covers of Harbrace has revealed legions of changes since the first edition, such as new sections dedicated to writing across the curriculum or writing in the disciplines, writing about literature, English as a second language, peer review and writing as a process, and electronic literacies, and these new inclusions have become standard in composition handbooks. If these additions did not become standard, then instructors arguably could assign the 1941 edition of Harbrace in their classes. What makes handbooks different, then, comes in the way they treat material, in their focus. Given this, St. Martin’s uses a classical rhetoric approach to teaching writing by emphasizing
reading and models, the importance of rhetoric, from invention to the whole composition, and by including an introduction that aims to teach students how to use the handbook.

In *St. Martin’s*, the section addressed to students and the introduction better describe the authorial intention of the handbook than the prefatory material of *Harbrace* because Lunsford and Connors extend beyond simple instruction to students of how to locate material in the handbook. *The St. Martin’s Handbook* (3rd ed.), *New St. Martin’s Handbook* (4th ed.), and *St. Martins Handbook* (5th ed., Lunsford is sole author) each have a tutorial in A Note to Students. This tutorial asks students to locate different types of information in the handbook, from how to use commas to how to revise a draft to how to handle internet source material. This tutorial, then, makes students active participants in the learning process, as the handbook does not tell them how to use it but shows them how to use it in a series of tutorial exercises (Fig. 51). In a way that refuses to acknowledge student insolence, the tutorial follows Genung’s 100-year-old argument that students must practice writing to become better writers. The tutorial, then, helps students become more familiar with the tool that will help them practice good writing.

A Note to Students also emphasizes the book’s focus on critical thinking, from encouraging students to use “the critical thinking program for building on strengths and eliminating weaknesses” in their writing, to reading “with an eye for various logical or stylistic or conventional aspects of writing” (1999 xv). The Introduction in *St. Martin’s* further helps students familiarize themselves with the handbook by scoping a discussion of the intent of the handbook, of all handbooks, within a discussion of working to avoid writing errors through practice and working to understand the complexities of writing. At some thirty pages long and

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49 I will center this discussion within the most current *St. Martin’s Handbook*, the fifth edition (2003), authored by Andrea Lunsford.
including discussions of critical thinking through analysis of writing to encourage students to study their writing, as well as discussions of writing situations and writing-as-a-process, the Introduction could operate as a handbook within itself, as it promotes error-free writing through study, the general goal of composition handbooks, in general.

Inciting Genung's discussion of practice once again, the introduction also begins with a discussion of the merits of practice—to excel at any activity, one must not only practice that activity, but one must work to come to understand it, to know more than how to perform tasks within that activity but to know why they must perform those tasks in certain manners (1-2). As Lunsford argues, students come to understand their writing by examining it, tracking errors, recording strengths and weaknesses in writing, to treat their own writing as veritable literature, giving it importance beyond the classroom and beyond scanning for mechanical errors to correct for a composition instructor. In this critical sphere, Lunsford asks students to consider the writing situation, the context in which they write and what types of language would best suit a given situation (12-13).

One section in the text that fosters in students the drive closely to examine their writing has roots close to classical rhetoric and close to handbooks of the nineteenth century. Varying Sentence Structures draws upon Edward P.J. Corbett’s fourth chapter of *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student* by asking student writers to vary sentence openings, vary sentence types, use differently structured sentences, and the like (719-726). The exercises help students become familiar with the terms of English grammar because students who begin each sentence with a noun would need to learn, first, the definition of a noun, and then, to vary their openings, the definition of verb, conjunction, propositional phrase, dependent clause, and the like.
Now, *Writer’s Harbrace*, among other handbooks, includes sections pertaining to sentence variety; however, the language in *Writer’s Harbrace* has a more corrective tone than the proactive language in *St. Martin’s* (Fig. 52-55). A glance at the language in *Writer’s Harbrace* reveals that corrective tone, as the first sentence ends with “but relying too heavily on a few familiar structures often makes your writing predictable” (579). Cross references after the first paragraph have titles such as: “combining choppy sentences” and “avoiding stringy compound sentences” (579). The page ends with a sample paragraph, titled “Not Varied” (579). Though the handbook has come to cover rhetorical topics related to sentence structure, showing progression in the ninth edition’s sentence combining section (1982 4), *Harbrace* still continues a tradition of subjective language that implies that wholly correct and wholly incorrect conceptions of writing still exist, as does the conception of instructor-as-corrector and student-as-correctee.

*St. Martin’s*, on the other hand, begins the first page of the Varying Sentence Structures section with three paragraphs written with a positive tone. For example, the first sentence reads: “varying sentence length not only makes prose more readable and interesting but also creates a pleasing rhythmic effect, what some writers call “flow” (719). The page ends with an example of memorable prose from George Orwell. Further, the subheadings in the section give power to student writers by eschewing corrective language. “Using transitional expressions”, “Using phrases”, and “Using dependent clauses” emphasize writing in action with the verb *use* (722-723) instead of emphasizing finished writing and correcting “stringy compound sentences” (Hodges, et al. 2001 579).

The sixth edition of *The Scott, Foresman Handbook for Writers* (2002) uses a plan similar to that of *St. Martin’s* by providing an explanation of the parts of speech in the effective sentences section (beginning on page 257) and, thus, fosters the same sense of composition
ownership in students that St. Martin’s does. Though the Blair Handbook positively titles its corresponding section Strengthening Sentence Structure, but the section has smatterings of derogatory statements such as: “Too much subordination can make your writing sound insipid” (2003 365).

Though St. Martin’s still adheres to the handbook form by providing students and instructors a guide to write more effectively, using positive language and transmitting power to students by asking them to think critically when reading, writing and revising gives the handbook a different perspective that emphasizes action—writing well—rather than reaction—correcting well.


Lester Faigley’s Penguin Handbook (2003) reconceptualizes the nature of first-year composition while preserving the course’s intent to help writers write better. As the newcomer to popular composition handbooks, Faigley’s Penguin has the opportunity to present instructional material in a different way, merely because it does not need to adhere to an existing format that previous users would recognize. In the Preface, Faigley explains why he takes a new approach in his handbook:

Veteran writing teachers know that two tools are indispensable for student writers—a good dictionary and a good handbook. [...] The key to using a dictionary is learning to look beyond spelling to the etymology and various meanings of a word. Effective use of a handbook requires more skills because handbooks have diverse kinds of information. [...] Unfortunately, handbooks are often difficult for students to use. (xxiv)
Faigley continues, stating that he wants those who use Penguin both to browse it and to use its index system. Interestingly, though, the handbook preserves the mechanical elements of its genre by including a quick-reference guide within the front cover, a Common Error Chart inside the back cover and a proofreading chart on the second-to-last page. Unlike St. Martin’s, which offers tutorials to help students learn how to navigate the handbook, Penguin, with its visually coded structure, simply presents material in a way that might be easier for students to understand.

Within the mechanics of its material, Penguin remediates composition handbooks, as the preface states: “The Penguin Handbook is innovative but does not discard any of the essential elements and the breadth of coverage found in traditional handbooks” (1st ed.; xxv). A glance at the second edition’s fifty-two individual chapter titles and ten major book divisions situates the text within its corrective roots while at the same time marking its acknowledgment that hypermedia and its immediacy have come to dominate our culture (Fig. 56). Supplementing the sections dedicated to grammar, research and documenting sources come, not callout boxes or appendixes or side notes, but sections dedicated to Composing in the Digital Era, Visual Rhetoric, Writing for the Web, and if English is not Your First Language.

Two elements, the rhetorical discussion and the citation system section (MLA section), distinguish Penguin both from past handbooks and present handbooks. In Part Three, Faigley’s discussion of visual rhetoric broadens the rhetorical tradition. Though examining visual rhetorical elements is not new, Faigley invigorates it by discussing how hypermediated communication, its iconic navigational schematics, and easily malleable computerized formats have created new emphasis for creating effective visual documents, as college work now can extend beyond typewritten term papers to computer-generated term papers (or web sites or graphical presentations or pamphlets, etc.) that take into account concerns ranging from simple
elements as font design to more complex elements such as page layout. This discussion gives electronic writing more immediate importance than, for example, St. Martin’s disjointed five pages of discussion about “Organizing verbal and visual information” (Lunsford, 2003 65, 283-286; Fig. 57).

