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Classical rhetoric and contemporary composition at work: A study of editorialists and their writing

Kelvin, Patricia Rosemary, Ph.D.

The Ohio State University, 1992
CLASSICAL RHETORIC AND CONTEMPORARY COMPOSITION AT WORK:
A STUDY OF EDITORIALISTS AND THEIR WRITING

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Patricia Rosemary Kelvin, B.S., M.A.

The Ohio State University
1992

Dissertation Committee:
Andrea A. Lunsford
Kitty O. Locker
Nan Johnson

Approving Authority:
Advisor
Department of English
For My Dearest Husband, Scott

and

My Best Boy, Taylor
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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VITA

January 31, 1945 .................................................. Born—London, England

1966 ................................................................. B.S., University of California, Davis, California

1968-70 ............................................................... Publicity Director, School of Creative Arts, San Francisco State College, San Francisco, California

1970-72 ............................................................... Medical Editor and Research Associate, Tufts - New England Medical Center, Boston, Massachusetts

1972-74 ............................................................... Public Relations Director, Childrens Hospital of Orange County, Orange, California

1974-1985 ............................................................. Consultant, Patricia R. Kelvin & Associates, California and Oregon

1987 ................................................................. M.A., Department of English, Humboldt State University, Arcata, California

1988-Present ........................................................ Graduate Teaching and Administrative Associate, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio
FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: English

Studies in Rhetoric: Andrea A. Lunsford, Nan Johnson, H. Lewis Ulman, and Edward P. J. Corbett; Business and Technical Communication: Kitty O. Locker; the Teaching of Writing: Thomas E. Gage, Karen Carlton, and John Schafer; American Literature: Steven Fink
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The Star Tribune, newspaper of the Twin Cities, has an opening for an editorial writer. The person filling this position will write on issues ranging from international to local and may pay special attention to subjects of concern to communities of color ....

The position requires superior writing and analytical skills, strong individual initiative, and demonstrable ability to write persuasive opinion essays.

—Ad in Editor and Publisher, (March 9, 1991)

In 1963, in their examination of research in the young field of composition, Richard Braddock, Richard Lloyd-Jones, and Lowell Schoer asked questions which to them “seem[ed] fundamental in the teaching and learning of composition but apparently ha[d] gone almost untouched by careful research” (52). In the research agenda they were suggesting for the profession, they asked—

How do the kinds of writing which adults compose vary with their occupations and other factors?

What forms of discourse have the greatest effect on other types of writing? For example does writing poetry help a writer of reports?

What is involved in the act of writing?

Of what does skill in writing really consist?

What is the effect on writing of having the student compose his paper for different kinds of readers?
At which levels of maturation does it seem appropriate to introduce the various rhetorical elements of writing?

What are the effects of the various kinds and amounts of reading on the quality and kinds of writing a person does? (52-53)

Although Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer had asked about "the kinds of writing which adults compose," clearly their focus on pedagogy was the focus of composition. As the field evolved, so did the research agenda, but the focus remained pedagogical. So, for instance, after they had reviewed the work of the intervening 15 years, in 1978 Charles Cooper and Lee Odell offered new questions for the profession to ask, questions, however, that continued to focus on classroom pedagogy.

What do we mean by competence in writing?

How can we best categorize diverse pieces of written discourse?

What are the practices that allow skillful student and professional writers to evolve successful pieces of written discourse?

What can we learn from observing successful writing teachers?

How can we draw upon other disciplines such as developmental psychology to help us refine and pursue the questions we are beginning to ask?

What new procedures seem especially suited to our new questions? (16)

Understandably, most of the answers to these questions of composition research emerged from the classroom. Only recently have scholars turned to the arenas of government, business, and industry where individuals write, for example, reports, proposals, and correspondence that support the work of their organizations, forms that are taught in business and technical writing.
classes. But despite the literary tradition that infuses English departments, surprisingly little work has been undertaken to answer these questions among those whose profession is writing, such as poets, novelists, dramatists, speech writers, or journalists. Without knowledge of these writers, our picture of composition and about the processes of writers, is incomplete. As a participant in the evolving research agenda that began almost 30 years ago with Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer, I am suggesting that we should now ask questions that vary slightly from Cooper and Odell's by focusing more explicitly on writers outside the classroom.

What do we mean by skill in writing?
How can we best categorize diverse groups of writers?
What can we learn from observing successful writers?
What are the practices that allow skillful student and professional writers to evolve successful pieces of written discourse?
How can we draw upon other disciplines such as sociology to help us refine and pursue the questions we are beginning to ask?
What new procedures seem especially suited to our new questions?

In this study, I attempt to answer these questions for one group of writers—newspaper editorialists. That editorial writers have not been studied previously could be reason enough to examine how, what, and why they write. However, mindful of Glenn J Broadhead and Richard C. Freed’s tocsin that “theory trickles down to classroom practice” (131), I believe that editorial writing is particularly worth the compositionist’s attention. The newspaper editorialist—in crafting socially-motivated persuasive opinion
essays—may come closest among professional writers to providing a model for the work undertaken by many composition students. For more than 100 years, literary models—writing by famous writers, prose fiction and non-fiction—have served as exemplars for student writing. Today's student writer may be asked to read and emulate the writings of E.B. White, Joan Didion, George Orwell, and Annie Dillard. Yet the students are asked to write brief essays, under constraints of time and form, on topics emanating from teacher assignment. The models, on the other hand, are more likely written by creative writers, who, for the most part, select their own topics, choose the form in which they will write, write at greater length, and have far longer time frames in which to write. Editorialists, however, are more likely to write short pieces, under tight deadlines, in constrained forms, and from a range of topics which is rarely in the writer's control. While Jonathan Swift or Joyce Carol Oates, for example, are described as writing literary essays, editorialists explicitly write persuasive, opinion essays—a favored genre in composition classes. Learning more about editorialists and their writing, I intuited, could inform classroom practice.

This dissertation attempts to draw on editorial writing for such insights by exploring the following questions.

- How do editorial writers generate their texts?
- In what ways are these writers and their writings similar to and different from other writers described in the literature?
- What are the contexts in which the editorial writers under study write?
- How does technology affect their writing?
- What kinds of collaboration are characteristic of editorial
writing?

• What observable processes, activities, and behaviors do these editorial writers exhibit?

• To what extent are these processes, activities, and behaviors described by any existing model proposed in composition studies or rhetoric?

• In what ways do the processes, activities, and behaviors of editorial writers differ—both from the models and from one another?

Answering these questions about editorial writers—by learning how a group of previously unstudied writers composes—may provide answers about how student writers compose or could compose.

The official narrative which emplots the recent history of composition studies suggests that until Janet Emig's watershed study of the composing processes of twelfth graders in 1971, only the end products of composing or writing were systematically or seriously considered. Yet composers of texts as well as their compositions have long been a subject, if not of study, certainly of discussion. Who wrote, what they wrote, why they wrote, and both how they wrote and how they were able to write concerned Isocrates, Cicero, and Quintilian\(^1\) just as such questions concern compositionists today. Thus, we learn from James Britton \textit{et al.} about the development of writing abilities in children from a study which began in 1966, and we find Plutarch describing the young Cicero:

\begin{quote}
For as soon as he was of an age to begin to have lessons, he became so distinguished for his talent, and got such a name and
\end{quote}

\(^1\) While these ancient Greeks are most likely to be known to those of us in composition and rhetoric, the teaching, learning, and writing of the young have historical antecedents in many other cultures whose classical works remain untranslated into English.
reputation amongst the boys, that their fathers would often visit the school that they might see young Cicero, and might be able to say that they themselves had witnessed the quickness and readiness in learning for which he was renowned. (704)

Caldwell, writing in 1837, describes Addison as having “addicted himself chiefly to the study of the writers of his native tongue...” (217).

Truman Capote observed that “Henry James is the maestro of the semicolon. Hemingway is a first-rate paragrapher. From the point of view of ear, Virginia Woolf never wrote a bad sentence” (The Paris Review Interviews, 287).

As these brief examples suggest, in the past, attention was paid the most competent and most recognizable writers. Current interest in composition, however, has allowed and encouraged the study of all who write, primarily students. In fact, following the social and intellectual upheavals of the 1960s, as composition studies looked beyond the products of writers to their processes, it focused almost exclusively on academic and school writing. By the 1980s, the scope had expanded as compositionists explored workplace writing—in the non-academic settings of lawyer’s office, social service agency, and laboratory workbench—designated in academia as professional writing. Drawing on the research of J. C. Mathes and Dwight Stevenson; Lee Odell and Dixie Goswami; Broadhead and Freed; Jack Selzer; Barbara Couture; Kitty O. Locker; Jone Rymer; James Paradis, David Dobrin, and

---

2 Unless otherwise stated, I use the word “process,” here and throughout, in its Webster’s definition as “a series of actions or operations conducing to an end” not to refer to a theoretical view of a writing model.

3 By tradition in academia, writing in the professions or in business and industry has been designated as “professional writing.” The writing of those who are principally employed as writers is not so designated. Thus, using the term “professional writer” can be confusing. When I refer to “professional writers,” I am talking about those whose principal profession is writing.
Richard Miller; Lisa Ede and Andrea Lunsford; and Christine Barabas among others, work-world writing practices are now taught in the classroom—particularly in business, professional, and technical writing classes. Students learn, for example, how to write an engineering report collaboratively; how to write letters and memoranda that respond to “corporate culture”; how desk-top publishing enables the rhetoric of design.

While our knowledge of workplace writing is growing rapidly, however, we do not know if what we have learned is applicable or relevant to professional writers. In particular, we do not know if the practices of professionals who “write persuasive opinion essays” is applicable to the composition classes which teach students to write such essays. To establish a foundation for the study of editorial writers and their writing, this chapter first looks at the state of knowledge in the three “worlds” of composition I have identified above: classroom or school-based writing; writing in the workplace—that is, writing that supports the principal work of the organization or individuals; and the writing of professionals—writing that is the principal work of the writer, the principal means by which he or she earns a living. Then I will turn to a review of what is known about editorial writing and explain how my study extends that knowledge.
Writing in the Classroom: Student as Writer

We have long been convinced that the required first-year writing course in "English Composition" or "rhetoric," under whatever name, can provide the most important of all college experiences....If in their first college writing course [students] have learned how to learn, if they have learned how to read and think and write on their own, if they have learned the joys of such learning, they will almost certainly continue to educate themselves from that point on.

—Wayne C. Booth and Marshall W. Gregory, xi

The vast majority of research on writing is based on classroom writing and student writers. For more than 25 years, many thousands of articles and presentations4 have dealt with understanding why and how students write and how they can be taught and can learn how to write better: whether a second grader writing a first story, a college basic writer, or an advanced student in a technical or business writing class. Writing classes have a

---

4 The editors of more than 18 professional journals which examine issues of classroom composition joined in a think tank at the March 1992, meeting of the College Conference on Composition and Communication: College Composition and Communication, (first published in 1949), the 25-year-old journal Research in the Teaching of English, the seven-year-old Written Communication, Teaching English in the Two Year College, and the more recent Rhetoric Review, Journal of Advanced Composition, Freshman English News, Writing on the Edge, Computers and Composition, The Journal of Basic Writing, Journal of Teaching Writing, Journal of Second Language Writing, The Writing Instructor, The Writing Center Journal, Writing Program Administration, Rhetoric Society Quarterly, Composition Chronicle, and Radical Teacher. Not included in this group but also focusing on teaching writing are English Journal, (first published in 1910 and directed toward secondary school teaching), Language Arts (the journal of primary education in English), the Bulletin of the Association for Business Communication, Journal of Business Communication, Technical Communication Quarterly (formerly Technical Writing Teacher) Journal of Business and Technical Writing, Journal of Technical Writing and Communication. To this list might also be added those journals which include articles relating to the teaching of writing within a broader editorial scope: Technical Communication, pre/Text, Rhetoric and Philosophy, Rhetorica, Speech Communication Quarterly, Management Communication Quarterly, and The ADE Bulletin. To these can, of course, be added the hundreds of local, regional, and national conferences held each year which also deal with the teaching of writing.
Even when they involve preparing a student for a future career that will require writing, classroom instruction in writing has different goals and different motivations from workplace writing. To understand the nature of a field whose underlying purpose had been teaching, a number of scholars have attempted to categorize the various approaches to pedagogy foregrounding classroom behavior or the philosophy and content of textbooks, notably Richard Fulkerson in 1979 and James Berlin in 1982. In his taxonomy, Berlin identified a group of researchers whose work he named "the New or Epistemic Rhetoric" because he believed they shared an understanding that "knowledge is not a static entity available for retrieval. Truth is dynamic and dialectical, the result of a process involving the interaction of opposing elements" (773-74).

This increasing sense that "knowledge is not static" has engendered the expectation that as well as teaching students how to do the kind of writing that they will need to do in college, the college composition class will also teach critical thinking and writing skills that will be useful out of college as well. Underlying this assumption is the belief that definable processes are the foundation of and common to all meaningful writing.

While Berlin had categorized textbooks, Lester Faigley categorized,

5 Kitty Locker makes the point that the real difference between freshman composition and business communication courses is that the former include personal expression and stress the logical analysis of impersonal questions, while the latter stress responding to institutional problems in a manner which is psychologically adequate as well as logically sound. (19)

6 While the ideologically hopeful might argue that student writing is the student's "job," writing classes are short-term, offer no remuneration, fulfill arbitrary requirements, and are based on teacher assignment.
instead, the approach to research various scholars had undertaken. Faigley suggests that three competing “perspectives” on these processes have emerged since the late 1960s. He described as the “expressive view” the work of William Coles, Peter Elbow, Ken Macrorie, and Donald Stewart who value “authentic voice” and value the “essential qualities of Romantic Expressionism—integrity, spontaneity, and originality” (529). A second category of research, Faigley calls the “cognitive view” and draws on the approaches and methodologies of education, cognitive-developmental psychology, and cognitive psychology. In this group, he assigned Janet Emig, James Britton et al., Barry Kroll, Andrea Lunsford, and Linda Flower and John Hayes. He suggested that “many writing teachers believed cognitive research could provide a ‘deep structure’ theory of the composing process, which in turn could specify how writing should be taught” (534). The third perspective he outlined as the social view...on the basis of one central assumption: [that] human language (including writing) can be understood only from the perspective of a society rather than a single individual. ...The focus of a social view of writing, therefore, is not on how the social situation influences the individual, but on how the individual is a constituent of a culture. (535)

Here he includes the diverse work of Patricia Bizell, David Bartholomae, Charles Bazerman, Shirley Brice Heath, and peripherally, Lee Odell and Dixie Goswami. Faigley’s delineation of a research-related taxonomy made room within the discipline for an understanding of composition which went beyond pedagogy, which recognized that not all writing takes place in the classroom nor for school-related assignments. Yet

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7 In the next section, I will discuss the work of Odell and Goswami and the others whose work in workplace writing pushed against the boundaries of the realm of composition.
research differences notwithstanding, for most of the hundreds of studies which might be divided by Faigley's taxonomy, when processes were considered and models developed to describe those processes, nearly all the models or concepts of writing were based on studies of school and academic writing. The "experienced writer" used in these studies is frequently a graduate student or other academician; the novice, a freshman—or other undergraduate anxious to earn pocket money or a better grade. Writing tasks for study have been teacher—or teacherly—assignments. Only gradually has composition ventured out of the classroom and into the workplace. Yet, Mary Ann Eiler makes a "clear distinction between procedures used to foster developmental writing in school and processes that characterize the writing acts of professional writers" (43). To cite just one example, while academic models were emphasizing the recursive nature of the writing process, Jack Selzer's study of "The Composing Processes of an Engineer" and Broadhead and Freed's Variables of Composition described linear models. Such first-hand knowledge about writing in the workplace is held in particular regard for contextualizing the teaching of workplace writing. Paul Anderson says Knowledge about the writing that is done on the job can be very helpful to teachers of career-related writing courses. These teachers can gain important insights into ways to design their courses by learning the purposes writers at work try to achieve, the circumstances under which these writers write, the expectations and conventions that pertain to writing at work,

However, much of their work was characterized by an opposition to classroom writing—academic vs. non-academic writing. By including the wide variety of theoretical approaches to the processes of writing, Faigley's taxonomy is particularly useful. While I would argue with Faigley's depiction of these theories of process as "competing," no doubt many of the exponents of these theories see themselves as in competition with one another.
the features that distinguish communications that succeed in that environment, and the composing processes writers customarily rely on there (presumably because those processes are efficacious).\textsuperscript{8} (75)

As Anderson suggests, the early studies of workplace writing, particularly those related to composition studies, were expected to inform pedagogy. But as the next section will show, research also changed the way writing at work was understood.

\textsuperscript{8} The unacknowledged danger in Anderson's assumption is that the composing processes "customarily relied on" may be not so much "efficacious" as they are customary.
Writing in the Workplace: Worker as Writer

The purpose of writing for impression rather than expression is the most essential distinction between business English and literature. . . . In the case of literature, the writer uses his own code and the reader learns it—or in other words, adjusts himself to the writer. The [business writer's] ideas and style must be governed by the reader's interest and point of view, [or] insofar as he is concerned, no message exists.

—George Burton Hotchkiss and Edward Jones Kilduff
(1924, 8)

Odell and Goswami were among the first in general composition studies to make a case for the study of nonacademic writing—for researchers to learn "about the variety of tasks adult, nonprofessional writers must perform and ... about the types of stylistic and substantive choices writers make or the reasons that govern a writer's choosing one alternative in preference to another" (1982, 202). Although Odell and Goswami's focus was adult, non-professional writers, their term "non-academic writing" came to mean all the work-related writing not done in college and university English departments, in contradistinction to "academic writing" which denoted writing that was done in colleges and universities, widely assumed to be the same as writing in English departments. This is, however, a false dichotomy because what is called "academic writing" is actually the workplace writing of the academician, a workplace with its own styles, conventions, and culture. 9

For example, after they have conducted some scholarly inquiry, academic

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9 While the academic workplace may be the one with which we are the most familiar, it should not be the standard by which the writing of other workplaces is measured. Having established that classroom writing and workplace writing are different, it is important to observe that academic workplace writing is different from academic classroom writing, as well as being different from the writing of other workplaces.
writers in the humanities report their findings in lengthy papers (usually exceeding 1000 words), on their own, or with one or rarely more trusted colleagues, for audiences of similarly-minded academicians. The goals of writing are publication or presentation (which are considered by many measures of stature), and the writers expect to see their names on their published work. A review of the MLA bibliography demonstrates that only the most active scholars will publish more than two articles in a year. Blind reviewing is the accepted means of editorial response, and an article will most likely be written many months before it is ultimately—if at all—published. University scientists, on the other hand, may write far shorter articles with a greater number of colleagues.