Faigley prefaces his discussion of visual rhetoric in the first chapter’s discussion of rhetoric. The chapter, titled The Rhetorical Situation, begins with a discussion of the rhetorical triangle and classical rhetoric’s ethos, pathos and logos (9-13). These discussions ideally help students understand the workings of composition and of argument by asking them to consider why they write, whom they write to and for, and how they should write. By doing so, students know more than how to write a composition, as they also come to know how to write for a specific situation. The rhetorical discussion also helps students to understand that because they will write for different occasions and situations, they will write in different ways, under different rules. Additionally, the discussion of classical rhetoric relates to Whately’s attempt to cultivate in readers an appreciation of the English language by discussing its history.

The Penguin Handbook's chapter on documenting sources incorporates a never-used visual system to help students find directions for properly citing their sources. The beginning of the Modern Language Association citation section begins with an all-too-standard index to direct students to the pages that provide instructions for citing books, magazine articles, etc. (361). However, any resemblance to other handbooks stops there, as Faigley provides visual explanations to students of how to cite sources (Fig. 59). The pages that describe how to cite books, for example, begin with a two-page explanation of a bibliographic entry, with directions, for how to cite various types of books. Here, Faigley offers a visually organized explanation of each element of the bibliographic entry and provides explanations of each part of that entry, so
students can come not only to learn how to make a bibliographic entry, but to understand what each part of the entry means. By simply allocating more space to this section, students learn in both a visual and a textual manner, as opposed to the cramped citation section in St. Martin's and Writer’s Harbrace, for example (Figs. 60-61).

No Change Means Change

To retain Connors's lament that first-year composition handbooks have not changed since the 1960s will require another examination of his statement in “Handbooks” because the content of handbooks, as I have explored above, has gone through several changes while the purpose of handbooks has remained relatively the same for over a century. Connors ends his essay with a description of the typical handbook in the 1960s and 1970s—a “530-page tome” that served overworked, undertrained instructors and students schooling under the fog of the “literary crisis” and back to basics movement (23). The tome, then:

fills a necessary role as a marking-simplifier and touchstone of course priorities.

The handbook was born [...] out of a “damage control” response to teacher overwork, and it remains as evidence of the impulse toward mechanization that appears when work is too onerous to be dealt with by organic attention.

Handbooks do not have to be used mechanically, but in the hands of teachers without rhetorical training, handbook rules all too easily come to be seen, as James McCrimmon said in 1941, as “the sole criteria of good grading. (23)

Connors continues, stating:

The handbook controls many writing courses today for the same reasons it did in 1925: the person who makes herself a correction machine, a grading assistant to
the handbook, gets rid of the pain of being a genuine reader. Instructors are not to blame for the handbook-based mechanical correction; so long as composition is organized so that ill-trained teachers must deal with 100 or 125 student essays every week, handbooks will be the central artifacts of writing courses. Not until we demand conditions change will we move out from under the shadow of sterile, a-rhetorical correctness that handbooks have come to represent. (23-24)

Thus, though earlier in this chapter when I noted that Lunsford and Connors have retained many of the elements of Harbrace, in Connors's call, we can see why St. Martin's, as well as Penguin, New Century, Holt, and other handbooks, have retained the same handbook purpose of Outlines, Principles, Rhetoric, Woolley's Handbook, and their contemporaries. Although the composition handbook has changed, although the end of the composition handbook as a living genre is far into the future, as even when the handbook assumes a paperless, hypermediated form, the genre will still endure as the reference tool that instructors use to correct English and students use to write better English.

The form of the handbook has begun, before the 1960s, as Connors states, but at the turn of the twentieth century, when Edwin Woolley collated theme correction cards and a rhetoric text and devised a coded grading system. Woolley’s text of embodied rules of composition, and instructors grading hundreds of themes per week, fueled the shift to rule-driven handbooks and John Hodges, insistent on driving students to write error-free prose took up Woolley’s task and succeeded. Composition handbooks still conform to Hodges’s two expectations:

1. To make correction of written work as clear and easy as possible for the student.
2. To make marking of student papers as easy as possible for the instructor. (qtd. in Hawhee 509)

However, different handbooks incorporate different means to accomplish these goals. Though Harbrace still uses corrective language while embracing new pedagogical practices such as revision and proofreading, handbooks such as Faigley’s Penguin and Lunsford and Connors’s St. Martin’s look to classical rhetoric and the rhetorical situation but still utilize coded grading schemes. Though handbooks have changed, they remain essentially the same, which explains why Lunsford and Connors focus on mechanical correctness in St. Martin’s and why Faigley argues in Fragments of Rationality that researching handbooks assumes students are subjects for correction, but in the Penguin Handbook claims that handbooks and dictionaries are the two most important writing tools. Handbooks merely exist to help instructors mark compositions and to help students correct compositions, though handbooks do incorporate discussions about the writing process, argumentation, research writing, and the like.

Theoretically, the handbook has stagnated. The grounding theory remains the same, as does the structure, but the implementation of that theory differs. Even discussions of non-mechanical elements of writing such as classical rhetoric and audience have been reduced to coded rules. With changes in labor, Connors argues, will come changes in the composition handbook.
Chapter Five:

Concluding Remarks and Postscript

Technologically-Driven Interface Structures and Composition Handbook Usability

Changes in technology drive changes in the ways we live and work, and we, agents to a degree in control of our own lives, use technology to achieve our human purposes (Hawisher, et al. 1)

In *English in America*, Richard Ohmann states that first-year composition students amount to little more than criminals, as they must serve time for their crime of *substandard* writing, so to say (142). Composition handbooks describe the college law that dictates what composition students must *do* for release—generate properly written compositions and essays. This seemingly punitive focus freezes students in the gaze of the spotlight, as first-year composition courses concentrate on student writing products and on the students who produce those products—a departure from the focus of the Rhetoric a,b,c sequence of the nineteenth century, with its aim to produce effective student communicators—students who can write a variety effective letters, articles, and essays and who can effectively speak for a variety of occasions.

Whether a tool for early American Rhetoric courses or later composition courses, the textbook that has helped students become effective communicators has remained largely the same in its focus since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when colleges such as Harvard and South Dakota Agricultural College reacted to larger enrollment numbers and new breeds of students with widely varying social statuses. After the American Industrial Revolution of the
1850s and 1860s, more American citizens could financially afford schooling, and the technological advances brought on by the revolution created a need for more specialized courses of study, thus reducing college degrees from signifiers of status to signifiers of merit and of utility (Ohmann 129-131; Berlin, Rhetoric and Reality 20-25). College boards, Overseers, and rhetoric textbook writers and publishers, then, reacted to new demands of specialization and new demands to teach new types of students with varying degrees of preparatory training and began to write more philologically-focused textbooks with clearly defined rules that present ways to efficiently correct and revise errant writing.

As I have discussed in Chapters One and Two, composition history scholars have extensively studied and charted developments of composition instruction and its roots in courses such as Rhetoric a,b,c. These histories, though contested, enrich composition studies by helping those currently in the field know where they have come from—whether taking into consideration workloads, pay, gender issues, the relevance of the field, etc. Scholars have critiqued composition histories by Berlin, Connors and others for relying too heavily on secondary source material and textbooks, or for skipping certain eras. Brereton has addressed such critiques by providing a documentary history in The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College that presents snapshots of rhetoric and composition handbooks, lectures and essays written by early textbook authors, student essays, and other documents pertaining to composition instruction history studies.

This examination of historical developments of rhetoric textbooks and composition handbooks augments existing composition instruction histories by explaining how handbooks have delivered information to students and to instructors by relating images taken from textbook pages to commentary on composition instruction history. Handbooks and rhetoric textbooks play
an important role in explaining historical trends in composition instruction because they reveal how widely spread certain pedagogies were during certain eras and how certain instructional practices have developed, just as my examination of correction charts shows how composition instruction evolved into a practice dedicated to composition correction.

Handbooks have come to take on a form conducive to quickly identifying and quickly correcting errors and also to informing new instructors of pedagogical practices. Though Kathleen Welch argues that handbooks operate in ignorance of prevailing pedagogical theory, handbooks have adapted to pedagogical shifts *en masse*. In Chapter Four, I discussed the modes of discourse, noting how late nineteenth-century rhetoric textbooks by authors such as Genung and Hill addressed the modes of discourse. Additionally, in Chapter Four, I discuss correction charts and how they moved to locations within the last few pages of handbooks to accommodate 1990s post-process theory. Just as few *rhetoric textbooks* still treat the modes of discourse, few *composition handbooks* still have correction charts directly inside the front or back covers. A scan of the contents of current composition handbooks will most likely reveal English as a second language sections, writing with computers sections, writing-as-a-process sections, etc. Early handbooks quickly adapted Woolley's format and then Hodges's format of producing texts that facilitate correction. In this sense, then, handbooks have physically changed to meet not only pedagogical shifts but also cultural shifts. Handbooks still do, however, assist grading and correcting writing.

In composition, the division between cultural and pedagogical influences has no clear definition, though, as Connors argues that composition handbooks will remain largely the same until the working conditions for composition instructors changes. *Facilitating quick correction* came as a response to increases in enrollment without increases in staffing or changes in teaching
methodologies. In “The Rhetoric of Mechanical Correctness,” Connors reports that at the turn of the twentieth century, college writing instructors often taught sections with anywhere from 60 to 250 students. The University of Iowa and Yale's Sheffield Scientific School allotted one professor and one instructor to writing courses with 250 students (Connors, “The Rhetoric” 82; Brereton, The Origins 157-186; Carter Simmons 346). As Barrett Wendell reports:

I have at this moment in my class at Harvard College within one or two of 170 men, and they write these themees every day, and it happens this year to be my duty to read those every day and to make some sort of note on them ... of course, I must do it rather hastily. It is a matter of two or three hours every day. (qtd. in Connors, “The Rhetoric” 83)

In essence, Wendell graded some 22,000 themes per year (83). It may seem that in the late 1800s instructors began to grade with a focus on mechanical correctness to accommodate their large workloads, because they no longer had the time to make large-scale rhetorical comments and grammatical comments. However, in “Constructing Writers: Barrett Wendell's Pedagogy at Harvard,” Sue Carter Simmons traces some contention between Barrett Wendell and the Harvard Overseers. Wendell argues that the Overseers, who knew “nothing about writing instruction,” pushed for instruction that focused on mechanics and grammar (qtd. in Carter Simmons 332). Still, though, Wendell did teach grammar in addition to larger rhetorical topics such as organization and unity, as his theme correction cards indicate (Connors, “The Rhetoric” 87; Carter Simmons 349).

Thus, just as Wendell graded students on a wide array of topics, some current handbooks include detailed rhetoric sections that discuss the writing situation, classical rhetoric, logic, and the like; however, handbooks still assist correcting and grading, practices which their structure
preserves. Connors and Pickett ask that handbooks change to meet changing cultural and pedagogical influences, but the problem of handbooks lies within the underlying purpose of first-year composition—to improve the writing skills of incoming college students as efficiently as possible.

Conceptualizing Change

In writing Rhetoric and Reality and Writing Instruction on American Colleges, James Berlin gleaned much information from composition and rhetoric textbooks, among other documents. What these histories do, though, is reveal insights about instructional practices, not about how textbooks deliver information to students and to instructors. In the nineteenth century, rhetoric textbooks had a cultivating role rather than the corrective role of later composition handbooks, and their structure does not reveal much about instructional practices. However, in Chapter Four, I made claims about developments of first-year composition based on the structure of the textbooks I analyzed. Numbered rules, correction charts, tabbed pages, flow charts, and the like signify that composition handbooks have changed to meet new instructional needs. However, these charts and other navigational tools in handbooks have developed to help students find information. Thus far, then, this dissertation has largely ignored the handbook's role of helping students find information. In my analysis of composition histories and of handbook

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50 In “The Rhetoric of Mechanical Correctness,” Connors refers to the “hidden agenda” of 1880s college writing courses: “grammatical and mechanical rule-application at the sentence level” (81). Connors refers to grammar-centric teaching as hidden agenda because, even in 1971, “college teachers were ashamed to be found professing grammar, punctuation, and lower-level skills” (81).
changes, I did not discuss whether or not new handbook developments actually help students find the information that they need to find, much less write better.

Composition histories, and to an extent this dissertation, subject students by emphasizing a textbook and not inquiring how students use a handbook or even whether students can use a handbook. Scholarly conceptions about handbooks come from what most composition instructors during the last century used (and still use) the texts for: grammar and mechanics correctives, not rhetorics. Stating that composition handbooks have not changed for some forty years, Connors makes a bold assertion a few years before he, with Andrea Lunsford, published The St. Martin's Handbook (1983). Even Lunsford and Connors soldiered on with the old handbook form by conducting an error analysis of some 21,000 student compositions to help inform their content and, mostly, grammatical approach, just as Hodges did in the 1930s, before first publishing Harbrace in 1941. Both Hodge's Harbrace and The New St. Martin's Handbook contain numerical and symbolic coding systems to help instructors efficiently grade compositions and to help students efficiently to consult the handbook as they make revisions. But these conceptions of the handbook as a corrective exist largely because of its structure, which scholars cannot consider apart from content because, as a reference text, the handbook and its navigation system(s) are intrinsically linked since new navigation systems direct users to certain data within handbooks. Considering handbook contents reveals several cyclical changes that morphed them from rhetorics to grammatics to rhetoric/grammatics, some of which I discussed in Chapter Four.

Thus, those who discuss and/or bemoan the composition handbook merely as a corrective tool that has not changed in several years are both correct and incorrect in their analyses. Although the handbook has remained a corrective tool for almost a century, its contents have
changed, much so as pedagogical theory has changed, albeit more slowly. For example, in Chapter Four, I discussed the advent of correction charts and their post-process theory-inspired move from just inside the back cover to a place within the last few pages of handbooks. Also, as I discussed, handbooks have changed to meet cultural influences and now include writing with computers sections, English as a second language sections, etc. Notwithsanding, the purpose of composition and rhetoric textbooks has remained steadfast in that they exist to help improve writing and, as I discussed in Chapter Four, the structure of composition handbooks has remained largely the same since the 1940s. Instructors use the correction codes in handbooks to direct students to certain sections so they can learn how to correct their errors.

If handbooks merely exist to help instructors mark errors and to help students correct these errors, then could they have different structures? For example, if handbooks are only reference tools, why hasn't Martin Steinmann and Michael Keller's NTC's Handbook for Writers (1995), with its alphabetically organized material (Go to A for apostrophe or to C for comma) become more popular? Comparing the existing technologies during the birth of the composition handbook to current technologies makes such a question a pertinent one, as computer technology has created new means of information delivery and has created more ways to manipulate print materials, with the inclusion of more detailed pictures, more diverse fonts, more colors, different types of callout boxes, and the like. The Penguin Handbook, for example, has incorporated icons into its navigational structure, so the top of each page in Planning Your Research will have the page number, “16” (the numerical code for the section), and a picture of a calendar page that signifies planning. Faigley most likely draws his iconic structure from cultural influences, as in

[51] Just as the handbooks, themselves, can incorporate more visual structures, students can do so in their compositions, just as I do in this dissertation and Bolter and Grusin do in Remediation.
Chapter One, I discussed how *Cosmopolitan* shifted to a more visual organizational scheme. Also, because of the hypermediated influences that I discuss below, many readers have come to browse for information much like they browse websites. These cultural and in-the-field shifts signify change to meet user expectations and to print handbooks that appeal to those with electronic and hypermedia literacy.

This discussion of the structure of composition handbooks surfaces because composition handbooks have structurally stagnated. A current composition student most likely could effectively use both Woolley's first handbook and Faigley's latest handbook. Of this discussion of handbook structure, Edward Tufte would argue *The Penguin Handbook* “escapes flatland” by incorporating both visual and textual explanations to make the information within it more complex and more appealing (9). *The Penguin Handbook* incorporates the new organizational structures that I discuss in this dissertation not only because current technologies make it possible to create textbooks with complex graphics, vivid pictures and flow charts but also because of a sense that handbooks need to change to better address contemporary student literacies. Additionally, the *St. Martin's Handbook*, with its student tutorial, signifies that students might have trouble navigating handbooks.

Given these moves and changes in technology, research into the structure of the handbook-reader interface and the usability of that interface merits consideration, as computer technology has enabled publishers to print handbooks with a wider array of visual information. In *Information Graphics*, Peter Wildbur and Michael Burke state that advances in technology, specifically computer technology, have made it easier for those creating informational

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52 Though changes in usage and the influence of technology would likely render much of Wooley's text obsolete.
documents to change those documents because typesetters or artists no longer have prominent roles (7-9). Ideally, then, handbook authors, with their knowledge of composition instruction, could make handbooks that do not need tutorials—handbooks that students can readily use.