To cite a different example, editorialists are writers within an organization writing for a general audience outside the organization. By convention, editorials are unsigned. In practice, internal response is in the hands of an editor who has ultimate authority over a text; external response is usually a signed letter to the editor which may also be published, but instead might be a phone call by an affected party to the writer, editor, or publisher. The pieces are short: 1000 words would be judged long. Depending on the size of the newspaper, a writer may write anywhere from 50 to more than 300 editorials a year and takes for granted that all will be published.

Other examples of these kinds of differences have been reported. In Worlds of Writing, Carolyn Matalene’s compilation of essays on workplace writing, Kristin Woolever explains that different discourse communities not only have different techniques of writing and different standards of
excellence but different ways of making knowledge. In a study of a large metal and plastics fabrication company, Kitty O. Locker identified nearly 50 different kinds of documents "written by people at almost every level of every division in the company," documents written for differing purposes and different audiences, written in response to different rhetorical situations (What Writers Write 124). Obviously, to understand the writing of other workplaces we must learn about their styles, conventions, and cultures.

In 1983, Anderson, Brockmann, and Miller described

scholarly research in technical and scientific communication [as]
lack[ing] both the theoretical rationale that provides problems and methods and the academic standing that provides motivation" due to Aristotelian distinction between rhetoric and science on the one hand, and on the other hand, in the uneasy situating of functional composition in belletristic English departments following the dissociation of English from speech in the early part of this century. (8)

"As a result," they said, "very little serious scholarly work has been produced ... [and that] practical research by the pedagogical and professional subdisciplines .... [is] largely intuitive and often repetitious" (9). They suggest that the essays in [their] volume also hint at certain themes that we might expect to become increasingly prominent in future research. ... [T]echnical and scientific communication should be studied contextually—in terms of the disciplines that employ it, of the historical circumstances in which it has arisen and developed, of the offices and laboratories and shops in which it is produced and used; ... should focus on connected discourse, not on isolated words and sentences; ... [and should examine] the difficulty of making clear and useful distinctions between scientific and technical discourse, and between them and academic writing, freshman composition, functional writing, and other commonly used categories. (13)

And as researchers have examined the forms and formats of workplace
writing in the past, increasingly, researchers are examining the ramifications of workplace contexts: studies, for example, on what kinds of writing are done in organizations—letters, memoranda, and reports—e.g., Bennett and Olney; Faigley, et al.; Storms; Paradis, Dobrin, and Bower; Anderson; and Locker. Others have surveyed issues of quality, such as wordiness, sentence structure, spelling clarity, organization, punctuation, word usage. (Goodin and Swerdlow, Stine and Skarzenski among others)

As Anderson, Brockmann, and Miller suggested, how people write on the job, rather than what they write, has received increasing attention. In summarizing his own work and 50 other surveys of writing on-the-job, Anderson concluded that

1. Writing consumes a substantial portion of the working day for almost all college-educated workers. ...On average 20%. (30-31)

2. As much time as college-educated workers spend writing, they generally spend more in oral communication. (32)

3. When deciding whether to communicate in writing or orally, workers may be influenced by their apprehensions concerning the alternative channels available. (32)

From their experience, Lee Odell, Dixie Goswami, Anne Herrington, and Doris Quick suggest that writers in non-academic settings

10 Despite the increasing understanding of the rhetorical and cultural elements of workplace writing, and despite the fact that computers are increasingly governing matters of form, many business and technical writing textbooks are still based on the proper way to structure a letter, report, memorandum, or even a résumé, some even (in 1991 editions) reminding students to make erasures cleanly.

11 They also distinguish (though perhaps unintentionally) between professional writers and writers in the professions when they suggest that "teachers and researchers should get outside the classroom and look at the writing people do in non-academic settings, writing that is rarely published or distributed widely" [my emphasis] but that is central to one's success in a given job or profession" (18).
... often have detailed knowledge about their audiences and have developed a repertoire of strategies for dealing with their audiences. Further, these writers can usually assume that their writing will actually be read by someone who can, in fact, be informed or persuaded and that the reader may well be dependent on the writer's ability to inform or persuade. (19)

They identify categories of reasons for choices in writing which range from understandings of audience, to reflections of organizational culture, to perceptions of task (27-30).

Anderson's survey of surveys also examined research about individual writer's activities and processes beyond those informed by organizational setting. Thus he states:

Workers devote a substantial effort to each of these three stages of the composing process: planning, drafting, and revising, (though he cites Roundy and Mair's study in which "none [of the subjects] 'invented'—that is none searched for or created new knowledge when writing." ) (48)

He also reported some baseline understandings of those who write at their jobs. For example, writers spend different amounts of time writing and write in different places. Many collaborate, use word processors, or dictate. Some workers often write under pressure of deadlines (49-53).

Studies of individual writing professionals—both those for whom writing supports their principal roles and those for whom writing is the principal role—have been perhaps even fewer in number, but have probably engendered far broader assumptions about the nature of workplace writing practices and processes. While Jack Seltzer, for example, explicitly states that his study concerns the "Composing Processes of an Engineer," [emphasis mine] his work is frequently characterized as representing the composing process of all engineers, if not all of those in technical or scientific fields.
Only recently, Couture has argued for recognizing rhetorical categories for professional writing as a basis for research, differentiating, for instance, among engineering, administrative, and technical/professional writing.

Engineering writing respond[s] to professional values of scientific objectivity and professional judgment as well as to corporate interests. Administrative writing reflects the locus of decision-making authority and promotes institutional identity. Technical/professional writing aims to accommodate audience needs through complying with professional readability standards. (5)

Because there are so few context-based studies of workplace writing (most notably Broadhead and Freed, Couture, Cross, Brown, Doheny-Farina, and the Odell, Goswami, and Herrington classic), it is no wonder that their works are seized on as exemplars despite their limited scope. In his ethnographic study of the writing of a two-page executive letter in an insurance company, Geoffrey Cross described impediments to writing inherent in organizational settings. Broadhead and Freed examined the revision practices of two writers working on eight proposals in a management consulting firm, concluding that the recursive processes and strategies associated with Flower and Hayes's cognitive process model are used on the job, as are highly staged linear processes. Spilka, Brown, and Barabas have all examined the work of writers in technical settings, Barabas noting that

the knowledge needed to transcend the immediate rhetorical situation and the foresight needed to sidestep political snares are usually acquired as one gains experience and moves up the administrative ladder. (66)

In their protocol studies of a wider range of ten writers ("representing college-level advising, law, and positions in middle management, politics, public relations, and scientific research"), Thralls, Blyler, and Ewald conclude
that contextual development varies with the writer's perception of audience.

However, nearly all the studies of workplace writing have excluded the work of what I am calling professional writers. Paul Anderson specifically states that when he

.... review[ed] the entire corpus of published surveys of writing in the workplace ... to summarize the general conclusions we may draw from those surveys, (5) ... excluded from this summary are surveys that concern the writing done by people who are employed as writing specialists, such as technical writers and editors. (79n)

And although academic interest in professional writing is supported by such journals as the Journal of Business Communication, Journal of Business and Technical Communication, the Bulletin of the Association of Business Communication, and the Technical Communication Quarterly (formerly Technical Writing Teacher), 12 many of the articles in these journals examine classroom concerns or applications and feature studies of workplace writing. They do not usually examine the work of those whose principal employment role is writing.

Writing in the Workplace: Writer as Worker

And surely if the purpose be in good earnest, not to write at leisure that which men may read at leisure, but really to instruct and suborn action and active life, these Georgics of the mind, concerning the husbandry and tillage thereof are no less worthy than the heroical descriptions of virtue, duty, and felicity.
—Frances Bacon, The Advancement of Learning. (70)

The strong historical association of English departments with the

12 Technical Communication the journal of the Society for Technical Communication thoroughly covers the technical writing professional. It is, however, not widely held by university libraries, notably not OSU's.
teaching of technical writing\textsuperscript{13} accounts for the stress on the activities, practices, and processes of technical writers. In fact, when Couture discusses career writers [her emphasis] she is referring "to those professionals in organizations who write on technical/professional subjects for a living" (26). In identifying the Society for Technical Communication (with 15,000 members) as "the major professional organization of practicing career writers" (27), she essentially eliminates from consideration professional career writers whose affiliation is with the 11,200-member International Association of Business Communicators,\textsuperscript{14} the 14,983-member Public Relations Society of America (whose budget of $5.2 million is more than all the other associations' combined), the 12,000-member Women in Communications, and the 19,000-member Society of Professional Journalists, the largest of them all.\textsuperscript{15} Studies of professional technical writers [emphasis mine] have reified the concept of the distinct identities of the different discourse communities in the workplace. But from the minuscule body of studies on the work of professional writers such as novelists, poets, speech writers, or journalists—most notably the Writers at Work series—we don't even know if or how the

\textsuperscript{13} At The Ohio State University, for instance, technical writing for engineering students has been part of the English Department's curriculum for more than 50 years.

\textsuperscript{14} To further demonstrate the worlds of difference between entities which may appear the same from the vantage of academic English, I offer the following example. The Association for Business Communication, a 2,500 member organization, predominantly of academics, and the International Association of Business Communicators, an organization of working professionals, the high professional standards of each notwithstanding, and despite the fact that each deals with an established realm of business communication, have virtually nothing else in common: neither membership, nor focus, nor goals, nor common understanding of what "business communication" is.

\textsuperscript{15} There are literally hundreds of organizations of writing professionals, groups affiliated by subject of writing interest (e.g., chess, bowling, or Pacific travel), genre of writing (e.g., poetry, journalism, public relations), ethnicity of writer (e.g., Asian, Jewish, Black, Arab), or geographic region (e.g., Hollywood, Pacific, Canada).
concept of discourse communities applies to these groups. While the study of Odell et al. has relevance primarily to those whose writing supports their jobs, we can assume that some of Anderson’s findings should apply to the professional writer who must surely compose with a word-processor, write under deadline pressure, take more or less time to write a page than his or her colleagues, or differ in the time and place used for writing. Yet our evidence is only anecdotal, unsupported by extensive research. Cynthia Ozick does “write in daylight,” but says, “mainly I go through the night” (198). Gabriel Garcia Marquez “just work[s] from nine until two-thirty [in the afternoon] ... and cannot write in hotels or borrowed rooms or on borrowed typewriters” (330). And because we recognize the individuality of the literary or so-called creative writer, we don’t expect what is true for Ozick to be true for Garcia Marquez—or anyone else, for that matter. We read interviews with them or reports of their habits with curiosity, not assuming that the reported practices apply to all writers or even to all creative writers.

Nonetheless, the more than 120 interviews in the now nine-volume Paris Review Interviews, like the writings of the 55 subjects of Waldrep’s books, encourage a certain view of creative writing processes which serves as a basis for our expectations of other literary writers. Studies of journalistic writers are no exception. As in literature, we do know the biographical detail of distinguished journalists, whether from Shirley Biagi’s NewsTalk I: State-of-the-Art Conversations with Today’s Print Journalists, Who’s Who, or popular accounts. But because the emphasis in journalism education is primarily on information gathering, and only secondarily on the content and structure of the articles resulting from the information gathering, the writing
itself and the writing processes of journalists have been investigated by only a handful of researchers.

Research in journalism is considerably different from research in composition. Gerald Stone describes two major types of research in the newspaper industry: 

― (1) 'public' research by newspaper organizations and independent scholars and (2) 'proprietary' research by individual newspapers and the firms they hire." "Studies in the former group," he says, "are often fragmented. ... The extent and quality of the latter group are a matter of speculation since the material simply is not available for perusal" (13). Much of the latter relates to readership and financial questions. He suggests, however, a general outline of the patterns of scholarly research in journalism, which demonstrates that journalism research is more focused on issues of management than on individual writers or their processes.

Studies of editing have generally related to the role of newspaper editor as gatekeeper. Studies of writing have centered on newswriting style and content (see for example Burgoon, Burgoon, and Wilkinson). In a study that

16 I list these in full to demonstrate the considerable difference between areas of concern to researchers in composition and those in journalism. (1) What is right or wrong about how the newspaper industry operates; particularly in the content of newspapers serving the public? (2) Which are the important newspapers and who are (or were) the key figures guiding them? (3) How are the various departments of newspapers managed? (4) How are news articles produced? (5) What happens in the newspaper's internal selection process and what effect does that process have on the content of papers? (6) What major news topics are covered in newspapers? (7) Who does and does not read newspapers? (8) Can principles be found that will provide the optimum quality, circulation, or income for newspapers? (9) What is the newspaper's market position relative to other mass media? (10) What effect does newspaper content have on audiences? (11) Are there broad principles that explain individuals' or audiences' involvement with newspapers? (16)

17 Newswriting is a particular genre, with its own style and conventions. Comparing newswriting and editorial writing because they appear in the same publication would be akin to evaluating by the same standards a poem and a research article both appearing in CollegeEnglish.
underscores differences in evaluation of journalistic stories by graders\textsuperscript{18} with either English or journalistic background Dennis Jones demonstrated that graders with an English teaching background consistently chose the longest and wordiest stories. The number of errors, quality or interestingness of the writing had no impact on what was chosen the best. If the writing was concise, it was judged not as good as lengthier pieces. (28)\textsuperscript{19}

Only Robert Root, Beverly Pitts, Elizabeth Young, and Gary Schumacher \textit{et al.} in the studies discussed below have reported their findings on the processes of journalistic writers, and the Schumacher \textit{et al.} study used only journalism students as subjects. Each study considered "process" as defined by Flower and Hayes.

From interviews with six writers (a columnist, a reviewer, three critics, and a magazine editor) Robert Root attributes the differences in the processes of professional writers and students to "immersion in context which ... facilitates the generation of ideas, the revision of text, the use of resources in long-term memory, ...experience in expression, and development over time" (15). From her protocol analyses of eight newspaper reporters and five journalism students, Beverly Pitts developed a model of the news-writing process which demonstrates "the integrated sequence of writing the lead [the opening paragraph], the value of the lead-writing activity for the writer, the strong use of recall, the development of only short-term goals and plans, and the integrated use of rereading and editing as part of the writing process" (18).

\begin{footnotesize}

\textsuperscript{18} "Graders" are those assigning grades to a paper.

\textsuperscript{19} The hardest lesson I have tried to learn (and not always successfully) in making the transition from the world of the professional writer to the world of the academic writer is that what I would have regarded as clutter in my journalistic life is considered careful “unpacking” in my academic life.

\end{footnotesize}
Elizabeth Young undertook what she called an ethnographic study of three professional journalists, the results of which again emphasized the importance of the lead but also demonstrated the importance of "professional monitoring ... as the reporters juggled [their] numerous constraints" (ii). Schumacher et al. compared the processes of 24 journalism students writing news stories and editorials and concluded that the "Flower and Hayes model is applicable in a limited manner to journalistic writing" (390). Clearly then, the writing processes within newspapers have not been a research concern either for the industry itself nor the scholars who have studied them. Not only do we have little information about the processes and practices of any journalistic writers, we have even less about that branch of journalism which concerns itself with writing persuasive opinion essays—the editorial writer.

Most of the journalism-based scholarly studies undertaken on the newspaper's editorial page have been content analyses or have focused on the role of editorial endorsement on elections (Coombs, Counts, Robinson, Rystrom, and others). In English composition studies, Carol Berkenkotter has shown that audience concerns are implicit in genres such as the editorial (57), and Suzanne E. Jacobs, in a study of Christian Science Monitor editorials, has demonstrated that the reader's recognition of the genre's conventions about voice and level of formality, about structure, and the reader's prior knowledge facilitate efficient communication. She says "readers know where to look and what to listen for" (546). Statistical surveys (e.g., Kriehbaum, Hynds and Martin, Wilhoit and Drew) continue to delineate the demographic profile of the editorial writer. Sloan, Rystrom, and Mott have
each examined the history of the editorial page. Yet even as Rystrom details the history of the editorial page, his description of editorial writers remains prescriptive. Rystrom says editorial writers need a wide variety of interests, to be good reporters, to be good writers, to have integrity and purpose, and to have the desire to express an opinion (57-59). Chilton R. Bush's description, written some 50 years earlier than Rystrom's, while more eloquent, is no more explicit.

The editorial writer, in his relation to life, is both a critic and a teacher. He refines the half-truths annunciated [sic] by his artist colleagues who write dramatically and episodically for the first page. He trims down the sharp and jagged pieces of episodic and dramatic news to smoother nuggets of fact so they will fit into the reader's scheme of understanding. He gives proposition to events by lifting them out of the tumult of the moment and setting them down in the calmer background of the past. (7)

In newspaper circles, a popular definition of an editorial writer is someone who descends from the mountain after the battle and slays the wounded. A sound foundation for research, however, requires more than prescription, eloquence, or humor.

Editorial Writers

I'm assuming that there is no truth in the old city room adage that reporters become copyreaders when they can no longer see, and editorial writers when they can no longer think.

—The Masthead (Winter 1951-52, 38)

Who, then, or what are editorial writers? The editorial page is a mystery to many—even those who are intelligent newspaper readers. True, editorials, letters to the editor, columns, guest columns, syndicated columns, cartoons, and at The Wall Street Journal, film, book, theatre, and art criti-
cism, may all appear on the one or two pages most newspapers dedicate to opinion. What is further complicating for the individual outside journalism’s discourse community is the journalistic convention of describing as “editorial content” that which is not advertising—that which is managed by editors, whether news, sports, food, or fashion.

Yet editorials proper are a very specific genre. They are statements of the newspaper’s opinion on a given concern or issue. Their purpose(s) may be to inform, educate, persuade, and/or entertain. In most newspapers, they will be essays, rarely more than 750 words, located on the left side of the editorial page under a masthead which lists the names of the newspaper’s senior officials. At most newspapers, editorials are unsigned. Although a single individual may write the piece, editorials are said to articulate the institutional voice of the newspaper.20

Columns, by contrast, reflect the opinion of the individual whose name is attached to that piece of writing. Some columns are written by members of the newspaper’s editorial or news staff on an issue of particular concern to them or on a position dissenting from the newspaper’s. Guest columns (a frequent venue for academics and jurists) may be solicited or unsolicited pieces usually from non-journalist individuals who have some degree of expertise in the field about which they are expressing their opinion or concern. Syndicated columns are written regularly by experienced journalists whose work is distributed nationally by an agency, or syndicate, to news-

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20 The editorial’s “institutional voice” is not necessarily the same as the newspaper corporation’s voice. At many newspapers, publishers have increasingly less influence on their newspaper’s editorial positions. At newspapers with editorial boards, the editorial position most frequently represents the consensus of that board.
papers either for a fee based on the size of the newspaper's circulation or as part of a wire service contract. Signed columns may also be exchanged by newspapers in the same chain.

Letters to the editor are written either by individuals within a newspaper's circulation area on many subjects or an "out-of-towner" with a particular interest in some aspect of local life—e.g., a Floridian writing to The Columbus Dispatch about the kindly motorist who stopped on I-270 to help her change a flat tire. Editorial cartoons are either generated by a cartoonist on the newspaper's editorial page staff or are obtained through a syndication or exchange agreement.

The person in charge of the editorial page may have the title "editor of the editorial page(s)" or, at some newspapers, "editor." In general, when the editor of the editorial pages has the title "editor," he or she will have as a counterpart a "managing editor" or "executive editor" whose responsibilities are the news sections of the paper. Work functions on an editorial page include managing and training personnel; selecting material to appear in the newspaper; writing editorials; writing columns; editing the written work of others; laying out the page; writing headlines and captions for editorials, columns, and letters. Depending on the size of the newspaper, these functions may be in the hands of one or many individuals. At The Pottstown Mercury, for example, with an editorial page staff of one, that individual, Thomas Hylton, performs all of these functions and writes some 300 editorials each year besides. Editorial writers at The Dayton Daily News, which has a staff of three, write their own headlines and select the illustrations or photographs that will accompany their editorials. At the
Philadelphia Daily News, day-to-day management and editing is the role of the associate page editor. The Miami Herald has a large enough staff to accommodate one editor whose sole responsibility is the “letters to the editor,” another editor who lays out pages and writes headlines, seven writers in various fields of specialization, two senior editors, and a political cartoonist. The Orlando Sentinel employs two political cartoonists.

Newspapers with editorial staffs of some size will formalize an editorial board whose membership generally determines the newspaper’s editorial positions and (depending on the board) what subjects will or will not be written about. The constitution of editorial boards varies with the newspapers they staff. The political cartoonist (this year’s Pulitzer Prize winner for editorial cartooning and the first woman to win, Signe Wilkinson) is one of the more outspoken members of The Philadelphia Daily News’s editorial board. The letters editor is not part of the board at The Miami Herald. Some newspapers have experimented with community representatives on the board.

While this description sketches the current picture of the editorial page, the editorial section of the newspaper is not without its own history. Wm. David Sloan suggests that although commentary had been a regular feature of American newspapers since before the Revolutionary War, the first real editorial written by editors (rather than by newspaper printer-owners) appeared in the Connecticut Courant on October 28, 1783. The nineteenth century saw the emergence of strong, well-known editorial voices: Horace Greeley, Henry J. Raymond (co-founder of the New York Times and initiator of the Republican Party), William Lloyd Garrison, Charles A. Dana, Joseph
Pulitzer, and William Randolph Hearst. G. Cleveland Wilhoit and Dan G. Drew suggest that the editorials promoting Abraham Lincoln written by Joseph Medill, a partner in the *Chicago Tribune*, were instrumental in Lincoln's election (2). In the early twentieth century, however, the editorial and its writer "retreated into [the] anonymity" of conservative, corporately-owned newspapers (Rystrom 38-39).

This conservatism was apparent in both the constitution of editorial page staffs and the subjects of their editorials. In 1950, Hillier Kriegbaum surveyed the editors of 40 of "the country's leading editorial pages." He concluded that editorial writers bore out in practice the ideal that they should be mature individuals, experienced writers, and capable newspapermen.... Of 118 editorial page writers on whom information was submitted, 102 were college graduates ... an impressive record when one considers that many of these men were in their fifties and sixties and that college training was not as common when they were young as it is today. (25)

Sloan states that from 1917, when the first Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing was awarded,

Every winning editorial writer through 1956 who covered a political or economic topic (unless we consider F. Lauriston Bullard's 1927 winner, "We Submit" [sic] a political editorial) exhibited conservative or even reactionary tendencies, usually siding with the Republican Party. Strong nationalism or patriotism was also a hallmark of many winners. In the late 1950s, a shift took place. Editorials since then have been marked by liberalism, strongly supporting civil rights and liberties in the face of prevalent social or governmental attitudes. (xii)

Writing in *The Masthead*, the publication of the National Conference of Editorial Writers, in 1955, Donald P. Keith of the *Easton (PA) Express* reflected that shift:
How many of us, for instance, have made intellectually honest, dispassionate evaluations of the era’s climate of politico-social fear and insecurity, and of the demagogues who have been nourished to appalling strength by lack of understanding and lack of moral and ethical integrity on the national leadership levels? Are we incapable, involuntarily unable, or too politically biased to make such evaluations?

How many of our voices have been calm, orderly voices, commanding the respect of our readers, seeking that respect without compromise of conviction and principle, when we evaluate one of the symptoms of this illness, that pitiful and at the same time sinister figure, Joseph R. McCarthy, and the byproducts of what has come to be known as McCarthyism?

How many of us have had the courage and integrity to resist social and economic pressures, clandestinely or otherwise applied, to persist on our evaluation of these issues upon platforms of clinical objectivity, humanistic understanding, and constitutionality? (14-15)

While the politico-philosophical views of the editorial page began to shift in the 1950s, staffing patterns have shifted appreciably only in the past decade. According to Wilhoit and Drew, in 1988 “more than 16% are women, compared to only 7% a decade ago,” but only 2.8% of the respondents to their 1988 survey were members of ethnic minorities (10). They also report that “policies ... actively encourag[ing] women and minorities to apply for editorial writing jobs are more likely to exist at the large, publicly traded corporations than at the smaller privately owned newspapers” (11). The typical editorialist has 21 years experience—half of which is with the writer’s present newspaper—has a median age of 46, is married (80%), holds a baccalaureate degree (91%), and perhaps a graduate degree (45%) (9-12).

Akin to the surveys of writers on the job undertaken and examined by Anderson, Ernest C. Hynds and Charles H. Martin asked 133 editorial writers
"how they go about their work." They reported that 90% of their respondents agreed that ‘reflection on an idea’ [was] one of the essential steps in the editorial writing procedure ... and 74% agreed that research is a basic step. But only about 60% indicated that organization of materials is a specific step in the process, and only about 16% indicated that they make any sort of outline before writing” (778). The considerable differences in time frame between editorial writers and others whose work requires writing is demonstrable from Hynds and Martin’s study. In describing “the amount of time spent doing research for and the time actually writing ‘typical editorials,’” they state

Half the writers contacted (50%) said they spend between one and two hours doing research, and almost three-fifths (59%) said they spend an hour or more writing their editorials. Only 15% said they spend less than an hour doing research; 14% said they spend two to four hours, and 8% said they spend four or more hours. About a third indicated that they spend less than an hour in the actual writing process; 22% said they spend 20-39 minutes; 6% said they spend 1-19 minutes, and 6% said they spend 40-59 minutes. (778)

The profile of Max Frankel, formerly editorial page editor of The New York Times in 1981 (and now its Executive Editor) written by journalist Mark Stuart describes one senior writer’s processes—a process which suggests the collaborative peer-responding environment of contemporary composition practice.

At 2:45 Frankel closes the door to his office and begins to write the lead editorial for the next day’s paper—on the inaugural address.

The closed door is a message to everyone on the floor. Frankel is writing, so don’t talk to him. He writes with intense concentration, in his shirtsleeves, filling, smoking and refilling a briar pipe with Captain Black tobacco. He doesn’t turn his head when a door opens or closes, a paper or magazine is dropped on his desk, a secretary comes in with a fresh cup of tea. He takes no
calls.

Writing, he shifts in his chair, looks at his notes, consults a dictionary at his side. He sometimes talks to himself. He writes in staccato streaks, with long pauses between bursts of energy. He edits carefully, begins to fidget in his seat when he senses the deadline approaching.

At 5:05 p.m., he straightens up, stores the editorial, recalls it, goes over it line by line, making changes as he goes. He looks around, notices for the first time a visitor sitting behind him, and smiles.

“Deadline for the page is 7 p.m. I like two colleagues to go over my pieces, so I like to have it done before 6 at the latest, when we have to have a fit for the page.”

... At 6:30 p.m., Frankel is at the VDT looking at other people’s work. He reads an editorial on the perils of smoking that uses a health study out of Japan. He calls the writer, asks when the piece was written. Then he calls the science page and asks an editor if the study is still valid. Editorials, he points out, are rewritten often. (26)

The informal surveys of the American Press Institute conducted at their annual editorial page seminars describe an average (40+ hours) work week for respondents divided as follows: duty-related reading, 10 hours; research, 8 hours; writing and editing, more than 20, in-house meetings and conferences, 5 hours; community activities, 1 hour; with the remainder made up of activity in professional groups, management chores, proofs, or makeup.

Impending deadlines are, perhaps, the most critical consideration in an editorial writer’s day. However, the time-saving techniques submitted by participants in the API seminars also give us a sense of the editorial writer’s workday concerns and may further demonstrate the differences as well as some similarities between these writers and others who write on the job.
Some of their concerns relate to how an editorialist can best generate the facts he or she will need which may be specific to the editorial writer: for example, set up a strong relationship with the library staff; make better use of library resources, keep an idea file, use the data banks more for research, save interesting passages, local or wire, in your computer file; and use information from Washington think tanks. Other suggestions respond to saving time in producing editorials but might be applicable to any writer: outline before you write; have your data-processing people customize your terminal for your purposes; write “duty”\textsuperscript{21} editorials ahead of time; work on your computer proficiency. Yet other suggestions relate to the writer as worker and could have broad applicability: make coffee only once, in a pot big enough for the whole day; get in early for productive time before the hubbub begins; make phone calls toward the end of the afternoon. You’ll catch more people at their desks then; and (no doubt, when all else fails) hang up on people.

As this section has demonstrated, what we do know about editorial writers ranges from the demographic to the idiosyncratic. But knowing a writer’s age or marital status or knowing a writer’s helpful hints provides little understanding of how that writer writes and brings us no closer to answering the questions I raised at the beginning of this dissertation, both the questions derived from Cooper and Odell’s research agenda for composition and my own questions for this study. Those questions can now serve as a

\textsuperscript{21} “Duty” editorials are written to commemorate national holidays, kick off community fund drives, etc. Many editorialists suggest that they can be written in advance during slack time. Managers in industry write similar “duty” memos (wishing the employees Happy Holidays,” announcing the company picnic, etc.).
useful outline for concluding this chapter and laying out the methods, findings, and conclusions of my research.

Conclusion

What we need in modern society are people who can acquire skills by having a knowledge foundation. We need only a fairly small number of people who are purely theoretical. But we need an infinite number of people capable of using theory as the basis of skill for practical application in work. Knowledge, like electricity or money, is a form of energy that exists only when doing work.

—Peter F. Drucker (1968, 269, 318)

How can we best categorize diverse groups of writers?

Categorizing writers requires some organizing logic. And while "academic" and "non-academic" writing have been convenient divisions, they do not permit placement of such groups of writers—or discourse communities—as editorialists whose work is not described by the current academic definitions of "professional writing." To make a place for studying a wider range of writers, I offer an alternative taxonomy with two broad categories: 1) classroom writing (at all levels); and 2) workplace writing (that of all professionals in their fields, whether university professors, social workers, chemists, or journalists). Further, I suggest that considerations of workplace writing should include two substantially different subcategories: 1) writing that supports the principal reason for employment (reports, letters, memos, proposals, academic presentations and publications) and writing that is the principal reason for employment (that done by creative writers [poets,


22 Without introducing (though recognizing) the theoretical complications any taxonomy begs, the understanding that taxonomic labels connote makes them useful and convenient.
novelists, dramatists, literary essayists], organizational communicators, journalists, and technical writers [recognizing that many technical writers are writing in support of others' work]). Classifying writers by their purposes in composing as well as by their sites of composing also offers a better logic for answering the second in our list of questions.

What do we mean by skill in writing?

As noted above, it has been common practice in composition to describe advanced student writers as "experienced," or a range of writers from student interns, to writing instructors, to engineers as "professional," . For example, Gregory Clark and Stephen Doheny-Farina make an unproblematic shift in calling the subject of their research first a student-intern and then a writer; Gary Schumacher et al. characterize the senior journalism students of their study as experts. Nancy Sommers suggests experiential equivalence in a group of journalists, editors, and academics she simply describes as "experienced writers" (330) without defining their levels of experience or the different kinds of experience their professions value. And "professional writing" has become generic for any writing performed in

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23 Professionals in the field of organizational communication write such documents as internal and external newsletters, newspapers, and magazines; brochures; corporate financial reports; employee manuals; among many others.

24 The term “technical writing” has two meanings. It is what scientists, engineers, and others in technical professions do when they communicate their work in reports, proposals, memos and other documents. But it is also a profession in its own right. Technical writing as taught in most colleges and universities is directed to the first group, and most academic research on technical writing has focused on the writing of scientists/engineers rather than on professional technical writers.
the workplace. But "skill," "experience," and "professional" are relative terms whose meanings change from context to context. A senior journalism student may be an expert student but is hardly an expert journalist. And should that expert student be unable to advance from an entry-level position as a journalist at a weekly "shopping news," he or she could be an experienced, professional writer, yet neither skilled nor successful. The culture represented by each of the writing groups I have described has its own standards for defining skillfulness. What counts for discursive expertise among English academics is not the same as what counts for excellence among editorialists. In responding to the need to expand the notions of the teaching of writing to other contexts, Christine Barabas suggests that what "we need, perhaps most of all, [is] to set aside our academic English teachery notions of good writing and to discover what other people who neither read, write, nor teach essays as a living, regard as good writing" (xxiii). I am suggesting that we should also discover what those who do read, write, and teach essays as a living, but in a world other than academic composition, regard as good writing and how they write those essays. The standards we assume from classroom or academic writing may not be applicable to other groups of writers, and vice versa.

Whatever we may believe about the portability of writing abilities, the standards by which those abilities are designated as skills may not be

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25 This kind of designation appears to be unique to English departments. One would not expect to see a college chemistry student described as an experienced chemist or a mathematics-using physiologist referred to as a professional mathematician.

26 When the Foundation of the National Conference of Editorial Writers reviewed my dissertation prospectus prior to awarding me a research support grant, I was gently told "we don't want to hurt your feelings, but your writing is awfully academicky."
transferable. Only when we learn what is meant by “skill in writing” for a specified group can we then determine who is the successful writer we will observe in order to answer the following questions.

What can we learn from observing successful writers? and

What are the practices that allow skillful professional writers to evolve successful pieces of written discourse?

Like the pioneers in workplace writing who have gone to writers’ sites of composing to learn what those writers do within their natural contexts, by my observing successful editorial writers to learn what practices allow them to evolve successful pieces of discourse I can report

- How editorial writers generate their texts
- The ways in which these writers and their writings are similar to and different from other writers described in the literature
- The contexts in which the editorial writers under study write
- How technology affects their writing
- The kinds of collaboration that are characteristic of editorial writing
- What observable processes, activities, and behaviors these editorial writers exhibit
- The extent to which these processes, activities, and behaviors are described by any existing model proposed in composition studies

and

- The ways the processes, activities, and behaviors of editorial writers differ—both from the models and from one another

My intent, then, is not just to report, in general, what can be learned “from observing skilled writers” but to direct those observations to answering the specific questions enumerated above. Observing and reporting what some
successful writers do will not tell us, by induction, what *all* successful writers
do. Observing and reporting what successful editorial writers do will
broaden our understanding of the range of writing.

In studying different writers than have been studied before and in
different settings, the methods of the past may be inappropriate for these new
investigations. By developing methods which best fit this research, two of
the general questions of composition research can be answered.

How can we draw upon other disciplines such as sociology to
help us refine and pursue the questions we are beginning to
ask?

What new procedures seem especially suited to our new
questions?

I turn now to consider those methods and procedures most suited to the
study of editorial writers at work.
CHAPTER II
METHODOLOGY

Methods can no longer be viewed as “atheoretical” tools.

—Norman Denzin (4)

Thursday, April 18, 1991. We drive to Detroit; I’m scared to death (trite but true), snappish on those occasional moments that I speak. My husband, Scott, tries to reassure me. “He’s meeting with you because he wants to. You’re a legitimate research scholar.” “Oh sure,” I think to myself, feeling six instead of 46. “After all, what’s the worst thing that could happen?” he asks. “Well,” I answer. “He could think I’m a fool and pitch me out of the Detroit Free Press fifth-story window.” My attempt at levity earns a sideways glance from my indulgent spouse. We arrive at the newspaper building in decaying and rebuilding Detroit on time. We make plans for Scott to pick me up in an hour, and I march, not too assertively, through the front door. My first stop is the security desk, where my appointment is confirmed and I am given a security badge and directions to the appropriate office. (This will be the routine everywhere but at the Pottstown Mercury.)