Scanning the figures in Chapter Four shows how handbooks have structurally changed. Of the textbooks, perhaps the quasi-flow chart table of contents in Kellogg's *Rhetoric* least resembles that of a standard textual book. Aside from that, marginal glosses of rules and topics such as those in Genung’s *Outlines* assists navigation and shows some structural complexity. Moving to Faigley's *Penguin Handbook*, with its photographs, visual explanations, icons, and flow chart-styled citation guidelines exhibits how technological advancements have changed information delivery. Handbook structure may have culminated in *Penguin*, but perhaps it should develop even more, so students find it more accessible.
Studying the Handbook Interface

Several technologies aside from print and informational technologies have advanced because of computer technology (see Wildbur and Burke). Though composition handbooks have remained relatively the same for several years, other informational media have changed. Television might best act as an indicator of how technological advances affect media. When I was a child, one to three news anchors sat behind a desk and reported the news to television viewers, occasionally using some video feed or a graphic to help fully develop a story (Fig. 62). Viewers would watch the news from start to finish to learn the information that they desired to learn. In recent years, though, television news has developed into a complex display with quick presentation, short stories, and several visuals. On the subtle side, nightly network news programs often incorporate tickers at the bottom of the screen to record sports scores, weather forecasts, stock prices, election results, etc. Extreme cable news channels such as Bloomberg Television (Fig. 63), though, often incorporate several layers of interfaces for viewer interaction, often simultaneously showing: a news anchor reading brief general news stories, occasionally replaced by a financial anchor, sports anchor, or fashion anchor; tickers on the top and bottom of the screen that reveal regional weather forecasts, stock market status, regional news stories, sports scores and stories, voting results, and more—thus lessening the amount of screen space that anchors occupy; and factoid windows that offer to viewers details about news stories. These new developments enable viewers to watch the news for short periods of time because they can quickly access the information they want. On its website, Bloomberg Television offers an explanation of how to use their “data screen,” or what viewers see, to glean information as quickly as possible (Fig. 64).
The Bloomberg Television Data Screen is the tool that Bloomberg Television uses to bring you the most comprehensive package of business and financial information available on any TV channel. Each portion of the Data Screen has a purpose and a mission. This guide is intended to help you, the viewer, understand the Data Screen so that you can use it to its fullest potential.

**Figure 62: retro newscast structure**

**Figure 63: the more complex nature of news channels**

### The Data Screen

The Bloomberg Television Data Screen is the tool that Bloomberg Television uses to bring you the most comprehensive package of business and financial information available on any TV channel. Each portion of the Data Screen has a purpose and a mission. This guide is intended to help you, the viewer, understand the Data Screen so that you can use it to its fullest potential.

1. **The Index Box**
   Bloomberg delivers an instant look at the most relevant stock indices for that point in the trading day.

2. **The Content Box**
   Puts what viewers are watching into context. For example: When a company is featured in the video screen area, the context box might display historical information relevant to the company.

3. **The Stock Ticker**
   Stay plugged into the markets with continuous scrolling stock quotes from the around the globe. We spell out the companies' names, so there's no need to memorize the ticker symbols. Stocks that are up appear in green, down in red, unchanged in white.

4. **The Headline Bar**
   Provides breaking news, drawing on the global strength of Bloomberg News® coverage.

Fig. 64: An explanation of the Bloomberg Television “Data Screen” from the Bloomberg Television website (“The Data Screen”).
In *Remediation* Jay Bolter and David Grusin refer to this type of multi-layered, multifaceted display as *immediacy* (and *hypermediacy*, the mixture of graphics and text to make meaning [12-14]), an attempt to deliver to consumers as much information as possible without allowing consumers to consciously notice the interface. A discussion of television news programming helps show how technology has effected information delivery; however, computer video games and even print materials incorporate several layers of interaction, all meant to transfer information without notice (6-12)\(^53\).

The complex nature of modern news presentations reflects upon cultural shifts regarding information exchange. Information exchange interfaces have developed into more complex structures, perhaps at the hand of how World Wide Web pages have developed into mediums briefly and quickly to display information. As Ian Heywood and Barry Sandywell argue that people cannot separate the “social history of perception from the arts of observation and the technologies of visual culture” (x), people cannot separate the history of reception from the tools of delivery. Given this discussion, one might ask whether composition handbooks have evolved into more complex information delivery systems or whether they have developed a complexity before users could adequately digest and navigate their layered information displays?

Answering this question, then, I argue that in the *most effective* means of interface operation, *immediacy*, the interface components and the content that create the composition handbook genre should help users find the information they need without incorporating too burdensome a navigational schematic—one that users would consciously have to consider how to use. Additionally, just as those who watched the news several years ago had to watch until they got

the information they wanted, Rhetoric a,b,c students once read rhetoric textbooks from cover to cover. Now, composition students can access a coded chart and refer to a section of the handbook to learn how to correct comma errors, just as a modern news viewer can refer to a ticker on the screen to garner weather or stock information without waiting for the weather or financial segments of the news.

The Interface

My discussion of handbook history in Chapter Four focused largely on the handbook interface—or how certain types of material have been or are delivered. Changes in technology have changed the knowledge-delivery interface, so future discussions of composition handbooks should explore the area where students come in contact with course topics. To help ground this discussion for further study into developments of the handbook interface, I will begin with a general description of interface by applying concepts of virtual or multimedia interfaces to textual interfaces. In “Introduction to Virtual Environments and Advanced Interface Designs,” Thomas A. Furnass II and Woodrow Baifield define the virtual interface as:

a system of transducers, signal processors, computer hardware and software that create an interactive medium through which; (1) information is conveyed to the senses in the form of three-dimensional virtual images, tactile and kinesthetic feedback and spatialized sound and, (2) the psychometer and psychological behavior of the user is monitored and used to manipulate the virtual environment.

Furnass and Baifield discuss virtual reality environments and their involved interfaces; however, their conceptualization of the virtual interface helps define the handbook interface, which is
composed of print (and sometimes electronic) media organized by indexes and tabulature that create a medium through which information is delivered in two and three-dimensional images (hypermediacy). Yet in the first-year composition classroom, feedback is typically provided by, and the user is typically monitored by, the instructor, who can manipulate the handbook to fill student knowledge gaps and to train students how to use handbooks to garner knowledge. In this sense, then, the interface can be generalized as “the technology that goes between the human and the functional elements of a machine” (4).

An interface allows humans to arrange symbols that represent physical tools, allowing high-order cognitive interaction within the intention and organization of symbols and lower-order interaction within the topic. Space restrictions, both in computer interfaces and on print interfaces, and the way that humans interact with interfaces, affect the meaning derived through the organization of symbolic content (Furness and Barfield 3). Interfaces also can affect information delivery by virtue of information pathways, as direct pathways involve the physical “transfer of signals in the form of light, sound, or mechanical energy” and indirect pathways convey meaning by utilizing signal organization “according to internal models” that the human and media share (5).

Given how interfaces can affect meaning, students from the Information Age have internal models that enable them to effectively read texts with several layers of information, such as computer screens, with maneuverable menus, icons and documents displayed at once, while students from previous generations can effectively read texts with only few, static layers. Perhaps, then, handbooks, with their diverse navigation systems—contents, indexes, tabbed pages, etc.—provide immediate functionality for students. On the other hand, the wide range of navigational tools and their complex numbered and coded rules may interfere with navigation.
The interface system also operates as a tool system. In “Hypermedia Communication and Academic Discourse,” Gunnar Leistøl discusses Engelbert's “human augmentation system,” which consists of two parts: the human system, which is composed of cultural tools such as “language, method, procedures, organization”; and the “tool system,” which consists of media and technology such as “devices, vehicles, machines, transport, media, and computers” (cit. in 264). These two facets of the human augmentation system increase human productivity—given that the human and tool systems operate in commensuration. The technological operations of interfaces must match cultural technology competencies. That is:

the current computer revolution displays an on-going convergence of cultural tradition and technology, where devices of innovation slowly and painfully enter existing practices and/or create new ones. In general, cultural competence and technological innovations seem to strive for a steady relationship. (264)

James A. Herrick's description of rhetoric that I have discussed in Chapter Two adds to these conceptual interchanges for interfaces. When defining rhetoric, Herrick quotes George Kennedy, who states that rhetoric is “the energy inherent in emotion and thought, transmitted through a system of signs, including language, to others to influence their decisions or actions” (qtd. in 5). Aside from its persuasive nature, rhetoric has five major characteristics: “Rhetorical discourse characteristically is (1) planned, (2) adapted to an audience, (3) shaped by human motives, (4) responsive to a situation, and (5) persuasion-seeking” (8-9). This definition of social rhetoric is analogous with Priestley's discussion of how interfaces must address certain cultural and environmental factors most effectively to mediate communication between a device and a human user.
Surely, though, Priestley's discussion of the computer revolution bears more upon existing technologies and media than rhetorical modes, as humans create tools to fit certain needs and to sustain desired aspects of their cultures, which helps substantiate why Pickett (see Chapter One) polled composition instructors to learn what they desired in composition handbooks. Language constitutes a tool system, however. Effective interface mediums transfer information in a way commensurate with a human user's “internal mental model” and the medium's “interpretation and representation of the [learning] environment,” thus making the interface a rhetorical tool (Furnass and Barfield 6). Which components of composition handbooks do instructors want further to develop and what new components should publishers and textbook authors introduce, then, to make these texts relevant and accessible to students and their electronic literacies? Simply, how well do students use handbooks, and what would enhance how effectively students use handbooks?