I take the elevator to the upper reaches of the Detroit Free Press, and soon I am met by Joe Stroud’s personable and efficient secretary Linda. (It is Linda who has phoned to set the interview and has given me infallible directions to
the *Free Press* building.) Moments later I am in Mr. Stroud's office—an office of both power and serenity. (The magnitude of my undertaking is becoming more evident. Patricia Kelvin, graduate student, is in the office of one of the leading figures of editorial writing. A senior editor is interested in what she's doing. Legitimization and intimidation in one not-so-easy step.) At this point, I do not realize that I will find the contrasts among the many offices I will visit interesting, so I do not know that I should be taking notes even now. Seeing this office, seeing the impressive person across the desk suddenly solidifies my project. I am a real research scholar. The senior vice president of the *Detroit Free Press* and President of the Foundation of the National Conference of Editorial Writers would not be wasting his time with me if I weren't. (I learn later from a number of sources the mentoring role Joe Stroud has played in the lives of many.) We shake hands. He asks me first to tell him what it is I am doing. I ask him if I may tape our conversation. We begin.

My carefully developed 20 questions are pre-typed on a form so I need only take notes in the blank spaces I have allotted. An hour later, I have asked more like 24 questions, but Joe Stroud has answered many more. The transcript of that one hour runs to nine single-spaced pages of 10-point Times type, almost 7500 words. For Mr. Stroud, my questions triggered discussions that ranged far beyond their starting points. I had not considered that editorialists would write columns as well as editorials and that they would talk about the different voices in which they wrote each genre. I had not expected that an editor and writer of Joe Stroud's experience would want his staff to respond to and edit his writing.

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1 To differentiate between those whom I met with personally and those whom I am quoting from the literature, I use a courtesy title (Ms., Mrs., Mr.) on second reference to the former and retain the academic convention of only using the surnames of the latter.
I realized that the interview with each writer I talk to will suggest different questions for me to ask. I learned that a structured sociological-style interview which is appropriate for surveys will not be satisfactory for the interviews I will be conducting. I will need to employ a more free-ranging journalistic interview style.

Thomas Hylton, the entire full-time editorial page staff of the *Pottstown* (PA) *Mercury*, has no secretary to run interference for him. When I first talk to him by phone, he is unsure why I would want to interview him. “I’m not a newspaper man,” he tells me. “I’m a do-gooder.” He can see no reason for my spending more than a day with him; his daily routine is always the same. Reiterating my letter to him, I explain that I will be in Philadelphia at *The Daily News* and that I do want to speak to a writer from a low-circulation newspaper. He finally agrees, though I sense, reluctantly.

Friday, June 14, 1991. My arrival in Pottstown is inauspicious. Despite my early start, a well-meaning but unknowledgeable rent-a-car clerk has sent me off to find a highway that exists on the map she has given me but that does not yet exist in Pennsylvania. Making an entrance nearly an hour late does not endear me to Mr. Hylton. Waiting for me has made him late for his Meals-on-Wheels route. (To make matters even worse, the multiplicative vagaries of both the Ohio State University campus and U.S. mail systems resulted in the letters confirming my visits at both Pennsylvania newspapers arriving late on the days of my own arrival, despite being mailed some 10 days before.) I meet him on the stairs of the small newspaper building. The first part of my interview will take place in his car in between stops to shut-in senior citizens. When I ask if I may tape our conversations, Mr. Hylton says “no” and suggests that I’ll
probably misquote him anyway. Instead, I will have almost 30 steno-pad pages of notes. During the five hours I am with him, I will never see him write, but we will walk to his stone's-throw-from-the-office home for me to see his home-office with its on-line computer so that he can write at home as well as at the newspaper. I will meet his publisher. I will learn why and how his brother edited Hylton's Pulitzer-award winning editorial series on saving agricultural land. (Hylton had planned to FAX his editorials for editing to his "one newspaper friend"—the editorial page editor of the San Jose Mercury News. But, just before he sent them, she became preoccupied with the great San Francisco earthquake of 1990.) He has saved the drafts with his brother's notes and has made copies for me. I will learn as much about Thomas Hylton's philosophy as I do about his writing.

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Thursday, May 23, 1991, 4:30 p.m. As I leave Dayton, the local classical music station is playing Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance" as some cosmic signification of my future graduation. At the Dayton Daily News, I have completed a full day's sit-down interviews, observations, and what I will later call "action" interviews: I ask questions while they work. I have sat in on an editorial board meeting with newspaper editor Max Jennings, editorial page editor Hap Cawood and editorial writers Ellen Belcher and Martin Gottlieb, learning how they determine their newspaper's position on the issues they write about. Ellen Belcher has allowed me to watch her generate an editorial (perched over her shoulder recording on tape and in my notes every change she makes to her text on the computer) and see it through its peer responses and editing. The writers have generously shared their drafts at each stage of the process. The
editorial staff takes me to lunch and shares even more of themselves and their knowledge with me. I have learned about differences in individual writing behaviors and processes; how real writers write varies considerably, even in the same department. As I listen to "Pomp and Circumstance" on the way out of town, I realize that I have, perhaps, five hours of tapes, a notebook full of notes, a folder of editorials and printed drafts—and an inkling that my project will generate more data than I can ever use.

The Methods of Our Tradition

Oftentimes, a greater obstacle [to research outside academic institutions] is the researcher's own lack of incentive or inertia. With the majority of his colleagues conducting studies with college students, the researcher may have little motivation to go outside the college or university. After all, why should we go to the trouble of leaving comfortable, familiar surroundings when we can stay home and do our research there? But the physical effort may be minor when compared with the intellectual effort. The more entrenched in academe our theories of writing have become, the more difficult it has been to look at them objectively and critically, much less to abandon them. It is not only a lot easier but much safer to build upon existing theory than to question that theory, for in doing so one risks the criticism of one's peers, which in turn could jeopardize one's reputation and job security.

—Christine Barabas (57)

The three "tales of the field" (to use John Van Maanen's words) that I have related above are the kinds of stories which characterize the "confessional tales" of ethnography: the details that "constitute the field experience of the author," (76) "establish a point of view," (77) and "normalize [the author's] presence coming on the scene, in the scene, and leaving the scene" (79). Explains Van Maanen, "stories of infiltration, fables of fieldwork rapport, mini-melodramas of hardships endured (and overcome), and accounts of what fieldwork did to the fieldworker are prominent features of confessions" (73).
Yet, strictly speaking, my work is not ethnography. My goal is not to describe the culture of The Dayton Daily News in particular, nor the culture of the editorial writer in general, not to seek cultural meaning for the writing editorial writers do, but rather to determine and describe what editorial writers do. If in contextualizing the writing of editorial writers, I describe their scenes of writing, my emphasis is still not on the scene. For me, the scene provides the authority, not the substance. Thus the work of the compositionist differs from the ways of the anthropologist.

The ethnographer Bronislaw Malinowski did not seek to enhance western marriage customs by studying the traditions of the Trobriand Islanders, but rather sought to understand them. However, most workplace studies of writing, called ethnographies by their authors, have instead sought to investigate “the complex relationships between writing and the social contexts in which texts are written and read” (Doheny-Farina and Odell 503) with a goal of applying what was learned to the writing classroom—a considerably different intent than that of either the anthropologist or sociologist. Sociological ethnographers look to “predict and explain patterns of thought and action … that appear quite unique and specific to a setting; … anthropological ethnographies denote spectacular differences among cultures” (Van Maanen 20-21). Doheny-Farina and Odell suggest that ethnographic investigations of writing, on the other hand, have broad applicability and may contribute substantially to our present understanding of … the composing process, the characteristics of ‘good’ writing, and the ways in which readers go about making meaning out of what someone else has written. There is also the chance that this sort of research will help us expand our notions about the functions of writing…. It may be that … writing does more than reflect the social context in which it exists; it may be that writing helps shape that context. (503)
Shirley Brice Heath’s work in the Piedmont and Marcia Farr Whiteman’s in the Hispanic community of Chicago in examining the broad concerns of literacy are certainly ethnographies of cultural anthropology, but my reading of anthropological and sociological ethnography made it obvious that ethnography, the writing (graphia) of culture (ethnos) was not what I was doing. But if I was not doing ethnography, what was I doing?

When Odell and Goswami state that “researchers in composition and rhetoric ... have begun to use ethnographic as well as quantitative and experimental research methodologies” (viii), they have—no doubt, unintentionally—concretized the three methodologies they cite as the only three research methodologies applicable to workplace research in composition and rhetoric. A wide range of quantitative and experimental methods, largely derived from psychology, have earned a growing acceptance in composition, as Janice Lauer and J. William Asher demonstrate. But even the qualitative methodologies they describe are oriented towards psychology rather than anthropology or sociology. The case studies Lauer and Asher discuss lean strongly towards the clinical or interventional methods of psychology (such as Flower and Hayes’s protocols). And they describe as the purpose of ethnography understanding behavior—a goal of psychology—rather than understanding culture—a goal of anthropology or a society—the goal of sociology. Moreover, they do not describe naturalistic methods. Scholars in the

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2 Experimental methods, however, have seen little use in the workplace because of their intrusive and disruptive nature.

3 Professor Asher is, in fact, a professor of education and psychological sciences. I suspect that the close relationship of English Education with departments of education and psychology (or educational psychology) are responsible for the prevalence of psychology’s methods.
more traditional areas of English studies are clearly uneasy about research methods borrowed from the social sciences. With no well-established history and tradition of extra-academic field research, only a few academics have ventured out of the safety of the classroom and library. Furthermore, by not being part of the disciplinary conversation in which Clifford Geertz is only one voice, many compositionists seem to have subsumed all qualitative methods unproblematically under his aegis.

In developing a methodology for studying writers who have never been studied before and for reasons which may be different than previous explanations for studying writers outside the academy, it is useful to consider established methodologies—mindful of the above caveats—which can then be applied, modified, or discarded. The inapplicability of some is apparent at the outset (e.g., counting T-units as a measure of discursive maturity of writers who are, by definition, discursively mature). The inappropriateness of others may not become visible until the researcher is already engaging in the research (e.g., some writers may not want to be watched while writing, or there may be no way to obtain intermediary drafts of their writing for examination). In some instances, that inappropriateness may be one of logistics (e.g., simply that the subjects or informants don’t want to be studied for more than a limited period of time, or that one’s time in a given setting is limited by resources).

Thus, in describing the methodology used in this research, I first discuss methods of research used in composition studies, particularly in the study of workplace writing, (looking along the way at those few relevant studies of

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4 I have wondered how many of those in English studies who have appropriated “thick description” and “blurred genres” as evidence of their scholarliness have any idea at all where Geertz has undertaken most of his work. (Bali, where his report of a cockfight is considered legendary.)
journalistic writers) and explain what and why different aspects of those methods were applicable to my own research and what and why other aspects were not. Then I move from composition studies to the social sciences to derive naturalistic methods that are not ethnographic. Finally, I describe the actual methods of my study, how subjects/informants were selected, the “field conditions” under which I worked, and the nature of my data.

Early Studies

When, in 1961, the executive committee of NCTE decided to “review what is known and what is not known about the teaching and learning of composition and the conditions under which it is taught,” they appointed an ad hoc committee on the “State of Knowledge about Composition” which in turn decided to evaluate “research employing ‘scientific methods,’ like controlled experiments and textual analysis” (1). The committee narrowed its focus to examining 485 items (of 1000 bibliographic citations that they discovered, many of which were only tangential) and subsequently screened and added others for a total of 504 that had been published before 1961. As reported by Richard Braddock, Richard Lloyd-Jones, and Lowell Schoer, these studies ranged from Cyrus L. Hooper’s 1912 investigation of “The Influence of the Study of Latin on the Student’s Knowledge of English Grammar” which appeared in the first volume of English Journal (393-404) to James J. Lynch’s 1961 dissertation on The Conference as a Method in the Teaching of English Composition in the Junior-Senior High School. Few examined what might be considered rhetorical issues: notably Irving Lee’s 1939 dissertation at Northwestern University, an examination of Emotional Appeal in Rhetorical Theory with Special Reference to Invention, Arrangement, and Style, and in 1949, Helen W. Schrader’s dissertation, A
Linguistic Approach to the Study of Rhetorical Style (also at Northwestern). Only three dealt with what might be considered professional writing—and all were doctoral dissertations: James Silverthorn’s *The Basic Vocabulary of Written Business Communications* (Indiana University 1955); Anthony S. Lis’s *Attitudes and Practices of Executives and Secretaries concerning Disputable Items of English Usage in Secretarial Handbooks* (Minnesota 1961); and Homer L. Cox’s *Factors Involved in Clarity of Language and Evaluation of Clarity in Selected Business Letters* (Northwestern 1955).

The studies Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer detail are largely quantitative—“studying the actual writing of a generous number of students” (70-80, or a carefully selected 20 with another 20 for control). They see as the important goal to “maintain as objective an investigation as possible by controlling or reporting the salient variables; that is by keeping the investigator as ‘removed’ from the study as possible.” Some of the significant methods and elements of design in composition research that they identify are:

- Rating compositions: writer variable, assignment variable (topic, mode of discourse, time afforded for writing, examination situation), rater variable, colleague variable (inter-rater variation) (6-12)
- Frequency counts (which, because they are objective “perhaps … are to become the most important types) (15-16)
- Environmental factors influencing composition (everything from effect of personal experience to longitudinal studies) (29-31)
- Instructional factors (revision, extensiveness of reading, grading) influencing composition (33-38)
- Objective tests versus actual writing as measures of writing (40-45)
- Others such as the size of English classes, the use of lay readers, teaching by television, writing vocabulary, handwriting,
typewriting, and relationships of oral and written composition (45-52).

Of rhetorical considerations they stated,

If little has been proved about the instructional factors influencing composition, it is fair to say that almost nothing has been proved in a scientific sense about the rhetorical aspects of composition” [those larger than the unit of the sentence] (38).

With the influence both of educational psychology and the nation’s scientifically-oriented post-Sputnik fervor, Braddock et al saw composition research in scientific terms and found it lacking:

Today’s research in composition, taken as a whole, may be compared to chemical research as it emerged from the period of alchemy: some terms are being defined usefully, a number of procedures are being refined, but the field as a whole is laced with dreams, prejudices, and makeshift operations. Not enough investigators are really informing themselves about the procedures and results of previous research before embarking on their own. Too few of them conduct pilot experiments and validate their measuring instruments before undertaking an investigation. (5)

The choice of the highly objective chemical experiment as metaphor for composition research was a bold one. Nonetheless, the need for some sort of scientific validity together with society’s structuralist disposition led to considerable text- or classroom-based research: products or producers whose elements were countable and controllable. But early chemistry established a foundation which ultimately led to the highest of high-tech experimentation, and the substances under study were discrete molecular structures, not human beings. In composition, analysis which yields quantifiable results, though one of the earliest modes of composition research, has served not only as a foundation

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5 Perhaps the reference to alchemy was a subtle invocation of John Donne’s Valediction, or a recognition that Renaissance science might be more familiar to literary scholars than current forms.
for other types of composition research, but retains legitimate use today. It is important to note, however, that while some studies may be purely classified in a schema such as Lauer and Asher's, many projects combine methodologies.

**Contemporary Studies**

The numbers, whether derived from keystroke analyses or word and sentence counts are still valued in research, as any reader of *Research in the Teaching of English* can attest. And in business and professional writing, Broadhead and Freed's landmark study of *The Variables of Composition: Process and Product in a Business Setting* was based on a computer analysis of twenty different macrosyntactic structures.

If textual analysis can be regarded as a micro-analysis, then survey research can be seen as macro-analysis. Paul V. Anderson's own survey together with those other surveys he describes have provided much of our understanding of the extent and purposes of writing at work. Faigley and Miller in response to what they saw as the "very narrow focus" of previous studies which sought to survey the writing of graduates of particular programs or in particular professions, wanted to "construct a broad picture of the writing of college-educated people in general, ... to give us some sense of how well

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6 Few literary scholars—even the most fervent advocates of close reading—(and probably not many composition researchers either) could make sense of "Significant multivariate effects were found for the covariate total words (lambda(2.779)=.588; p<.001) and the main effect mode of discourse (lambda(2.79)=.705; p<.001)"; this in a study of gender and writing (Rubin and Greene 23).

7 And Doheny-Farina and Odell, having simplistically conflated a number of qualitative methods from the social sciences, even suggest an "ethnography" the greatest concern of which appears to be the analysis of encoded field notes. Admittedly, in reducing the entire field of ethnography to a 30-page chapter, some things are bound to be left out. Nonetheless, their account, in a volume on writing in business and the professions, which competely ignores the published ethnographic wok undertaken in organizations, has engendered an understanding of ethnography which is both limited and skewed.
college-educated individuals think they were prepared for their writing needs after graduation.” (558) They were interested in such questions as

1. How much work time do college educated people spend writing?
2. What types of writing are required of college-educated people? and
3. What methods of composing and what media do college educated people use? (558)

Surveying 200 people in a statistically valid sample of occupations, they could substantiate the common-sense assumptions that “College-trained people write diverse types of written products in a variety of media using a variety of composing processes” (566). While such broad surveys may expand our knowledge of the demographics of writers, or of the extent and nature of writing in a number of organizations or by a large number of persons (see also, for example, Anderson and Stine and Skarzenski), narrow surveys have been used to help understand the nature and purposes of writing within a single organization. Using internal surveys as part of their research, James Paradis, David Dobrin, and Richard Miller documented the functions of in-house writing at the Intermediates Technology Division of Exxon Chemicals Company. Christine Barabas, investigating what distinguished good progress reports from poor progress reports gathered background information by surveying 48 people at the R & D organization she was studying and designed a classification scheme to analyze the documents she gathered during her survey-interviews. While the wide survey is usually conducted by mail using a questionnaire, surveys within organizations are conducted in person, as the surveyor asks each respondent the same questions in order to have comparable data.

Both kinds of surveys have been valuable in my study. The demographic surveys available in published (and unpublished) reports which have provided
most of the information we have about the status of editorial writers, have given me a basis for a broad understanding of the nature of the people in the profession (American Press Institute, 1982, 1985, 1987; The Masthead, 1988; and Wilhoit and Drew, 1971, 1979-80; 1989 and 1990). So, for example, knowing that the typical editorial writer is white, over forty, married and male provides a context for studying editorial writers who may be black, under forty, single, or female (or any of the other possible combinations of gender, age, ethnicity, or marital status). Hynds and Martin’s survey, which was concerned with “how today’s daily newspaper editorialists obtain information and perform their tasks” suggested starting points for explorations of how editorialists enact what rhetoricians would call invention and arrangement. The extent of the Wilhoit and Drew surveys also made it unnecessary to duplicate their efforts in drawing a demographic picture of the field.