Nonetheless, interfaces operate on more levels than mere medium-to-user interaction because they operate within and across several layers of their genre and medium. Bjorn Larsen and Peter Bøgh Andersen discuss Umberto Eco's prosthesis theory, in which tools, “mirrors, spectacles, and binoculars,” for instance, help improve the “functional radius of an organ” (cit. in 238). Likewise, then, Larsen and Bøgh Andersen compare multimedia to Eco-styled prostheses, as computer programs, and textbooks, I argue, affect “consciousness” and knowledge promulgation on several levels of inference, from the “dialog” between user and media to the user's internalization of information. Computer programmers must take into account kinesthetic (“mouse handling”), auditive (sound perception and decoding), logical (spatial change adaptation), and linguistic codes. Such codes are transmitted from global structure to global structure (from machine to living organism) and must utilize different types of Gardner's
intelligences (linguistic, musical, personal, etc.; Larsen and Bøgh Andersen 238-239). Student handbook users, then, interact with the handbook-as-interface on similar levels: kinesthetic (manipulating pages and book structures), logical (spatial change adaptation), linguistic codes (understanding and willfully engaging with material), and possibly auditive (perhaps external sound decoding) codes.

Existent in the Peirce's tool-system interface are signs, which consist of “representamen,” the sign, picture, letter, word, sound, etc.; an object that the sign refers to; and an “interpretant,” “the respect in which the represent amen stands to its object” (Bøgh Andersen 17). These methods of examining symbol systems can be used to examine composition handbook interfaces:

![Diagram](image)

(can be adapted to look like:

- **representamen**: how a textbook treats subject at hand
- **interpretant**: users and their language and actions
- **object**: focus of the book, each chapter, etc.)
Effective interface design has deep semiotic structures because an operative interface must have both the mechanical functionality that I discuss above but also must have semiotic functionality to convey proper meaning to users. In “A Semiotic Approach to Programming,” Peter Bøgh Anderson discusses the semiotic-symbolic structure of computer interfaces, noting the interplay of signs from the actual user interface to the “operating system and the assembly code” to the hardware code (16). Likewise, one can assess multiple layers of sign systems with composition handbooks by discussing student-book interface, the layout of the textbook, the structures of the navigation system, and the physical composition of the book. At different symbolic levels, the text takes on different interpretations, as the physical structure of a textbook conveys different meanings than the informative structure, or learning material (17), as users must manipulate different navigational interfaces to get to the information they need. For example, the New Century Handbook took on a barrage of colors in 1999 but the Harbrace still incorporates a white and blue color scheme. Just as the New Century Handbook might emulate some hypermedia design elements and the Harbrace might remain a text in the traditional sense, how might different design schemes affect different audiences?
Usability Proposal

As I have discussed in Chapter Four, Lunsford and Connors have incorporated a student tutorial in A Note to Students in The St. Martin's Handbook (Fig. 64). The tutorial raises interesting issues concerning how well students can operate the handbook tool system. While the tutorial can help students and teachers learn how to navigate the text and its menu systems, the presence of a tutorial indicates that the handbook's users might not know how to use a book with such a structure. Almost certainly, students have not used similarly structured reference books before college. Thus composition handbooks, with their multiple levels of navigational structures, from contents, to indexes, to quick-reference guides, to correction codes, to etc., might not have a structure intuitive to its student users, as even in St. Martin's, Lunsford states that students might not know how to navigate the book (2003, xvi-xvii). To appeal to different types of student literacies, the handbook interface may have become overly complex.

St. Martin's tutorial provides a solid foundation upon which to design a usability test for handbooks because its questions focus on a wide range of issues pertaining to the types of writing that students might encounter and then prompts students to find material by using the index, table of contents and list of coded rules. The tutorial's five sections of scavenger hunt-type questions address: using the table of contents, planning and drafting, editing, research, and college writing that might include incorporating charts in writing or writing project proposals (xvi-xviii).

54 More so than Century's directive: when you see a number in the margin of your compositions, go to that numbered section of the text to learn of your mistake and to learn how to correct it.

55 For this discussion, I will use the fifth edition of St. Martin's (2003) (Lunsford).
A usability test for handbooks should focus on a handbook's designation as a reference tool. Incorporating a general set of questions such as those in *St. Martin's* with detailed questions for solving certain problems would likely indicate how easily students can use a particular handbook. Additionally, such a test should include both qualitative and quantitative questions that gauge not only if students can find answers to questions but also how easily they could find those answers. If students express frustration, for example, the handbook might not have an ideal sense of *immediacy*—students might become frustrated with the navigational structures in a handbook, thus making the index or numbered rules too prominent, leading students to wrestle with those instead of solving their problems. Additional factors to consider in such a test include how much time it takes students to find their answers and how many attempts (how many sections of the handbook they might turn to, to find their answer) they need to make to find the answers.

Usability Tests

As I have stated earlier, the tutorial from *St. Martin's* could work as a general usability test. Instead of listing similar questions, I have included that tutorial below, in figures 63a and 63b. Such a test would indicate how easily students could adapt to a handbook's navigational structures. But the *St. Martin's* tutorial asks students to answer a set of general questions, so I have incorporated a second usability tests that focuses on one part of the handbook. Applying multiple usability tests on one product makes the findings more popular, as in “Comparative Usability Evaluation,” Rolf Molich, et. al. state that usability tests that produce “reliable results suitable for making informed decisions” incorporate more than one usability test of the same item (67), so a general test and specific test could work together to reveal user difficulties.
The third set of questions focus on a certain part of handbooks by creating what Molich, et. al. Refer to as a “client scenario” (66). This set of questions focuses on the section(s) explaining how to use source material. Like the St. Martin's tutorial, this test helps students familiarize themselves with a handbook by asking them not only to find answers but also to find locations in a handbook that cover how to handle source material. Less abstract, the third test prompts students to work with and change a piece of writing, thus revealing whether they can understand the material in a handbook.

In addition to the questions in the following tests, test-takers could answer qualitative follow-up questions:

1. How easy was this handbook to use (easy, moderate, hard)?
2. Would you use this handbook for your own writing?
3. Which question was easiest to answer? Why?
4. Which question was hardest to answer? Why?
5. Did you leave any questions unanswered? Why?
6. What did you like about using this handbook? Why?
7. What did you dislike about this handbook? Why?
8. If you could change one aspect of this handbook, what would you change?
9. Were the explanations (easy, moderate, difficult) to understand?
10. Did you need to consult more than one section of the handbook to answer any questions?
   a. Was the information explained in two different sections?
   b. Did you mistakenly turn to the wrong section?
11. Was the index (easy, moderate, difficult) to use? Why?
12. What one aspect of this handbook would you change? Why?
Figure 65a: Questions 1-16 of tutorial from *St. Martin's* (Lunsford, 2003 xvii).
Figure 65b: Tutorial questions 17-23 from *St. Martin's* (Lunsford, 2003 xviii).
Usability Test for Incorporating Source Material


In representing and communicating information, how are we to benefit from color's great dominion?

1. You want to quote the sentence in a research report. Find the section of the handbook that tells you how to quote the sentence and write the page number(s) here: ________.

2. Now correctly quote and parenthetically cite the sentence:

3. You now want to omit the word “great” from your quote. Find the section of the handbook that tells you how to quote a sentence while omitting words and write the page number(s) here: ________.

4. Now correctly quote and parenthetically cite the sentence while omitting “great”:

5. You now want to change the work “we” in the middle of the quote to “people”. Find the section of the handbook that tells you how to quote a sentence while changing some words and write the page number(s) here: ________.

6. Now correctly quote and parenthetically cite the sentence while changing “we” to “people”:

7. Now you want to quote more of the paragraph your sentence came from and the quote is longer than three typed lines. Find the section of the handbook that tells you how to quote a sentence that spans three or more lines and write the page number(s) here: ________.

8. Now correctly quote and parenthetically cite this long section from Tufte's book:
In representing and communicating information, how are we to benefit from color's great dominion? Human eyes are exquisitely sensitive to color variations: a trained colorists can distinguish among 1,000,000 colors, at least when tested under contrived conditions of pairwise comparison.

9. Assume that your source is now from an Internet site. Now correctly quote and parenthetically cite the sentence:

10. You need to write a works cited page entry for your quote. Which page(s) of the handbook tell you how to do so?

11. Write your works cited entry here:

12. Assume that you retrieved your quote from a website site on June 7 2005 (From the website Things, last updated on 2 December 2004). Which page(s) of the handbook tell you how to do so?

13. Write your works cited entry here:

14. Assume you want to paraphrase your original quote. Which page(s) of the handbook tell you how to do so?

15. Correctly paraphrase and cite your quote:

16. Assume you want to summarize your original quote. Which page(s) of the handbook tell you how to do so?

17. Correctly summarize and cite your quote:
Additional Measures

It may take over an hour for respondents to answer all of the questions in each of the above studies, so respondents could take each of the two tests at different times or different respondents could take each test. These tests also have a comparative nature, so different respondents could use different handbooks. One respondent could not take the tests multiple times with different handbooks because they would learn how to use the texts, learn the answers, and skew the results. Using the same tests to compare two or more different handbooks could also reveal faults in the tests (for example, if respondents using different handbooks have trouble answering the same question or answering the same question correctly).

Because usability testing involves more than testing to see if users can easily, effectively and properly use a product by testing, many usability evaluators ask participants to think aloud as they work through problems and also videorecord the usability sessions to see how they use the product (Jacobsen, Hertzum, and John 256). Using think-aloud protocols and recording the testing sessions will help identify whether student respondents do not understand their instructions, do not understand the handbook, or simply make mistakes. Additionally, video recording the think-aloud sessions would provide qualitative, emotional, feedback that users might not reveal in post-test questions like those I proposed above.

Book Usability and Culture

In the early twentieth century rhetoric textbooks transformed into composition handbooks and the structure of these textbooks changed with their new goal as reference tools for correcting errors in writing. However, since Woolley's handbook pioneered the shift to numbered rules, the structure of composition handbooks has changed little, mostly by incorporating symbols that
coordinate with rules and by providing topical outlines within the covers. Technologies in the end of the twentieth century have brought hypertext, and its sense of immediacy has fostered within students a desire to retrieve information quickly. Though new handbooks have several layers of navigational systems, a handbook with discussions of commas, for example, in three distinct sections makes retrieving information difficult, so older rhetoric textbooks, with their comma discussions in one section may have an advantage over some current textbooks.

Though, if handbook publishers followed their own models instead of building from Woolley's and then Hodges's examples, the genre would be scattered with variations that would make it difficult for teachers and students to use different texts. However, by retaining its structure for over fifty years, the handbook has failed to breath in new life from culture, from remediation. In the simplest form, handbooks could include newer navigational structures like those in the document citation section of Penguin Handbook or use navigational terms that the users, students and instructors, generate. Conducting usability studies to determine how effectively students and instructors use handbooks and to determine how to structure new and existing handbooks will help make the texts more accessible to users becoming increasingly familiar with hypermedia.

Examining how effectively students can use composition handbooks can usher in student-centered perspectives about composition instruction history that take into account available technologies and how those technologies impacted instruction because technological advancements determine the limits of textual production. Additionally, such examinations can inform the structure of future handbooks. The best available instructional technology when

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56 For a discussion of user-determined navigation labels and icons, see Vicky Duncan and Darlene M. Fitcher's “What Words and Where?”
composition handbooks first developed was the printing press. In “The Rhetoric of Mechanical Correctness,” Connors argues that in the 1890s, composition textbooks became the primary instructional aid that textbook publishers promoted (91). Those instructional aids developed into today's handbooks, with their focus on mechanical correctness. Today, computers drive textbook production as well as media delivery, so handbooks could assume a different structure.

If composition handbooks have come to exist wholly as reference tools and available technology can make searching for key terms earlier, then the demise of the composition handbook may soon arrive. Composition handbooks and their coded structures evolved as composition instruction became more corrective. The handbook's structure helps students find answers in a format that they, ideally, can use. Now, instead of changing instructional practices, increases in enrollment, or the like, as I discussed in Chapter Two, it will be changing technologies and changing literacies that will come to affect composition handbook design, unless the mission of composition instruction changes.

Conclusion

To change a handbook, then, would include more than incorporating new ideas and a few new navigational structures as Faigley has done in the Penguin Handbook. Changing the first-year composition handbooks would need to come with large-scale changes in the purpose and in the structure of the course. The composition handbook has developed into a reference tool for writing and contains instructions for correcting a variety of grammatical and mechanical errors, for citing a variety of sources in a variety of styles, for how to draft, revise, edit and proofread a composition, for example. These elements must remain inside first-year composition handbooks unless the entirety of first-year composition changes. Sections about rhetoric and logic help give
breadth to practices but also reduce rhetorical comments to coded schemes such as “log” for logic. Thus, as I discuss in Chapter Five, changing composition handbooks would entail changing their structure: how they deliver information to students and to instructors. Just as Rhetoric students of the nineteenth century read their textbooks from front cover to back cover and composition students of the last century read sections of their handbooks at the direction of coded marks in the margins and lessons in the syllabus, composition students of this century should be able to browse composition handbooks, perhaps, in the manner they browse hypertext.
Appendix

This appendix catalogs the figures that I refer to in Chapter Four.

Fig. 3: Excerpt from contents and Lesson I of G. P. Quackenbos's *Advanced Course of Composition and Rhetoric* (1854), showing the space dedicated to the modes of discourse (12-13).
Fig 4: Excerpt from Preface and Contents of Richard Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric* (1828), showing the minute breadth of Whately's discussion of style (14-15).
Fig 5: Excerpt from Contents and Introduction of Richard Whately's *Elements of Rhetoric* (1828) (14-15).
Figure 6: Excerpt from Contents in G. P. Quackenbos’s *Advanced Course of Composition and Rhetoric: A Series of Practical Lessons* (1864) (10-11).
giving writing an active quality instead of a corrective quality. Hill and Genung’s predecessors would argue that words simply dress thought and choosing the correct words would win over audiences, not using the best words organized in a pathetic manner. Thus, while approaching writing homogeneously, the two authors still promote rules for writing.

Fig. 7: Excerpt from contents of John F. Genung’s The Practical Elements of Rhetoric, with Illustrative Examples (1885), showing the breadth of his discussion of EDNA.
Fig. 8: Contents from A.S. Hill's *Foundations*, showing the division of topics in the rhetoric textbook.
The unity which every young writer should seek is not the unity of perfection, but the unity which comes from the conception of a discourse as a whole, and from the harmonious arrangement of the parts in conformity with that conception. Every composition that he writes should be "a body, not a mere collection of members," — a living body. Its life must come partly from the writer’s natural qualities, and partly from his acquired resources whether of matter or of language. Familiarity with good authors will stimulate his powers of expression, and constant practice under judicious criticism will train them.

Whatever a writer's materials, whatever his gifts, he must, if he hopes to be read, awaken interest at the beginning and hold it to the end. Unless he succeed in doing this, his work, whatever its merits in other respects, fails — as a picture fails which nobody cares to look at, or a sonata which nobody cares to hear. A student of composition can receive no higher praise from his teacher than this: "I enjoyed reading your essay."

1 Non solus composita oratio, sed etiam contemn. — Quintilian: Inst. Orator. vii. x. xvi.ii.
John Henry Harris 172

Fig. 10: Excerpt from Adams Sherman Hill's _Principles of Rhetoric and Their Application_ (1878), showing pages from his discussion of description.
Fig. 11: Excerpt from Contents and Introduction of John F. Genung's *Outlines of Rhetoric*, showing the location of rules and the glossary and the beginning of his discussion on how to write well.
Fig. 12: Excerpt from Paragraphs of A. S. Hill's *Foundations of Rhetoric* (1895).
CHAPTER V.

THE PARAGRAPH.

In composing sentences, that is, in combining principal elements and modifiers, words, phrases, clauses, to make up completed thoughts, we have by no means reached a stopping-place. Out of these single thoughts and assertions must be shaped larger, more comprehensive topics; and to this end our sense of order must devise ways of grouping sentences so that the result shall be a united, connected organism. Hence arises the construction of the paragraph.