Writing processes have been investigated in a number of ways. Broadhead and Freed performed their computer analysis in order to describe revision practices. To ascertain the writing processes of an engineer, Jack Selzer was able to “collect and examine all the interim written materials that contributed to several of his [the engineer’s] written products—jottings, notes, outlines, plans, drafts, revisions” (179). Anderson states that although “in a few studies, researchers have asked respondents about the methods and procedures they use when writing at work and about the conditions under which they write” (47), most studies of writers’ processes have been undertaken more directly and more closely, frequently utilizing clinical methodologies.

Carl Bereiter and Marlene Scardamalia define six levels of inquiry in research on the composing process:

Level 1. Reflective inquiry;
They consider the characteristic questions of process description, "What is the writer thinking? [and] What pattern or system is revealed in the writer's thoughts while composing?" (34). And as we shall see, this concept of "process" differs significantly from the sociologist's concept of process, which Norman Denzin says may be any of five: social occasions, social situations, social relationships, and "the meanings, ideologies, or values that a sample of individuals holds toward some specific objective set of activities" (75-77).

Barabas conducted "task-oriented interviews with each of the directors, supervisors, and researchers [she had] initially interviewed during Phase 1 [of her study] ... [in which they] were asked to make certain distinctions and judgments regarding the nature and importance of the informational content of the reports" (173).

While there have been a considerable number of "process investigations" in composition, the work of Janet Emig and Linda Flower and John Hayes are particularly significant to my research because the few process studies involving journalistic writers have been based on their models. Not only was Janet Emig the first to use a case study approach to studying individual writers, but she also looked at how those writers "usually or typically behave as they write with minimal direct intervention by the investigator" (21).8

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8 Although Emig's study was of adolescent writers, she did recognize the differences between school-sponsored and other forms of writing, asking "In 'business,' where can one write the
Linda Flower and John Hayes, researchers at Carnegie-Mellon University in the departments of English and psychology, respectively, were the first to use the methods of cognitive psychology in composition. Drawing on the work of Herbert Simon and others, they advanced the use of the “talk aloud” protocol, a method in which subjects are asked to say what they’re thinking as they write as evidence of the problem-solving nature of their processes.\(^9\)

Flower and Hayes’s methods have been exported to other areas of writing research. Beverly Pitts used protocols to study journalistic practice. Just as Janet Emig decried the three-, five-, or seven-paragraph theme as the essential mode for teaching writing, Pitts calls into question the “inverted pyramid and modifications of that structure” to be the model for news-writing, stating “it is an incomplete model because it is a mode of the finished product, not the process used to create it” (Pitts, 1989, 12). From protocol studies of professional reporters in 1982 (the first use in journalism) and 1989, Pitts encoded their responses to determine that

unique activities for the newswriting process are the integrated sequence of writing the lead\(^10\), the value of the lead writing activity for the writer, the strong use of recall, the development of only short-term goals and plans, and the integrated use of rereading and editing as part of the writing process. (1989, 18)

From her studies, she concluded that “the best writing experience comes when students write from their own information gathering experiences” (19).

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Fifty Star Theme except as a letter to an unheeding computer or as a Pentagon memorandum?” (98)

\(^9\) The work of Ann Matsuhashi in analyzing pauses during writing for clues to cognitive planning processes has not been as widely assimilated in workplace writing studies as has that of Flower and Hayes.

\(^10\) The lead (pronounced “leed”), is the opening paragraph in a journalistic story or article.
Gary M. Schumacher and his colleagues\textsuperscript{11} videotaped the writing (of both news stories and editorials)\textsuperscript{12} of two groups of journalism students who were subsequently asked what had they had been doing during each pause in their writing of more than five seconds. A third group was asked to talk as they wrote, and their comments were recorded. The transcribed comments were encoded and analyzed.

Calling her work an “integrated analysis” that was “part thinking-aloud protocol and part ethnography” (33), Elizabeth Matsuhiro Young further investigated the function of leads in the writing process. After surveying 25 reporters (with a mailed questionnaire), she asked three to participate in two practice and two actual protocols. She also accompanied the reporters on their assignments and “asked them to talk aloud if they had thoughts about the story either before or after an interview assignment. During these trips, she also talked with the reporters, in what she called “interview-conversations” about “general journalistic issues as well as the reporters’ composing process” (31).

Schumacher \textit{et al.}'s use of student subjects allowed considerably more latitude than the studies of Pitts and Young who used professional journalists. Both Pitts, in her study of journalism students, and Schumacher \textit{et al.} could also take a more “clinical” approach by using artificial settings and “fact sheets.” The artificiality of the writing task and controlled environment in protocol studies has been particularly criticized by (among others) Deborah Brandt. But in

\textsuperscript{11} As if to emphasize the interdisciplinary nature of studies on writing processes (but also its leaning towards psychology), Schumacher, a professor of psychology, worked with a second psychologist, George R. Klare; a professor of English, Frank C. Cronin; and two professors of journalism, Byron T. Scott and Donald A. Lambert. Both of the latter had been professional journalists prior to their academic careers.

\textsuperscript{12} The written pieces were to be generated from fact sheets—the equivalent in journalism education to what compositionists would call “prompts.”
using the natural setting of the newsroom for the protocols, Young discovered that her subjects “felt self-conscious while talking aloud.... In one case, the subject said she felt ‘intimidated’ by other reporters lingering in the office nearby and simply stopped talking until they left” (45). She also found that “at times, the reporters made so many revisions in such quick succession that they would forget to verbalize each one” (46). Young also found that

the reporters gravitated toward stories which would fit the research requirements ... were fairly manageable in terms of meeting deadlines and completing interviews, [and] steered clear of controversial or sensitive assignments when the presence of the researcher might jeopardize coverage, intimidate sources, or compromise the paper in the case of a lawsuit. (44)

If I had not already had doubts about the usefulness of protocols to study the writing of writers on tight deadlines, Young’s experience confirmed my view. Although some intervention does creep into naturalistic methods (see Denzin), the obtrusiveness of protocols limits their utility.

Robert Root chose instead to interview his subjects “about both their recollections of writing and the evidence of their composing processes in notes, drafts, and final texts of articles written immediately prior to the interviews” (17). His intent was to “determine the extent to which planning interacts with long-term memory and task environment” (17) in working with six professional expository writers.13 Drawing on his interviews, in which he ascertained that the professional writers were, to use Tom Wicker’s words, “assiduous string

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13 The writers he selected were Tom Wicker, New York Times columnist, syndicated political columnist Richard Reeves, film critics David Denby and Neal Gabler, drama critic Walter Kerr, and Susan Nykamp managing editor of Photo Marketing. Root also noted the difference between modeling student composing processes on literary and academic models as Janet Emig had done and looking instead at expository writing done under deadline.
savers," Root underscored the need for context and experience to produce good writing.

Root’s use of interviews to elaborate a writer’s processes reiterates what Janet Emig had called the “dialogue between writer and attuned respondent” (11) (one of three methods that before her study had been used to ascertain writing processes). While Emig had in mind the correspondence between Thomas Wolfe and his editor Maxwell Perkins or that between Gerard Manley Hopkins and Robert Bridges, the interview between writer and knowledgable respondent aptly describes the kinds of interviews conducted by Root and Young, an interview style which is different from the highly detailed and structured ethnographic interview. Like Root, Young acknowledged that having a journalism background was a distinct advantage in working with the case study reporters. ... I already knew the newsroom jargon and routine, [and] ... during the field observations, I was more aware of what the reporters were focusing on since I knew the kinds of information needed for a particular type of story. (46)

The Paris Review interviews, avant garde at the time they were initiated, are further examples of this research genre. In his introduction to the first volume, Malcolm Cowley describes the interviewers [who had] done their assigned reading, [had] asked the right questions, or most of them, and [had] listened carefully to the answers,” (4) in contrast to previous interviews with literary figures conducted by interviewers [who] either have had no serious interest in literature or else have been too serious about themselves. Either they have been reporters with little knowledge of the author’s work and a desire to entrap him into making scandalous remarks about sex, politics, and God, or else they have been ambitious writers trying to display their own sophistication, usually at the expense of the author, and listening chiefly to their own voices. (3)
With no recording equipment available, the interviewers worked in pairs "jot[ting] down the answers to their questions at top speed and match[ing] the two versions afterward. "With two men writing," says Cowley, "the pace could be kept almost at the level of natural conversation" (5).

Unlike the interviews conducted by Root, Young, and the Paris Review interviewers who had extensive knowledge of their subjects, some workplace studies have used the interview to become familiar with the context of the study. In the preface to Writing in Nonacademic Settings, Lee Odell and Dixie Goswami explain:

We assumed that some people were hired specifically for their writing skill—speech writers, for example, or technical writers. But we had no idea how many people, apart from those specifically hired as writers, had to do much writing as a routine part of their day-to-day work. And we had no personal knowledge about the forms this writing took, about the diverse rhetorical and conceptual demands it entailed, or about the kinds of sophistication these writers possessed (or lacked). (vii)

Thus, they began their work with an “initial interview” to “develop a description of the research sites apart from official, published descriptions, and to provide at least an impressionistic understanding of who writes what to whom and under what circumstances in these writing communities” (Goswami 1980).

With what they had learned from the initial interviews, Odell, Goswami, Herrington, and Quick “asked workers to keep copies of everything they wrote for a two week period” to identify and evaluate types of writing in rhetorical context (20-22). Then they evaluated participants’ sense of style by asking them to respond to three different versions of what was essentially the same memo varying between active and passive voice and use of nominalizations (23-25). And finally, they conducted what they called “discourse-based interviews”
(which asked subjects to select from several alternatives which words would be most suitable to a particular piece of discourse) to determine how textual features “relate to a writer's understanding of the audience being addressed, the persona he or she is creating, or the subject being dealt with” (25). Through further interviews, they determined whether these reasons differed for writers of different status or levels of experience.

From the highly clinical approach of Schumacher et al. which uses such scientific-sounding terms as “experimenter,” “testing room,” and “inter-rater reliability,” to the perhaps less daunting terminology of Odell et al., all of the researchers thus described have created artificial tasks or environments in order to explore the variables of composing. Investigating writers in their own environments were the hallmarks of Odell and Goswami and their colleagues and of Young. And Young, even though she used protocols, still characterized her study as ethnographic, drawing on the Doheney-Farina and Odell essay on ethnographic methodology. The growing trend of describing as “ethnography" any study undertaken at a work site suggests that this methodology deserves special attention.
Ethnographic Methods

At the present time, in spite of heated discussions about the success of schools in teaching writing, there is almost no systematic description of the functions of writing in the society as a whole or in special groups or subcultures which differ among themselves and from school culture in their uses of writing and their attitudes toward it. Ethnographic research from communities and institutions is needed in order to provide this information and to relate instruction in writing to it.

—Shirley Brice Heath (1981, p. 44)

During the past ten years or so, however, researchers in composition and rhetoric have begun to recognize the diversity and importance of writing in nonacademic settings and have begun to study this writing, drawing heavily on rhetorical theory and using ethnographic as well as quantitative and experimental research methodologies. Consequently, a body of scholarship is beginning to develop in this area.

—Lee Odell and Dixie Goswami (1985, vii-viii)

“Rather than studying people, ethnography means learning from people” (3) says James Spradley.

People everywhere learn their culture by observing other people, listening to them, and then making inferences. The ethnographer employs this same process of going beyond what is seen and heard to infer what people know. It involves reasoning from evidence (what we perceive) or from premises (what we assume). ... In doing field work, ethnographers make cultural inferences from three sources: (1) what people say; (2) from the way people act; and (3) from the artifacts people use.(8)

So Stephen Doheny-Farina visited a young computer software company over the course of eight months, investigating “the writing of a business plan from its inception to its completion in order to answer

- What are the social elements of a writer’s composing processes?
- How do writer’s perceptions of their organizational contexts influence these processes?” (161)
He reports that during his one- to eight-hour visits, he collected data "during formal and informal staff meetings in offices, hallways, and open areas in two different Microware buildings. My key informants," he says, "were the five top executives, two middle managers, and two outside consultants (164-65). Geoffrey Cross spent three months working in an insurance company as an unpaid writer-editor two hours each day, gathering data for the remaining six hours per day, in order as he said, "to acquire a fuller understanding of the influence of social context upon the editing of business documents" (62). In a study of the college and work contexts of an individual college student, Doheny-Farina collected data over a five-month semester attending most of the senior seminar class sessions of his informant, Anna, and two conferences she had with her professor. He also observed and took field notes during group meetings between Anna and her supervisors at work. Young rode around with reporters on assignment. Kelly Belanger joined student collaborative groups. Presence confers authority. Explains Spradley,

Like a cartographer engaged in mapping a land, surface, the ethnographer both examines small details of culture and at the same time seeks to chart the broader features of the cultural landscape. An adequate cultural description will include an in-depth analysis of selected domains; it will also include an overview of the cultural scene and statements that convey a sense of the whole. (185)

For Spradley, however, "Ethnography starts with an attitude of almost complete ignorance" (5). The informants "define what is important for the investigator to find out" (29). Such an approach is exemplified by one of the questions Spradley asked his own informants in a study of a leather factory, "In the last few months, I've been trying to find out everything that you and others at the Valley [a factory] know" (202).
However, neither Young, Doheney-Farina, Cross, nor Belanger started their work with a blank slate. Young stated explicitly that knowing the journalist’s world made her interviewing easier. In previous school terms, Belanger had taught two of the courses in which she conducted research. And while they were neither insurance nor software experts, both Cross and Doheney-Farina sought to fit the composing practices of the companies they studied into the rhetorical structures (which they knew well) of the academic researcher, rather than to describe the *culture* of an insurance company or the *culture* of a software company. And like theirs, my intent has not been to want or need to know everything about the culture of a given newspaper or profession, but to be selective: to learn not what it means to work for the *Miami Herald*, but to learn how editorials are produced there; to derive not a description of a culture but to see how this culture might provide our own with useful perspectives and practices. As Spradley suggests

> Tacit assumptions about the world find their way into the theories of every academic discipline—literary criticism, physical science, history and all the social sciences [and composition]. Ethnography alone seeks to document the existence of alternative realities and to describe these realities in their own terms. (11)

And even though this study focuses only on those realities which are relevant to my project, it is still possible to make what Spradley calls “comparison[s] with other cultural scenes” (202) and to derive “domains” for study: such as “approaches in the writing of editorials,” “kinds of editorials,” “styles of writing,” etc. and from there to look at those domains which are especially interesting for in-depth analysis (or example, *ethos*, modes of collaboration, orality). According to Spradley, “In beginning to search for themes—[that is, ‘assertions that have a high degree of generality’]—the
ethnographer must identify all that appear, no matter how broad their general application (187). But as I have suggested, such broad descriptions of culture have not characterized field-based work in composition and rhetoric, nor are they necessary to some researchers' purposes. On the other hand, the manner of describing these discoveries can follow Spradley's recommendations for writing an ethnography:

- **Level one:** Universal statements
- **Level two:** Cross-Cultural descriptive statements [may be true for some societies but not all]
- **Level three:** General statements about a society or cultural group
- **Level four:** General statements about a specific cultural scene (descriptive statement about a particular group; low-level abstraction)
- **Level five:** Specific statements about a cultural domain (narrative description)
- **Level six:** Specific incident statements (anecdotal evidence, transcriptions, etc.) (206-10)

This structure has provided the methodological basis for the writing of my third and fourth chapters, although this study is not a true ethnography: that is, a long-term investigation of a culture.

**Ethnography: A Cautionary Note**

"Ethnography," says James Spradley, "is the work of describing a culture" (3). Heath says that we need ethnographic research. Odell and Goswami say that researchers are using "ethnographic methodologies" (vii-viii). So, we might ask, is using ethnographic methodologies the same as doing ethnography? Can you be using ethnographic methodologies and not be doing ethnography? Very obviously, the answer has to be "Yes" because a number of researchers are
doing just that, Doheny-Farina and Young among them. So the question might be better stated, should you call what you’re doing “ethnography” because some of your methods are similar to those used by ethnographers? And why does it matter? In a cultural landscape of “blurred genres” and overlapping scholarly jurisdictions, appropriating a term which has a very specific meaning in one culture without full awareness of that meaning has intellectual ramifications beyond a simple semantic quibble.

Carl G. Herndl, writing in *College English*, is one of the few scholars in composition and rhetoric who in examining the textual practices of writing ethnography even discusses ethnography from the current view of anthropology. He argues that inasmuch as an “ethnographer’s material is always a representation, … [that is, they are ] texts produced by the ethnographer’s discourse, … we should consider ethnography as the product of research rather than as a research method” (321). Indeed, these *au courant* reconsiderations of ethnography which are significant in the worlds of anthropology and sociology are notably absent from the bibliographies of ethnographies in rhetoric and composition. In their own studies, Odell and Goswami cite no social science methodology at all. Although Doheny-Farina and Odell are writing on “Ethnographic Research on Writing,” the authorities they cite only provide examples of populations or subject matter that have been studied, not the methods used nor the researcher’s point of view. In his own study, Doheney-Farina cites only Geertz’s “The Social History of an Indonesian Town” and Wilson’s “The Use of Ethnographic Techniques in Educational Research.” When the very scholars who are considered our discipline’s experts in ethnography have not situated themselves within ethnography’s current conversation, it is no wonder, then, that Clifford Geertz and Shirley Brice Heath
have become the “house ethnographers” for composition and rhetoric. And even more problematic, because of the influence of their article in workplace research, as Odell and Doheny-Farina invoke Geertz, they cast his “blurred genres” in concrete, establishing theirs as the only interpretation of ethnography. Few scholars in rhetoric and composition have evaluated the applicability of sociological ethnography (or for that matter, any sociological methods) to studies undertaken within organizations. Perhaps the narrative form of the ethnography, literary folklore’s connection with cultural anthropology, and even the mental associations of the modifier “cultural” with the traditional role of English studies in disseminating culture, may all have helped make cultural anthropology acceptable within English circles, while sociology is ignored. Thus, relying on precedents established by cultural anthropologists like Heath and Geertz may have protected researchers in English from appearing to use methods from the social sciences—methods which are described by their practitioners as the method of the scientist or social scientist. Yet studies in organizational settings could have benefited from sociological ethnographic methods.