A paragraph, then, is a connected series of sentences constituting the development of a single topic.

A new paragraph is indicated, both in writing and in print, by beginning a new line, whether the previous paragraph has finished its last line or not; and by indenting, that is, by beginning a little way inward from the margin.

Note. — The paragraph form is also given to what each speaker says, whether one word, one sentence, or more, in writing dialogue or conversation. Though this looks like a paragraph, it may or may not have a regular paragraph structure.

The two divisions into which the present chapter naturally falls are suggested by the definition of the paragraph given above. Because the paragraph is the development of a single topic, we need to inquire how that topic appears as a whole, a unity. Because the paragraph is made up of a connected series of sentences, we need to inquire what is necessary to make this series into an organism. The two divisions therefore are:

1. The Paragraph in Sum.
2. The Paragraph in Structure.

The principles that we have here to trace are but the repetition, in broader relations and applications, of the same principles that we have already discussed; being indeed the principles that underlie all composition.

I. THE PARAGRAPH IN SUM.

The paragraph is virtually an expanded sentence; that is, it contains a subject, here called a topic, — it is all about some one thing; and it contains what corresponds to a predicate, or as we may say predicative matter, — a term here adopted to denote in general what is said about the topic. As anything that has been expanded may be condensed again, we may say a well-constructed paragraph, with the unity it ought to have, may be summarized in a single sentence; in which the topical matter corresponds broadly to the subject of the sentence, and the predicative matter, or treatment of the topic, to the predicate.

This is indeed such a useful test that perhaps the most practical way to set out in the composition of a paragraph is to state its substance first in a sentence.

II. RULES RELATING TO THE PARAGRAPH TOPIC.

To this sum or total effect of the paragraph the topic is so closely related that the two cannot well be separated in treatment. In many paragraphs the one suggests the other.

Fig. 13: Excerpt from The Paragraph of John F. Genung's Outlines of Rhetoric (1893).
Fig. 14: Table of Contents in Brainerd Kellogg's *Rhetoric* (1896).
Fig. 15: Excerpt from Kellogg's *Rhetoric* (1896), showing Kellogg's division of discourse and explanation of exposition.
Fig. 16: Excerpt from Forming of Paragraphs from Brainerd Kellogg’s Rhetoric (1896), showing a model, a critique of the model and an exercise for argumentative paragraphs.
so close that the comma seems unnecessary. See Rules for Punctuation, IV. 6, Lesson XLI.

Here it should be noted that punctuation is a matter of feeling, not of rule alone. The closeness of connection in thought between various parts of a sentence must in general govern the punctuation, and pupils should be trained early to perceive and judge of this connection.

When two or more clauses of like construction, whether dependent or independent, occur in a series, they should be separated by commas if the pause between them is sufficient to demand some punctuation (Ex. 4, Ex. 5).

In general all dependent may be separated from independent clauses by commas, but a close connection renders the comma unnecessary (Ex. 5, Ex. 6). For instance, in Example 5, the clauses in the last sentence are not separated from each other, because the second clause defines the distance at which Charlemagne heard the horn; in Example 6, the first two clauses are separated, because the second does not define the time of the first. For further examples of these rules, see Rules for Punctuation, IV. 7, Lesson XLII.

**EXERCISE.**

Supply “among” or “between” in the passages that follow:

1. These men stood forward now as mediators the Roman gods and the Roman people.
2. The sun shone on the delicate leaves; everything breathed in the sweet fragrance.
3. Before him figures had been put in rows, one above another, with little thought of connection them.

Giotto placed them in groups.

4. His voice, which once floated over a little provincial seaport, is now reverberated in brick edifices, and strikes the ear amid the buzz and tumult of a city.
5. But I wandered north and south, upon the treacherous warm gulf-stream, till I met with the old icebergs afloat in the mid-ocean. So I got tangled in the icebergs, and chilled with their frozen breath.
6. And when it was day he called the men of Barca to his parley; and they gladly hearkening to him, a covenant was made.
7. Upon this they went all trooping away, with every man a gun, a pistol, and a sword, and muttered some insolent things themselves.
8. The commonalty, clad in homely garb, gave precedence to their betters at the doors of the meeting-house, as if admitting there were distinctions them.
9. Then they swore a great oath them, and afterward both went in, and lay down to sleep.
10. And in a pine wood at last he met him, where the Isthmus was narrowest, and the road ran high rocks.

**LESSON III.**

**BESIDE AND BETWIXT.**

“Beside” is to be used only as a preposition with the meaning (a) by the side of; (b) aside from, (c) out of.” “Beside” is not now used as an adverb, although it was formerly so used, as in the following stanza:

“Beside” is a verb in Old English, meaning “to stand near.”

**SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, The Ancient Mariner.**
Fig. 18a: Student notes inside Helen J. Robins and Agnes F. Perkins's *An Introduction to the Study of Rhetoric* (1903). The notes describe EDNA, labeled “compositions.” Because this rhetoric textbook contains mostly exercises and no rhetorical discussion, the instructor most likely lectured about EDNA.
Fig. 18b: Student notes inside Helen J. Robins and Agnes F. Perkins's *An Introduction to the Study of Rhetoric* (1903). These pages continue the student notes on EDNA and include notes about narrative point of view.
Fig. 18c: Student notes inside Helen J. Robins and Agnes F. Perkins's *An Introduction to the Study of Rhetoric* (1903). These notes show which pages the instructor assigned and include some notes about usage.
Fig. 19a: Student notes inside the front cover of William M. Tanner's *Composition and Rhetoric* (1922). With a spelling list and notes for two assignments appear “composition—four classes”, indicating that although the text did not include discussions of EDNA, the instructor lectured about the modes.
Fig. 19b: Inside the back cover (last page seems to have been removed) of William M. Tanner's Composition and Rhetoric (1922). The notes discuss narration and unity, mass, coherence. Of importance, though grammar school students used this book, the student notes cover material in the college rhetoric textbooks I discuss. Preparatory school students may have used this text.
Figure 20: From Writing Paragraphs in Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell's Holt Handbook (1986). The pages show the last half of the book's treatment of narration and the first half of its treatment of description. Like Kellogg's Rhetoric, published eighty-three years earlier, the section uses as much space providing models as it does describing how to write such paragraphs.
Fig. 21: Rules 105-125 in John F. Genung's *Outlines of Rhetoric* (1893).
Fig. 22: Excerpt from Contents of the first edition of Garland Greever and Easley S. Jones's *Century Handbook* (1918). Note that almost each section includes a set of exercises. Additionally, sections 99 and 100 include more exercises.
Fig. 23: Rules 183-189 in Woolley's *Handbook* (1926). Unlike *Century*, Woolley included rules and did not include exercises for each rule.
Fig. 24: Excerpt from Table of Exercises and Detailed Synopsis of the Numbered Rules in the third edition of Woolley's *New Handbook of Composition* (Woolley and Scott, 1926). Note that the handbook includes 108 exercises for its 350 rules.
Fig. 25: The Reference Chart in Woolley, Scott and Tressler's *Handbook of Writing and Speaking* (1944), showing its similarity to Woolley's handbook, with its 350 rules.
Fig. 26: Correction chart, Tabular View of Principal [sic] Rules, from Woolley's *New Handbook of Composition* (Woolley and Scott, 1926).
Fig. 27: The correction chart in the first edition of Garland Greever and Easley S. Jones's *Century Handbook of Writing* (1918), showing 99 of the 100 rules.
Fig. 28: The correction chart in the second edition of Garland Greever and Easley S. Jones's *Century Handbook of Writing* (1922), showing how the authors compacted the first edition's 100 rules into 55 rules.
Fig. 29: Student-inscribed proofreading chart in A. S. Hill's *Principles of Rhetoric* (1895).
Fig. 30a: Common Problems and Proof Marks in the back cover of the first edition of Albert H. Marckwardt's *Scribner Handbook of English* (1940).
Fig. 30b: The correction chart in the front cover of the first edition of Albert H. Marckwardt's *Scribner Handbook of English* (1940).
Fig. 31: The correction chart from the first edition of John C. Hodge's *Harbrace Handbook of English* (1941).
Fig. 32: The correction chart from the second edition of Glenn Leggett, C. David Mead and William Charvart's *Prentice Hall Handbook for Writers* (1954).
Fig. 33: The correction chart in the front cover of Kirszner and Mandell’s Holt Handbook (1986).
Fig. 34: The correction chart (“Revision Guide”) from the back pages of Lester Faigley's *Penguin Handbook* (2003).
Fig. 35: The correction chart (“Revision Symbols”) from the third edition of Andrea Lunsford and Robert Connors's *The St. Martin's Handbook* (1995). Note that the facing page lists the twenty most common errors, among other issues.
Fig. 36: The correction chart ("Revision Symbols") in the fifth edition Andrea Lunsford's *The St. Martin's Handbook*. The revision symbols face a reference page for multilingual writers, instead of the twenty most common errors, as in previous editions.
§ 2. Men, being endowed with social dispositions, naturally desire to interchange the ideas received in the manner above described. Brutes, also, particularly those of gregarious habits, are at times actuated by a similar impulse to make known their feelings to each other. Now in both these cases some medium of communication is necessary; and we find that the ingenuity of man has devised four means more or less adapted to the purpose, the first two of which the instinct of the lower orders of creation has led them also to employ. These are as follows:—

I. Gestures. By these are meant the movements of the body or its members. In the case of brutes, they are often so expressive as to leave no doubt as to the predominant emotion. Thus, in the bellowing of doves we see love exemplified; in the lion lashing his sides with his tail, and the cat raising her back at the sight of an enemy, we have unmistakable evidences of anger; and in the horse depressing his ears backwards, of fear. Man, having generally other and better means of communication, seldom uses gestures alone, though he often employs them to illustrate and enforce what he says. When other means, however, are wanting, he is able with their aid alone to express his sentiments; as in the case of the sick who have lost the power of speech, or of one attempting to make himself understood by those with whose language he is unacquainted. It is surprising, indeed, to see how perfectly persons practised in the use of gestures can communicate even complicated trains of thought and long series of facts. Good pantomimists will make the plot of a theatrical piece just as intelligible to an audience as if it were developed by dialogue.

§ 5. What desire results from man's social disposition? Is this desire confined to the human race? How many means of communication has man devised? How many and which are employed by brutes also?

What is the first medium of communication? What is meant by gestures? Give instances of the use of gestures by brutes, and mention the emotions they indicate. For what purpose does man generally use gestures? Do they ever serve alone to express his sentiments? Give instances. What may be communicated by gestures? Give an instance. What is said of the action of the Greeks and Romans? How far was it carried on the stage? What point was debated by Cicero and Roscius?

Fig. 37: Excerpt from History of the English Language in G. P. Quackenbos's Advanced Course of Composition and Rhetoric (1864). Knowing the history of the English language, Quackenbos argues, will help students cultivate an appreciation and interest in the language.
Fig. 38: Excerpt from the preface of G.P. Quackenbos's *Advanced Course of Composition and Rhetoric* (1864), showing how Quackenbos intends students to use his handbook.
The aim of the work in English is two-fold: First, to secure accurate, vigorous and graceful expression of thought. Second, to cultivate a taste for good literature.

1. II.—English Words, a, 60. Full.
   a. A study of Anglo-Saxon, Latin, French and Greek derivatives and synonyms. This course is designed to form an intermediate step between grammar and rhetoric, and aims to make the student familiar with the elements entering into the growth and present use of the English language.
   Every day, 10:30 to 11:30. R. 25.
   Anderson's Study of English Words.

2. III.—Rhetoric a, 60. Full.
   a. Principles of style conducive to logical, accurate and effective expression of thought; frequent original essays and practical exercises.
   Every day, 10:30 to 11:30. R. 25.

3. IV.—Rhetoric, a, 60. Full.
   a. Continuation of course 2, principles of invention, sentence structure, paragraph structure and planning essays. One essay each week.
   Every day, 9:30 to 10:30. R. 25.
   Genung's Outlines of Rhetoric, Part II.

4. II.—Literature, a, 60. Full.
   a. Advanced course in essay writing. Three essays and frequent exercises; lectures on principles pertaining to exposition and argumentation. English prose. The student is required to formulate the theme, to make analysis and study the elements and qualities of style in each of the following: Webster's second “Battle of Bunker Hill” oration; Burke's “On Conciliation with America”; Carlyle's “Essay on Burns.”
   Every day, 2:00 to 3:00. R. 25.

5. III.—American Literature, a, 60. Full.
   a. Brief summary of the greater movements in the history of

Fig. 39: Excerpt from the 1897-1898 SDAC course bulletin, showing descriptions of the courses in the rhetoric sequence and the texts utilized in each course.
Fig. 40: Excerpt from 1891-1892 SDAC course bulletin, explaining the content sequence of the composition and rhetoric sequence.
Fig. 41: Student inscriptions inside the front cover of the first edition of Harbrace indicate that someone used the text to help write a job application letter.
Fig. 42: The correction chart in the eighth edition of *Harbrace*, showing the handbook's then thirty-four rules and six divisions.
Fig. 43: Excerpt from Contents of the second edition of *Scribner Handbook* (1948), showing sections about research writing and business writing.
Fig. 45: The 35 rules and six major divisions of *Writer's Harbrace*, as shown in the front cover.
TO THE INSTRUCTOR

The Harbrace Handbook is a guide to the correction of student themes and also a text for use in class. It presents well-known subject matter in a more usable form, and thus eases the instructor's task of grading papers. The book contains only thirty-four major sections. To determine the sections actually needed (and consequently the numbers to appear in the correction chart), twenty thousand freshman themes have been tabulated according to the corrections marked by sixteen instructors. These representative instructors—men who have been trained and who have taught English in as widely scattered parts of the country as Massachusetts, New York, Illinois, Colorado, North Carolina, Texas, and California—have determined by their practice the thirty-four sections into which the handbook is divided. The subdivisions treated under the major sections have been determined in the same way.

Few Numbers. Although the major rules (numbers) of the correction chart are few, they include everything to which instructors commonly refer in correcting themes. Other rules less frequently used have not been overlooked. They are subordinated logically to the thirty-four major rules and may be found readily by reference to the detailed Index. If the individual instructor wishes to have any of these conveniently before him, he may add them in the blanks provided at the right of the chart on the inside cover.

1 The ten errors most frequently marked are those treated under sections 12 (Comma), 18 (Spelling), 20 (Pronouns), 21 (Apostrophe), 22 (Omission of Words), 21 (Wenliness), and 19 (Good Use).
Fig. 47: Excerpts from To The Instructor and from To The Student in the first edition of Harbrace.
Fig. 48: The Twenty Most Common Errors from *St. Martin's* (5th ed.; Lunsford 14-15). This figure also shows the brief, cross-referenced explanation for the most common rule.
Fig. 50: Common Errors and cross references from inside the back cover of Faigley's *Penguin Handbook*. The extensive list implies that students are error-bound.
Fig. 51: Questions 9-20 and answers to questions 1-13 of the student tutorial in A Note to Students in the New St. Martin's Handbook.
Fig. 52: Excerpt from the eighth edition of Harbrace, showing trite, derogatory language that implies that writing is either correct or incorrect, ignoring rhetoric (Hodges 286-287).
Fig. 53: Excerpt from Variety in *Writer's Harbrace* (2001), showing more sensitive language and the remnants of a corrective tone.
Fig. 54: Excerpt from Varying Sentence structures in St. Martin's (Lunsford 722-723). The positive language in this section represents the nurturing tone of the text. Also note the blue cross-references in the margins.
Fig. 55: Excerpt from Variety in the second edition of the New Century Handbook (692-693).

The explanations in this section are somewhat neutrally toned. The text uses visual elements in each section, such as a FAQ callout box. Additionally and unfortunately, the text also retains audio and video hyperlinks that most likely appear on the ancillary CD-ROM.
Figure 56: The major book divisions located inside the front cover of *Penguin* (2nd ed.).
Fig. 57: Excerpt from the fifth edition of St. Martin's (2003), showing some of the handbook's discussion of how to incorporate visual elements into arguments.
Fig. 58: Excerpt from *Penguin*, showing how the text incorporates visual elements in its explanations, here, of writing with a purpose and, thus EDNA (Faigley 66-67).
Fig. 59: Section 21b: Books in MLA-style works cited of *The Penguin Handbook* (1st ed.). The visual design and flow chart-styled explanations help make this section more accessible and more readable to students (Faigley 366-367).
Fig. 60: Excerpt from Using and Citing Sources in Writer’s Harbrace. Bibliographic citation explanations written in paragraph form, though condensed and succinct, make interpretation of the entries difficult (Hodges, et al. 240-241).
Fig. 61: Excerpt from Documenting Sources MLA Style in *St. Martin's Handbook*. Though these explanations of bibliographic entries use some visual explanations, most of the content comes from cramped paragraphs. (Lunsford 422-423).
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