In differentiating between the anthropologist and the sociologist, John Van Maanen explains that

the most fundamental distinction is that anthropologists go elsewhere to practice their trade while sociologists stay at home ....

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14 Odell and Doheney-Farina’s apparent insistence on their version of ethnography reminds me of my three-year-old son’s definition of a party: it required “hats, cake, and for the teacher to move the chairs.” Any event, no matter how festive, missing these elements was not a party. As I discuss more extensively in Chapter 5, the increasingly accepted concept of “blurred genres”—the intellectual equivalent of “fuzzy logic”—should encourage our discipline to enlarge its vantage rather than narrow its view.

15 Uneasiness patrols the borders between the humanities and the social sciences. Few humanists would appreciate being mis-identified as scientists.
Sociologists, by and large, focus their work on urban contexts that are literally close to home and where there is no alien tongue to awkwardly master. The culture of interest is at least partially known at the outset of the study. Anthropologists, despite some small notable repatriation, still do a great deal of their work in small remote, semi-isolated social systems, spending long periods of time (often including lengthy revisits) in close, trusting contact with the studied. Sociologists can commute to work in their Volkswagens, while anthropologists must arrive at and depart from their work sites on 747s, with suitcases, not briefcases in their hands. The former can (and do) more easily shift research sites and topics time and time again; the latter usually remain tied to the same general domain for a career as area specialists in a region, culture, language and people. (21-22)

Van Maanen’s observations have significant implications for the way that composition scholars have appropriated anthropological ethnography. While we seek to document anthropologically what we call “corporate culture,” we bring along with our academic attaché case anthropology’s nineteenth century baggage of studying an alien, primitive culture—studying the culture of others because they are different from us. Cross quotes Bronislaw Malinowski’s purpose, to “‘grasp the native's point of view’” (25), as his own goal (54).

But even when we do use sociology’s methods, as I am suggesting that we do, we must keep in mind that these methods were developed to study otherness: deviance, dysfunction, and aberrance; the world of the drug user, the delinquent, the slum, the ghetto, the alcoholic, those with problems of literacy. This same sense of otherness is emphasized in the ways that writing is described

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16 Nonetheless, as I noted in Chapter I, different discourse communities do interpret the same words differently. And as Spradley has observed, ... in recent years, as ethnographers have increasingly undertaken research in our society, the necessity of studying the native language is frequently ignored. In part, this neglect occurs because informants appear to use a language that is spoken by the ethnographer. But such is not the case; semantic differences exist and they have a profound influence on ethnographic research. (28)
in the world of composition and rhetoric: standard and nonstandard; academic and nonacademic. The implication is standard and substandard; academic and subacademic.\textsuperscript{17}

Along with this ideological admonition of my own comes an applicable theoretical caution from sociologist Norman Denzin. Just as composition scholars have been reluctant to stray far from the well-trodden path, Norman Denzin complains that “many sociologists now use only one method in their studies . . . a tendency [that] has given rise to a rather “parochial, specialty-bound use of research methods .... Sociologists have tended to use methods with little thought for either their theoretical implications or their differing ability to shed light on theory” (3). Denzin urges that “the separate elements of the sociological act [theory, research methods, and substantive interest] must be reunited” (2). In composition studies, such disunification is promulgated by Stephen North who pits practitioner against scholar against researcher. Denzin opines instead that “It is important for practitioners . . . to develop their own synthesis of theory, method, and specialty” (4). Thus, I have been attempting to synthesize theories and methods in a subspecialty of workplace writing studies.

Because the areas of social science influence on composition studies have been either developmental (Piaget, etc.), cognitive (Flower and Hayes, Bereiter and Scardamalia), or anthropological (Geertz, Heath), methods that might have been derived from the sociology of organizations have been ignored. Instead, as

\textsuperscript{17} In a presentation at the convention of the Modern Language Association, Charles Bazerman observed in a similar vein,

The term non-fiction is, to start with, suspect for it is only a negative—that which is not fiction, fiction being understood as that which interests us as literary scholars, critics, and humane readers. Non-fiction is the other [emphasis mine] stuff, uninteresting and unproblematic unless it bears similarity to fiction, as in the literary essay.”
we have seen above, some researchers have attempted to import the methods of psychology or cultural anthropology to either the classroom or a workplace setting, while others have sought to export methods of study appropriate to students in a classroom to the workplace. While each has its place, there exist yet other methodologies wholly appropriate for discovering the processes, as broadly conceptualized, of writers "in the field."

The Methods of Sociology

Until sociology has a set of criteria that permits discovery and interpretation, the separation between theory and methods will persist. —Norman Denzin

"You have elaborated the hypotheses, reviewed the literature and determined the appropriate statistical strategies for the research problem. All that remains is to conduct the study" (1). This structure in the "Planning for Field Operations" as delineated by Judith Fiedler typifies the traditional view of social science research and one that characterizes much of composition's research. Susan Gustavus Philliber, Mary R. Schwab, and G. Sam Sloss state that the methods of social science research have four purposes: description, explanation, prediction, and intelligent intervention (10). Empirical evaluation of measured responses to standardized survey instruments has been a traditional tool of the social scientist, particularly in sociology, psychology, and education, an orientation which is also reflected in the 1963 Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer study of research in composition. It is assumed that studies which can be reduced to mathematical measures are more scientific and *ipso facto* superior. Even case studies, which Fiedler describes as "undoubtedly the oldest method of studying social phenomena" are expected to follow a rigid research design.
In this construct, “Sociologists should be able to describe the phenomena they are studying so that others can repeat their descriptions with a high degree of agreement” (Denzin 37). Essentially the researcher should be a neutral instrument, a human seismograph registering the bumps and shakes of the social ground. In contrast, the ethnographer would live among the natives in a seismically-active region to record and understand the cultural response to anticipated or active earthquakes. However, neither of these models describes the methodology which my kind of study requires. But there is yet a third research perspective akin to visiting a community renowned for earthquake safety and preparedness to see how they do it. Enjoining social scientists to be “less scientific and more humanistic,” Denzin calls this third alternative “naturalistic” methodology.

Denzin says that “[Naturalists] do not approach that [social] world [under study] with a rigid set of preconceived hypotheses” (100). He argues that “naturalistic inquiry objects to 1) objectivity; 2) hypothetical-deductive theory; 3) external lawlike relations; 4) exact and formal language; and 5) the separation of facts and meaning” (69).

Instead,

Naturalists pay careful attention to the ecological (or spatial) temporal, ritualistic, and interactional features of the social organization they are studying. (88)

Ideally, researchers attempt to gather, produce, or elicit interactions, activities, and attitudes that will permit them to further develop their central concepts and propositions. In that sense, all observations are theoretical constructs. At the practical level, however, what is observed will be the actions, behaviors, and attitudes of interacting individuals. From those behaviors and attitudes, sociologists then infer the existence of their central concepts and propositions. An inferential process underlies the processes of observational theory construction. (75)
Thus, naturalistic research differs from the traditionalist positivistic models. Yet naturalistic research also differs from ethnography. Rather than Spradley’s “attitude of almost complete ignorance,” Denzin maintains that “before beginning to sample, the naturalistic researcher must have an in-depth working knowledge of [the] population ....” (72) The ethnographer, “like a cartographer,” maps every cultural nuance. Denzin’s naturalists, on the other hand, sample—that is they observe and record behavior specimens—at “‘peak’ interactional times” (88).

First, they must gather and record observations that have direct relevance for the theoretical questions they are exploring.... [They] must have the confidence that their observations are not typical only of those they have studied but could be generalized to other groups and individuals as well, ... [and] third, researchers must have confidence in the observations they gather. Observations must accurately, reliably, and validly reflect the behaviors that have been recorded. (69-70)

Sampling units include not only individuals but could also include situations, time, social organizations, or interactive relationships. What is significant is that all sampling activities are theoretically informed and that “researchers ...place themselves in social situations where theoretically relevant observations can be gathered” (73). Using Sheri Cavan’s 1966 study of interactions in San Francisco bars, Denzin notes that Cavan’s activity was guided by “matters of convenience, personal knowledge, and emerging theoretical conceptualization. Many naturalistic studies,” he states, “follow a similar format.” (76).

In Denzin’s model,

Naturalists link their theoretical concepts to the empirical world through the collection of behavior specimens...... They attempt to secure several observations of their key concepts. They include as many behaviors as possible as indicators of the concept in
question, through the use of naturalistic indicators which ... derive (preferably spontaneously) from the subjects' world of meaning, action, and discourse. Such behavior is interpreted as being indicative of underlying sociological process. (94)

To assess these indicators, Denzin examines behavioral validity (how often does a specimen appear in the subject's behavior repertoire?) and observability,

the extent to which it is based on publicly observable acts and activities. The greater the public nature of the act, the greater its assumed validity. The naturalist places greatest weight on those behaviors that could have been observed and recorded by any other observer. (95)

These general rules, it must be noted, do not impose a fixed time period for observation on the researcher. Nor do they demand that a certain number of behavior specimens, or a fixed number of pages in a field notebook, be generated. Observations end when the researcher has generated a theory, or explanatory account, of the subject or social organization in question that is naturalistically grounded in the routine, repeatable behaviors of that acting unit.... Acts of any consequence and importance to a subject will be repeated, time and time again.” (97)

Denzin suggests a number of methods for collecting "behavior specimens” which were particularly applicable to my study. For example, many of my interviews could be characterized as “non-standardized sociological interviews”—which are actually akin to journalistic interviews—relatively unscheduled, not using the same questions asked in the same order for each respondent, not working with a list of information required from each respondent.

My role in the site visits falls into that category which Denzin calls “observer participant.” According to Denzin, “Investigations in which the researcher takes this strategy typically include only one visit—or interview—with the respondent” (165). Even longer-term studies such as Doheny-Farina’s and Cross’s might more accurately have been described as “observer
participation” than as “participant observation,” the principal methodology of ethnography. In contrast to the investigative stance of the observer-participant, the participant observer could become an actual member of the group. Denzin explains:

Participant observation is a commitment to adopt the perspective of those studied by sharing their day-to-day experiences. Participant observers do *ethnography*, which is the description, classification, and interpretation of a particular group's way of life. Participant observers are ethnographers, and part of what they do involves writing narratives about how they studied what they studied. (156)

The goal of this participation is to produce an understanding of the group or culture being studied. Such an understanding should permit the student of the culture to know “Whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves.” (Goodenough, 36 as quoted in Denzin 157)

My site visits involved both tape-recording and note-taking as I attended editorial board meetings, watched editorials being generated and edited, listened as writers conducted phone research, and, in general, observed the day-to-day activities of editorial writers and editors.

A third technique I found useful is described by Denzin as the “biographical method” which uses life histories or life stories to “present the experiences and definitions held by one person, one group, or one organization as this person, group or organization interprets those experiences. . . . A careful transcription of an interview, provided it does not intermix the interviewer's

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18 Denzin distinguished between them: “A life history... focuses on the experiences of a person, group, or organization... based on conversations and interviews... deals with what happened and how it happened.” “A life story focuses on a life, or a segment of a life, as reported by the individual in question.” (185-86)
own interpretations, is as much a form of life history data as a personal diary” (183). Not only did these life histories/stories provide “writers’ histories,” but they also facilitated my learning about pivotal incidents in a particular writer’s experience with the writing of editorials or with his or her newspaper. I gathered the life stories/histories during the interviews.

Interpreting the data thus collected is also subject to validation. Denzin states that

the greater the naturalistic grounding, the greater the assumed validity of the interpretation.... [The] greatest weight is placed on those interpretations that have withstood the impact of triangulated observations, ... greater weight to those acts that have been observed more than once. As acts critical to the emerging theory are located and discovered, multiple instances and reconstructions of them are sought out .... Those interpretations that survive the test of multiple theoretical perspectives are given greatest credence and attention. (98)

Denzin’s theoretical vantage is based on the work of C.S. Peirce, who describes the research process moving through phases:

The first phase, “abduction”... “occurs after a substantial body of data has been collected. ... The abductive insight forces the researcher to pause and ponder over the substance of the existing observational base. This insight suggests that there might be processes at work that are unknown or unthought of, producing the behaviors that he has recorded. (99)

“It is an act of insight, although of extremely fallible insight. It is true that the different elements of the hypothesis were in our minds before; but it is the idea of putting them together which flashed the new suggestions before our contemplation.” (qtd in Denzin 100, 181))

The second phase is a “rigorous deduction” ... in [which] the researcher is forced to systematically define critical concepts and inspect multiple instances of the behavior in question” (100). The third phase, “induction” asks “How far
those consequences [resulting from deductive application of the hypothesis] accord with experience" (Peirce 472, qtd in Denzin 100). In other words, "How many behavior specimens can be explained, or accounted for, by the hypothesis" (Denzin 100)?

Peirce's method of abduction, which "combines the deductive and inductive models of proposition development and theory construction" calls for the researcher to work back from "consequence to cause or antecedent" (100). It permits hypotheses to emerge from data, rather than deriving data to prove or disprove hypotheses whose formulation precedes the research acts. It encourages intuition and synthesis, recognizing that, in Denzin's words, "Facts do not speak for themselves. They must be interpreted" (100).

The Methods of This Study

Humanistic sociology is ethnographic, journalistic, and historical in nature and focuses on the interactions of persons in their natural social worlds.

—Denzin (46)

Before I could gather or interpret facts, I needed to determine how best to study "What we learn from writers when writing is the job," to rephrase Faigley and Miller. While my research might have been characterized as a description of "process" in Bereiter and Scardamalia's terms, it also needed to look at the activities, behaviors, and interactions of the writers in their work settings,

19 Denzin calls his methodology of interpretive interactionism an interpretive, symbolic, interactionist view of sociological theory and research methodology . . . with its roots in hermeneutics, critical theory, feminist theory, pragmatism, and symbolic interactionism, [which] stresses the self-reflective political nature of every-day and scientific conduct." (vii)

This seems to cover all the appropriate contemporary bases.
“processes” in Denzin’s terms. Because the writing processes and behaviors of professional writers\(^{20}\) had received little attention by composition scholars, developing methods to study those behaviors and processes was an essential part of this project. Again, by way of analogy, studying any number of collegiate high jumpers may tell us a lot about collegiate high jumping or about the culture of the collegiate track and field team. But such generalized study won’t tell us about Olympic high jumping form. And even studying Olympic form requires differentiating between the eras before and after Fosbury’s famous “Flop.” Thus, it is important to recognize that outstanding writers may provide different evidence than do average writers; and contemporary editorialists may offer different evidence than that of Donald Murray, who is frequently cited as a “professional writer” but who left his Pulitzer Prize-winning newspaper career for academics more than 20 years ago.

Past research in workplace writing has not only been distinguished by the methods used, as described above, but also by research conditions quite different from my own. Barabas cites as a major obstacle in her studying technical writing in a research and development organization the proprietary nature “of in-house technical reports—especially in the case of progress reports that are based on highly confidential research that may not be disclosed to the public, much less to all in-company personnel for weeks, months, or even years after a project has been completed” (xxxix). In Cross’s study, 77 days were required to write the management letter he studied. The business plan studied by Doheny-Farina was written over two months’ time. These researchers were able to review the many printed draft versions of the documents that had been

\(^{20}\) Again, “professional writers” is distinguished from those writing in the professions.
produced over the course of their research. All three researchers masked the companies and personnel they studied behind pseudonyms. The writing studied by each was directed to a specific audience. Contrast these experiences with studying the production of editorials which are written in extremely short time-frames—often from idea to newsstand in less than 24 hours. Routinely, all composing and editing is done on computer, with drafts only printed for rare special purposes. Because "freedom of information" is a journalistic tenet, the organizations and individuals I studied preferred openness to secrecy, and their names and their newspapers' names are freely cited. (Only one interviewee asked that her comments not be attributed.) Furthermore, while a specific editorial might be directed toward a specialized narrow audience—Congress, for example, or a city council, political leader, or other governing body—that editorial is readily accessible to the general public, can be stored in public archives, and will remain retrievable well into the future.

By setting the parameters for my visits or interviews, the individuals I studied provided the corollary to Spradley's dictum that informants "define what is important for the investigator to find out" (29). During either the telephone calls that preceded my visits and interviews or the interviews themselves, the editors or writers set the ground rules for my time with them: what could be tape recorded and who had time (and how much time) to spend with me. For example, my interview with Wall Street Journal editor Robert Bartley was rescheduled and slightly shortened to accommodate his appointment with the Secretary of Education. Two new editorial writers were

21 Such as a doctoral student asking for them. The only other situation in which printed drafts were produced were those of Thomas Hylton's Pulitzer series which he had sent to his brother to edit.
self-conscious about my standing over their shoulders as they wrote, but the "old hands" seemed to welcome the attention. Because editorials are usually written about current issues or event, the subject matter of the writing I studied was determined by what was happening out in the world, nation, or community—such as the Flag Day editorial written on June 13 for the June 14 Philadelphia Daily News or the Dayton Daily News's longer-term editorial investigation of abandoned toxic industrial sites.

Selection Process

While it had been my intention to conduct ten interviews with good editorial writers of differing backgrounds (age, ethnicity, gender) from a variety of newspapers (low, medium, and high circulation), the realities of accessibility and the demographics of the editorial-writing population changed that intent, and selection was made arbitrarily, circumscribed largely by accessibility and my financial resources. To account for the culturally determined definitions of "skilled" or "successful" writer raised in Chapter I, I decided to select writers who had won major awards for editorial writing: the Pulitzer Prize or the Walker Stone Award (which is presented annually by the Scripps-Howard Foundation). By using award-winning editorial writers as my subjects, I could be assured of an external judgment in determining that my subjects were, indeed, good—as well as experienced—writers. After all, as A.C. Purves and W. Purves note, "It is the culture, finally [that] establishes standards for good writing" (193).

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22 The responsible compositionist adopts the principles as well as the practices of social science: "In research, an anthropologist's paramount responsibility is to those he studies. When there is a conflict of interest, these individuals must come first" (Spradley 35 quoting the Principles of Professional Responsibility, 1971, para. 1).
Using almanac listings, I wrote to all those winning the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing since 1978 who were in geographical areas to which I could have reasonable expectation of gaining access by virtue of either driving time, cheap fares, convenient flying schedules, serendipity, or some combination thereof, and also to two additional writers, Walker Stone awardees who also met my arbitrary conditions of access. Thus, the *Dayton Daily News* (Hap Cawood) was within driving distance. The *Chicago Tribune* (Lois Wylie) was a brief flight away. The *St. Paul Pioneer Press Dispatch* (Ann Daly Goodwin) and Jonathan Freedman (formerly of the *San Diego Tribune*) could be reached en route to a family occasion on the west coast. Philadelphia (Rich Aregood at the *Philadelphia Daily News*), New York (Robert Bartley, editor of *The Wall Street Journal*; Jack Rosenthal of the *New York Times*; and the current home of Albert Scardino, former editor of the now defunct *Georgia Gazette*), and Pottstown, PA (Thomas Hylton, editorial writer of the *Pottstown Mercury*) were close together and also a relatively easy air trip away. The *Miami Herald* (the entire editorial board) and *Orlando Sentinel* (Jane Healy) were similarly proximal, as were the *Washington Post* (Meg Greenfield) and the Virginia home of the retired Edwin Yoder. Difficult access had ruled out the 1991 winners in Shrevesport, Louisiana. These writers were sent letters (see Appendix A) either to their newspapers or to addresses obtained from *Who’s Who* explaining the purposes of my project and asking if I could come and either interview them for an hour or visit their editorial department for one to three days. Ann Daly Goodwin, Jonathan Freedman, and Albert Scardino responded by mail agreeing to be interviewed. The *New York Times* refused to grant any interview or visit explaining on a preprinted card that “the volume of requests outstrips the ability to fulfill them.” Joanna Wragg, associate editor of the *Miami Herald*
telephoned with an enthusiastic response, inviting me also to attend the
convention of the National Conference of Editorial Writers. All the others
required follow-up phone calls. Ultimately, Lois Wylie was retiring and would
have left *The Chicago Tribune* by the time I could visit Chicago. Meg Greenfield's
office was unable to set an appointment though “perhaps could squeeze [me] in
if [I] happened to be in Washington at the same time as Ms. Greenfield.” I was
unable to find a phone number for the second writer in the Washington area,
Edwin Yoder, and so could not follow up on my request. Although Jonathan
Freedman agreed to be interviewed, I was unable to travel to San Diego to see
him.

I was thus able to interview from my initial list of prize winners Hap
Cawood, Albert Scardino, Robert Bartley, Richard Aregood, Thomas Hylton,
Ann Daly Goodwin, Joanna Wragg, and Jane Healy.

As well as this group of writers who had been the initial focus of my
study, the project’s momentum led me to other writers whose observations
broadened and enriched my perspectives. Because I wanted to be sure that the
understanding of editorial writing I had drawn from textbooks and journals was
adequate preparation for my site visits, I wanted to find a well-regarded
editorial writer that I could talk to first, to try out my questions and to gain
further direction. Fortunately Joe Stroud, an editor and senior vice president of
*The Detroit Free Press*, who had long been active in the National Conference of
Editorial Writers and was currently the president of that organization’s
foundation, was within driving distance and was willing to talk with me. In
addition, when I reached the various newspaper sites, several of the editors
assumed I would want to talk with members of their editorial writing staffs and
encouraged those discussions. Thus, I added to my list Ellen Belcher and Martin
Gottlieb at the *Dayton Daily News*; Linda Wright Moore and Don Harrison at the *Philadelphia Daily News*; at *The Miami Herald*, editor Jim Hampton and writer Robert Sanchez who with Mrs. Wragg had been members of the 1983 award-winning editorial board, writers Ramon Mestre and Tony Proscio, and letters editor Zulay Chirinos; and Leslie Doolittle, David Porter, Clint McCarthy, and Charlie Reese at the *Orlando Sentinel*. Finally, at the NCEW convention, I sought out or was introduced to other writers who offered their vantage on editorial writing: While at the conference, I conducted (and taped) interviews with Robert Pittman, vice president and editor of editorials of the *St. Petersburg Times*; Paul Greenberg, Pulitzer Prize winning editorial page editor of the *Pine Bluff Commercial*; Susan Albright, editorial page editor of the *Tuscon Star*; Jerry Donau, editorial page editor of the *Arkansas Gazette* and the past president of NCEW; Martha Musgrove of *The Miami Herald*; Linda Goyette of the Edmonton, Alberta (Canada) *Journal*; and talked less formally, but nonetheless specifically about the questions of my research, with Joe Geschwiler of the *Atlanta Constitution*; Morgan McGinley, editorial page editor of *The Day*; Phineas Fiske, assistant editorial page editor of *Newsday*; Donald Kimelman, deputy editorial page editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*; and Ronald Clark, editorial page editor of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*.

**The Interviewer**

Recognizing that the researcher is not a neutral instrument, one of the conventions of naturalistic research calls for a description of the interviewer as well as the interviewees; thus this brief history. Currently a doctoral candidate at The Ohio State University, I returned to graduate school some 20 years after receiving my initial degree, a B.S. in international agricultural development. Having entered graduate school because I wanted to teach writing, my work has
been motivated by that goal. Before beginning the doctoral program at Ohio State, I had completed a Master of Arts in the Teaching of Writing at Humboldt State University in California. The cultural and epistemological disadvantage I have felt entering English academia relatively late in life proved an advantage as I re-entered the journalistic world of my subjects—a world that I first entered in 1954 as editor of the Edison Eagle, my elementary school “newspaper.” Although my only formal course in journalism was in the ninth grade (a competitively-entered class which produced the school newspaper, literary magazine—both of which I had the opportunity to edit—and yearbook), I was an active staff member of the California Aggie, the student newspaper of the University of California, Davis. (Until beginning my dissertation, however, I had forgotten that I was also the opinion editor of the Aggie, writing a number of editorials myself.) In the 20 years between my college graduation and the beginning of my graduate education in English, I worked in various aspects of professional communications: medical writing, corporate communications, public relations, and newspaper writing, to name a few. Working with the news media was my daily bread and butter; interactions with people who made their livings from their writing skills (though few would have called themselves “writer,” and none, “author”) constituted my cultural milieu. Moreover, in-depth interviewing was a requisite of my profession. I have interviewed authors, artists, bankers, and bakers for magazines, newspapers, and organizational publications. Thus, I brought an atypical experience to the research process. Although my background provided a general foundation for my study, I also made specific preparations.

Perhaps the invocation of journalistic method in the teaching of composition (the who, what, when, where, why, how “formula” of invention)
justifies the reporter’s method of seeking “my” story. While the ethnographer should visit her site with a *tabula rasa*, an alien visiting the foreign culture, the reporter first does her homework. Recognizing she may have only a brief time with her “informants,” she wants to be prepared to ask the right questions. When opportunities present themselves for gaining knowledge, she needs to know what those opportunities mean and be able to garner something from them. Thus, before beginning my interviews, I read three major textbooks on editorial writing: Kenneth Rystrom’s *Who, What and Why of the Editorial Page*; Harry Stonecipher’s *Editorial and Persuasive Writing*; and William Rivers’ *Writing Opinion: Editorials*. I had read through ten years of *The Masthead*, the quarterly publication of the National Conference of Editorial Writers (although what I read in *The Masthead* made more sense after I attended the NCEW conference). I also read regularly the newspapers that were available in The Ohio State University library: *Detroit Free Press*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Miami Herald*, and *Dayton Daily News*. Because I was explicitly looking for ways that editorial writing might be congruent with rhetoric and composition, I was, of course, familiar with the theory and practice of the teaching of composition. I also read any of the biographies of my interviewees that had appeared in *Who’s Who*.

**Site Visits**

My field work took me to nine sites, four at which I conducted interviews with a single individual and five to newspapers where I conducted formal or informal interviews with all of the editors (all award winners) and some of the writers, attended editorial board meetings, and observed/took notes of writing and editing.

The initial purposes of the formal interviews were (1) to describe for editorial writers “writers’ histories” in the manner of Biagi (1987) and Waldrep
(1985 & 1988) and thus establish an understanding of the term "editorial writer" which extends beyond the demographic depiction; (2) to understand the contexts in which the writers see their work and how both the contexts themselves and the knowledge of those contexts compare with those of writers in other settings—academic and nonacademic; and (3) to determine what other research methods would be appropriate and feasible to a naturalistic study of editorial writers. The interviews which were separate from other data gathering at newspaper sites were conducted with Joe Stroud, editor of the Detroit Free Press, at his office, Robert Bartley, editor of the Wall Street Journal, at his office, Albert Scardino, former editor of Georgia Gazette, at his home, and Ann Daly Goodwin of the St. Paul Pioneer Press over lunch at a St. Paul restaurant.

My first interview was with Joe Stroud, editor and senior vice president of the Detroit Free Press, a Knight-Ridder newspaper with a circulation of more than 600,000 (one of the nation's 10 largest). As I mentioned above, my interview with Mr. Stroud was a testing ground for my questions and the source of great encouragement. (Subsequently at the NCEW convention, Joe Stroud took me under his wing, introduced me to those he felt I could learn from, and said encouraging words about my project. After he announced at one of the conference sessions what I was doing, other journalists came up to me to ask if they could be part of my study.)

Robert Bartley, editor of The Wall Street Journal and winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1980, provided a contrast to the urban general readership of the Free Press. Readership of the Journal, a newspaper with international significance, and a circulation of more than 1.8 million, comprises, says Mr. Bartley, an audience of sophisticated college graduates with family incomes that exceed
$80,000 annually. "Our audience is not one that is easily swayed," he says. Nonetheless, he states, "We have probably had more impact over the course of events in the past decade than any other editorial page."

When I visited Albert Scardino in his home, he had only months before resigned as press secretary to New York Mayor Dinkins. When he won the Pulitzer in 1984, he was editing a small family-owned weekly newspaper in Savannah, Georgia. For him, "believing in something is something other than the corporate health of a Fortune 500 company." He told me that his approach was "to define the debate, establish an agenda for discussion, and state 'this is where I stand.' If you drift along with the powers that be, drift with the power of the moment, you can't lead the population to a better society or to a better informed world."

Ann Daly Goodwin received the Scripps Howard Foundation's Walker Stone Award in 1989. A writer for the St. Paul Pioneer Press Dispatch (circ. 200,508), Mrs. Goodwin had taught English and journalism for more than 20 years before entering the newspaper world relatively late in her career. Known for her feeling-intense editorials, Mrs. Goodwin wanted to be sure I understood that editorial writers "need to be careful not to put too much importance on our impact." Nonetheless, when Mrs. Goodwin wrote an editorial opposing corporal punishment in Minnesota schools, a supporting legislator told her "I put a copy of your editorial on every legislator's desk." "And that," she said, "made me feel wonderful."

The visits to the newspapers provided even greater insight into and understanding of the writing of editorials and the work of the editorial writer. At the Dayton Daily News (circ. 178,615) I attended and tape recorded an editorial board meeting, tape recorded interviews with editor Hap Cawood and
writers Ellen Belcher and Martin Gottlieb; observed an editorial being written and responded to on-screen by members of the editorial staff; and talked informally with the editorial page staff over lunch.

At the Philadelphia Daily News (a tabloid with a large “blue-collar” audience, circ. 232,129), I also attended an editorial board meeting, interviewed editor Rich Aregood, conducted and tape recorded informal interviews with Linda Wright Moore and Don Harrison, observed the editorial page being edited, observed the generation of an editorial; and talked informally with associate page editor Don Harrison over lunch.

I spent six hours with editorial page editor Thomas Hylton at the Pottstown (PA) Mercury (circ. 18,000) beginning with his Meals on Wheels route and continuing in his office and at his home. Although he asked not to be taped recorded, I took extensive notes.)

I spent two days at the Miami Herald (circ. 427,954) attending editorial board meetings (regular and special); conducting and tape-recording one hour individual interviews with all available staff members as they had time: Jim Hampton, editor; Joanna Wragg, associate editor; editorial writers Robert Sanchez (abridged due to an unexpected editorial board meeting); Ramon Mestre, and Tony Proscio; and letters editor Zulay Chirinos. (Four of the writers were either on vacation, out of the office, or too busy to be interviewed the days of my visit.) I chatted informally with Joanna Wragg over lunch in the Herald’s cafeteria and went to lunch the following day with Ramon Mestre and a Cuban-American reporter to one of Miami’s Cuban restaurants.

I visited the Orlando Sentinel (circ. 266,549) for one day, attending their editorial board meeting, interviewing editor Jane Healy and editorial cartoonists Ralph Dunagin and Dana Summers who also collaboratively produce the
nationally-syndicated comic strip "The Middletons." I also talked briefly with editorial board members David Porter, the chief editorial writer; Leslie Doolittle, and Clint McCarthy; and talked informally with columnist Charlie Reese over lunch in the Sentinel lunchroom.

**NCEW Conference**

Subsequently, I attended the annual convention of the National Conference of Editorial Writers in Salt Lake City at the invitation of association president Joanna Wragg and with a travel grant provided by the association's foundation. While I had envisioned attending sessions and sitting in on critiquing workshops, I did not realize that my interview file would grow so precipitously and so valuably. With notebook and tape recorder in my purse, I turned lunches, bus trips, and breaks into interview opportunities. Journalists I met during critique sessions provided me with copies of critique session responses and the newspapers on which those comments were based. Spending more than a day in high-level sessions related to the current crisis in national health care expenditures demonstrated the depth of research editorialists feel they need before crafting their relatively brief texts. These opportunities enabled me to see further what the association and its members valued.

**Methods of Interviews**

Individual interviews began with a brief explanation of my purpose and a request that the interview be taped. Although I began the project with a list of 20 questions (See Appendix B), that list was modified in general...
particular from interview to interview as my study followed its course. For example, my preparatory research had described the purposes of the editorial as "to educate, inform, persuade, and entertain," but early on, it became apparent that for these leading editorial writers, the editorial was much more. To Albert Scardino, the editorial page was "the soul of the newspaper." For Martha Musgrave, it was the opportunity "to make a difference." For Ann Daly Goowin, editorial writing required "passion." These kinds of responses encouraged me to focus more on ethos and pathos and less, say, on the appropriate education for an editorial writer. As editors and editorial writers described methods of response which were closely akin to methods of contemporary composition—findings I had not anticipated—I looked for further evidence of these manifestations in my interviews and visits. A discussion of the collaborative relationship between the two editorial cartoonists of the Orlando Sentinel provided a new avenue to explore but which was beyond the scope of this dissertation.

In the early stages of my field work, I transcribed the full interviews that I conducted. However, as the volume of tapes increased (almost 40 hours) and the amount of time decreased, I transcribed only relevant portions of the tapes as guided by my notes. Because of the numbers of voices, editorial board meetings proved almost impossible to transcribe rationally, and for these I relied on my notes.

Methods of triangulation

As well as triangulation by method (tape recordings, interview notes in response to my questions, observation notes during editorial board meetings, notes taken while an editorial was being written or edited, rhetorical analyses of published editorials), my research was also triangulated by data source. Data
sources ("different data areas in which the same event occurs" [Denzin 23] e.g., the writing of an editorial, editing it, etc.) can also be triangulated by time, space, and person. Thus, attending editorial board meetings at four different newspapers validates interpretation of the functions of such events. Similarly watching how "responding" works both at newspapers and at the NCEW critique sessions substantiates the validity of that evidence.

Conducting the research and interpreting the evidence as social scientist, journalist, compositionist, and rhetorician also permits triangulation by theory. As a naturalistic social scientist, I visited the worksites of my "informants" properly prepared to gather those behavior specimens from which I could generate an "explanatory account" of the units I was studying. As a journalist, I was an active interviewer, probing for the facts—the who, what, when, where, why, and how of my informants' knowledge. I interpreted those facts as a compositionist and as a rhetorician. As a compositionist, I focused on the aspects of the editorialist's work that related to the writer's process: voice, collaboration, the interaction with technology, and the acts of composing, editing and responding. As a rhetorician, I examined manifestations of classical rhetoric in the contemporary editorial department and the rhetorical elements of the written texts.

This chapter has attempted to answer two of the general questions raised in Chapter I:

How can we draw upon other disciplines such as sociology to help us refine and pursue the questions we are beginning to ask?

What new procedures seem especially suited to our new questions?

It remains to demonstrate these methods and procedures at work in examining the central concerns of this study:
• How editorial writers generate their texts
• The ways in which these writers and their writings are similar to and different from other writers described in the literature
• The contexts in which the editorial writers under study write
• How technology affects their writing
• The kinds of collaboration that are characteristic of editorial writing
• What observable processes, activities, and behaviors these editorial writers exhibit
• The extent to which these processes, activities, and behaviors are described by any existing model proposed in composition studies and rhetoric and
• The ways the processes, activities, and behaviors of editorial writers differ—both from the models and from one another.

From my interviews and observations, it became apparent that much of the editorialist's *raison d'être* and *raison de travailler*, so to speak, were extra-textual. To determine how these editorial writers generated their texts required an overarching framework, one that could account for what precedes the act of inscribing a text as well as the writing itself. Thus, I turned to rhetoric, which in providing since classical times a basis for looking at the speaker as well as the spoken would allow me to look at the writer, as well as the written: at the writers' intrinsic motivations emanating from *ethos* and *pathos*; the interactions between editorialists; and the place of orality in their work. The next chapter invokes and explores that classical framework.
CHAPTER III
CLASSICAL RHETORIC AT WORK

What other power could either have assembled mankind, when dispersed into one place, or brought them from wild and savage life to the present humane and civilized state of society; or when cities were established, have described for them laws, judicial institutions, and rights?

—Cicero, De Oratore, (Bk I, VII)

The rhetorical aspects and antecedents of workplace writing have only recently been rediscovered. Perhaps as a way to justify the inclusion of workplace writing in more traditional English studies or even to legitimate the study of professional writing as an academic subject, the work of the past 20 years or so seeks to recover the previous 2000. In fact, when John Hagge in his 1989 article "The Spurious Paternity of Business Communication Principles" chides researchers in business communication for not looking past the early

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2 Robert Connors wrote in 1982 that "technical writing has been accepted as an important part of the discipline of English ... since the lean times when it was a poor cousin to literary studies in English departments, to its present eminence as a center of vital scholarly and pedagogic activity" (329). That technical—and business and professional communication—are indeed centers of "vital and scholarly activity" is certainly true. However, their acceptance "as an important part of the discipline of English" is arguable at many major universities; Ohio State's English department, for example, has been forced to eliminate a number of business and technical writing classes from its course offerings because of budgetary constraints. The "poor cousin" metaphor for the position of workplace writing in the English studies family is explored extensively in Chapter V. Kitty Locker's "Making Business Communication Courses Academically Respectable" provides further insight on this concern.
twentieth century for the antecedents to busines communication principles, he states

these principles are in fact commonplaces in a 2000-year-old rhetorical tradition. Specifically, such principles first were annunciated in ancient Greek epistolographic manuals, a fact heretofore unacknowledged in the annals of business communication (34).³

And while the rhetoric of current organizational communication—particularly business, technical, and scientific writings—can be found in such journals as The Technical Communication Quarterly (formerly Technical Writing Teacher), Journal of Technical Writing and Communication, Technical Communication, and the Journal of Business Communication, as well as occasionally in the mainstream composition and rhetoric journals⁴—there remain those who believe that workplace writing should not be complicated by rhetorical theory. Elizabeth Tebeaux’s “Let’s Not Ruin Technical Writing, Too” exemplifies this viewpoint. Plato notwithstanding, the study of workplace rhetoric needed far less justification in ancient times than it still seems to need today. After all, the fora and courts of the ancient Greeks and Romans were workplaces, and oratory was the work performed there.

Similarly, in the American nineteenth century, oratorial rhetoric was a necessary subject in the University curriculum of young men who were expected to have public lives—notably ministers and civic leaders. The pulpit, the courts, and the political fora were their workplaces, their venues for arguing and persuading as they had been for the ancients. Letter writing (for business as well

³ And since Hagge’s sources, particularly Demetrius of Phalerum, Cicero, Seneca, Philostratus, and St. Gregory Nazianzus (47), were all pre-dated by Isocrates, Aristotle, and the other earliest rhetoricians, the association between rhetorical and epistolographic principles must have been inevitable.

⁴ The bibliographic essay “Technical Communication and Rhetoric,” of Roger E. Masse and Martha Delamater Benz is particularly helpful.
as personal purposes) was also considered appropriate for inclusion in nine-
teenth century rhetoric textbooks. In the 1860 edition of Elements of Rhetoric,
Henry Coppée writes that letters were the “most natural” form of written dis-
course, and “after oratory ... approach most nearly a personal address” (159).
He continues

There are as many kinds of letters as there are forms of association,
or relation, domestic, social civic or official; and each peculiar cir-
cumstance will dictate the character and manner of the letter; thus
in letters of business, or official letters, the design of the writer is to
express himself firmly, clearly, and concisely: to introduce nothing
episodical, or foreign to the subject; and above all, to be brief;
remembering that busy men have not time to read long letters.
(159-60)

Coppée also cautions that letters should be answered when they are received.5
He explains, “although no part of Rhetoric, the caution will be pardoned on ac-
count of its practical use; and indeed the rhetorical character of the answer de-
pends somewhat upon the freshness of the impression made by the letter upon
the mind” (160). By 1871, letter-writing had become in G.P. Quackenbos’s Advanced Course of Composition and Rhetoric “one of the most important branches of
composition” (356). But as well as the by then conventional letters of business,
friendship, condolence, congratulation, and introduction, Quackenbos
introduces

News letters, or communications to papers or periodicals,
containing accounts of what has happened or is happening else-
where than at the place of publication.

Such communications have lately become popular, and now form a feature of
almost all leading newspapers. In these letters, profundity is not expected, un-
less they treat of political, religious, or other serious topics. They should rather
be characterized by brilliancy of thought, and an original, striking mode of ex-

5 Quackenbos modifies Coppée’s advice urging a prompt reply for “Every letter, not
insulting” (358).
pression. Their effect may often be increased by strokes of humor, and what is commonly called piquancy, or a pleasing vein of sarcasm on persons and things in general. Taste and judgment are required for a proper selection of subjects. The space allowed, being generally limited, should be filled to the best advantage. Local matters should be avoided; it is well to introduce no topics but those of general interest.  

Other aspects of rhetoric, particularly style and arrangement, are found in all the letter-writing sections of early composition textbooks. And of course, as textbooks emerged solely for business correspondence, their foci could only be considered rhetorical—whether described by that name or not. George Burton Hotchkiss, considered by many the father of articulated business communication principles, enumerated in 1916 what became the famous “5 C’s” of business correspondence: clearness, correctness, conciseness, courtesy, and character. And while Hagge acknowledges their ancient origins, he does not note that the “C’s” are recent offspring of the eighteenth and nineteenth century rhetorical principles of purity, propriety, perspicuity, precision, and plain style. Rhetorical analyses of public discourse have also been a feature of rhetoric as studied by speech-rhetoric departments, to a far greater extent that can be included here.

Yet the workplace of my interest, the editorial page, has received little attention by rhetoricians whose interest is the teaching of writing. Although considerations of arrangement—the well-known journalistic pyramid—and invention—the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the so-called journalistic

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6 Inasmuch as journalism was considered a craft until after the turn of the century (and there are some old hands who still do not hold much truck with journalism education), this may well be the earliest academic reference to journalistic principles, notable also for its association with rhetoric. By 1916, The Ohio State University included a journalism curriculum in its College of Commerce and Journalism: also offered in this college were courses in social work, business administration, public service, economics, sociology, and charity organization.

7 A fuller discussion of the shift from the P’s to the C’s is the subject of another work in progress, but is mentioned here to affirm the continuous strong strand of rhetoric that has run continuously through the entire skein of workplace writing.
formula—and style have been part of journalism for more than a century, they have not been associated (in journalism) with rhetoric. In the news media today, we are far more likely to see “rhetoric” paired with “empty” or opposed by “reality.” And despite the persuasive, and therefore necessarily rhetorical nature of the editorial, “rhetoric” does not appear in the indices of editorial writing textbooks by Kenneth Rystrom, Harry W. Stonecipher, William Rivers, et al., nor John L. Hultung. Yet, what a rhetorician would consider the constituent parts of rhetoric are certainly present. In a chapter on editorial credibility, Stonecipher quotes directly from Aristotle’s Rhetoric: “‘persuasion is achieved by the speaker’s personal character when the speech is so spoken to make us think him credible. We believe good men more fully and more readily than others’” (156). Stonecypher quotes verbatim from the W. Rhys Roberts translation of the Rhetoric (1356a) but chooses not to cite the source of his quotation. Kenneth Rystrom, too, quotes Aristotle on credibility but cites his three quotations from secondary sources. Even the commonly accepted purposes of an editorial—in Stonecipher’s words, “to 1) inform or explain, 2) persuade or convince, or 3) stimulate insight in an entertaining or humorous manner” (23)—sound remarkably similar to Campbell’s “All the ends of speaking are reducible to four: every speech being intended to enlighten the understanding, to please the imagination, to move the passions, or influence the will” (145). The author of the oldest text on editorial writing, Chilton R. Bush, acknowledges “Genung’s The Working

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8 The journalistic formula is a popular invention heuristic in composition, but its simplistic application betrays a limited knowledge of the journalistic principles which underpin it.

9 Hultung does, however, warn against “rhetorical overkill” because of which he says, “a good many editorials are marred, sometimes fatally, by the writer’s inability to control his flow of words” (79).

10 One wonders if these gentlemen are afraid to corrupt their textbooks with the taint of “Rhetoric,” while preserving the scholarly sanctity bestowed by using the name of Aristotle.
Principles of Rhetoric for the help it afforded in the preparation of the chapter on
editorial style” (xi). After selecting a topic, Rystrom tells his readers to deter­
mine purpose, audience, and tone, and then offers instruction for researching
the subject, determining the general format, and writing the beginning, the
body, and the conclusion of the editorial (144-170). Stonecipher states that

one or more of the following elements . . . are usually found in the
opening lines of most persuasive messages: 1) an *exordium*, to
arouse sympathy and interest in the subject or issue being dealt
with, 2) a brief *narrative*, to give the pertinent background of the
subject or issue, and 3) a *partition*, stating the theses or giving a hint
of the conclusion or an indication of how the editorial arguments
will be delivered. (116)

Actual practice goes even further than do the textbooks on editorial writ­
ing in employing what many would consider the spiritual as well as the techni­
cal principles of rhetoric. As this chapter will show, the emotional appeal, dis­
missed by Stonecipher as “irrational evidence” tantamount to propaganda (141),
is held in far better stead by the editorial writers with whom I spoke. *Ethos* rep­
resents far more than a basis for suasory argument. The use of commonplaces is
more than an academic exercise. In fact, when rhetoric is truly a way of life,
rather than a subject for academic study or a means for teaching writing, any in­
dividual who lives that life today—such as the editorial writer—evides consid­
erable congruence with the orator of classical times. When seen from this van­
tage, then, *ethos, pathos, and logos* are not only Aristotle’s designations for the
three modes of persuasion listable as discrete taxa, but express the interrelated
qualities of the ideal orator him- (and now also her-) self. This view argues

11 Bush discusses “clearness,” “force,” “vigor,” “the periodic sentence,” “climax,” “iteration,”
“antithesis,” “irony,” “litotes,” and even “the rhetorical question” (353-377).

12 The *Ad Herennium* is not acknowledged.
against using *ethos* only in the sense of honing arguments that make the character of the speaker look right and *pathos* only as manipulating the emotions of an audience, considering them instead as the foundation for persuasive discourse developed by an individual who is truly sympathetic to audience and cause, who is truly good, moral, and ethical.

Situating these expressions of rhetoric in the workplace permits us to see, first, the extent to which practices of ancient western rhetoric are used today for more than academic purposes; second, that those academic purposes—notably the teaching of composition—can be enhanced by recognizing and understanding that these modern displays of classical practice can be salubriously incorporated into writing pedagogies; and third, that there is historical and contemporary justification for rhetoric to be considered not only as a means of persuasion, not only as a way of thinking or knowing, but also as a way of being.

As discussed earlier, the evidence on which these conclusions are based emerged from observations of and discussions with editorialists. None of the editorialists I talked to believed that they had any knowledge of the subject matter of rhetoric. Yet rhetorical themes came forth repeatedly in editorial board

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13 Albert Kitzhaber, Michael Halloran, James Berlin, and James J. Murphy, among many latter-day rhetoricians, have noted the accelerated abandonment in educational institutions of classical rhetoric since the latter quarter of the nineteenth century; and we are all aware of its gradual restoration, particularly since the publication in 1965 of Edward P. J. Corbett's *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. For the most part, however, interpretations and applications of rhetoric have remained within the province of pedagogy, although scholars in business and technical communication (particularly in such journals as Technical Communication, Journal of Technical Writing and Communication, and the Journal of Business and Technical Communication) have been identifying the persuasive elements of writing in the workplace—and not without controversy as noted above. And, too, it has been claimed that classical rhetoric is inappropriately applied in our current day (Susan Jarrett, in conversation) or that its rigidity is philosophically incompatible with the freer-thinking aspects of the teaching-writing-as-process movement. (See, notably, Berlin and Knoblauch and Brannon). My point here is that classical rhetoric, though not identified as such, is routinely part of the work world of editorialists, that the art is part of the life.
meetings, during interviews, in the editorialists’ writing, and in their own commentary both during their convention and in their publication *The Masthead*.

Analyzing the data gathered from my field studies and interviews demonstrated the editorialist’s considerable resonance with the classical orator and the manifestations of classical rhetoric which appear in contemporary editorial writing: including such features as *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos*; the nature of argument; the five canons of Roman rhetoric—invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery; and the purposes of the classical oration. I discuss at length those features of rhetoric which appear to be far more important in the workplace than in the textbooks, either of journalism or composition, and which are particularly suggestive for the way we teach writing: *ethos*, and *pathos* as qualities that enable arguments, and “methods” (used for want of a better word) of invention which have not been described as such in our own literature. “Because it emerged as the dominant theme in discussions with writers and editors, *Ethos* in the Editorialist and on the Editorial Page,” begins this chapter.
Ethos in the Editorialist and on the Editorial Page

You will be struck by [the editorial's] peculiar style, and may be interested to know that it was written by General Otis himself (one of the most corrupt and most violent old men that ever appeared in public life), being a fair sample of the vitriol which every day for thirty years he poured out upon everything enlightened in California.

—Upton Sinclair (1920) Referring to an editorial appearing in about 1916 in the Los Angeles Times (The Brass Check: A Study of American Journalism. 200)

To offer fair and informed comment on issues important to the community, to foster public debate, to give a voice to the public, to produce pages that contribute to bettering the community and society.


From vitriol to veracity, from a voice of the powerful to a voice for the public, the American newspaper editorial, like the American newspaper itself, has undergone a considerable transformation over the past 100 years. In major newspapers today, publishers' voices are rarely heard nor their self-interest represented on the editorial pages. Editorial writing has become its own profession, with a professional association founded in 1947, and with its own standards of conduct. The "Basic Statement of Principles" of the National Conference of Editorial Writers (Appendix C) describes "editorial writing [as] more than another way of making money. It is a profession devoted to the public welfare and to public service. The chief duty of its practitioners is to provide the information and guidance toward sound judgments that are essential to the healthy
functioning of a democracy." For most of the writers I studied, moral purpose and ethical intent were at the forefront of their writing. For example, when I first talked to Pulitzer Prize-winning Thomas Hylton of the Pottstown Mercury by telephone, he was quick to state, "I'm not a newspaperman, I'm a do-gooder."

A strong ethical or moral dimension of editorial writing—the writer as "do-gooder"—is touched on only sparingly in journalism textbooks, where discussion of ethics generally relates to subjects of accuracy, not accepting gifts from sources, or writing about issues in which the writer has a vested interest. Nor does the ethical dimension appear as a featured aspect of rhetorical studies. In her essay "Ethos and the Aims of Rhetoric," Nan Johnson states

> Despite the advocacy of influential theorists such as Weaver and Booth, there is no representative group of texts in contemporary education that defines ethos as a prerequisite virtue or reiterates the neo-Platonic attitude that the rhetorician must be a good person dedicated to advancing the ideals of truth. . . . The majority of instructors in rhetoric view the issue of ethical intention to be a concern that falls outside the sphere of pedagogy, and philosophical studies in rhetoric have not succeeded in restoring to rhetorical education a focus on the moral obligations of rhetoric and the ethical responsibility of the writer. (114)

Before we can restore such a moral and ethical focus—the kind of ethical and moral intent I believe is exemplified in the editorialists I studied—to rhetorical studies, we need to understand why it isn't there in the first place. Furthermore, to understand that absence of "ethos as a prerequisite virtue" requires understanding how "ethos" is currently construed, how those constructs

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14 William Rivers, Bryce McIntyre, and Alison Work, for example, in their text *Writing Opinion: Editorials* drops the 1974 NCEW Statement of Principles into their third chapter, "The Purposes and Forms of the Editorial," but provides no additional commentary about the principles nor about ethics. (Curiously, although this book was published in 1988, they chose not to use the 1975 NCEW Statement of Principles which is distinguished from the earlier version by its gender-free language.)
fend off a definition of ethos that does include those "neo-Platonic\textsuperscript{15}" moral and ethical implications, and how the current understanding of "ethical" precludes the "issue of ethical intention" falling inside the "sphere of pedagogy." Thus, the first part of this section will discuss the classical view of ethos and representative contemporary scholarship that interprets the classical tradition. In clarifying the historical basis for the current understanding of ethos, I will also differentiate between ethos, ethics, and ethical intent as these terms are used in a number of disciplines. Following this historical foundation, I will explain how these different interpretations of ethos resist a definition of ethos that does include moral and ethical intent, and examining considerations of ethos that inform today's teaching of writing, paying particular attention to the influence of literary theory on these concerns. Then, drawing on the data collected in my interviews and fieldwork, I will describe the ways in which moral and ethical considerations play an important part in the writing of contemporary editorialists. And finally I will show how we can redefine ethos in such a way that an ethical dimension can be restored to rhetorical education.

Johnson's statement (above) not only identifies the absence of an important dimension of rhetorical education, but also makes explicit the disciplinary boundaries that shape our consideration of "moral obligations" and "ethical responsibility." "The majority of instructors in rhetoric" to whom Johnson refers reside in the sphere of rhetoric and composition; not in speech communication where most of the work on rhetorical ethics has been undertaken; nor in philosophy where most of the scholarship on ethics is situated; nor in law, business, or journalism where students are likely to find academic courses with "ethics" in

\textsuperscript{15} A different conception of neo-Platonic than that of Berlin as discussed in Chapter I.
the titles. And because the concept of *ethos* taught in a philosophy class may be very different from that taught in a history of rhetoric class, which, in turn, may be very different from that taught in a technical writing course, we see little bibliographic overlap between, say, the extensive bibliography compiled in Broadie’s *Ethics With Aristotle* and Antczak and Brinton’s “The Ethics of Rhetoric: A Bibliography,” other than the primary Aristotelian sources. If we are confused by the number of significations of *ethos*, it may well be because, since antiquity, we have had but one signifier. In directing my comments to those parts of the conversation that are taken up by “compositional rhetoricians,”16 I want to make explicit not only how these various significations of *ethos* have informed our own understanding of the term, but also that our classical heritage already provides the substrata from which ethical intent can be restored to the definition of *ethos*.17

Because Aristotle specifically and extensively discusses *ethos* in the *Rhetoric*, his definitions and uses of “*ethos*” have become the standards either to follow or to resist in current practice. Aristotle considers *ethos*, the appeal from the orator’s character, one of three *pisteis* or means of persuasion, which also include *logos* (the appeal from reason) and *pathos* (the appeal from emotion). In the

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16 My neologism “compositional rhetoric” acknowledges the historically different concerns of rhetoricians situated in departments of speech communications and those in departments of English. This disciplinary exclusivity establishes boundaries which provide structure to a field of study but, accordingly, delimit which scholarship may legitimately inform that field of study.

17 I want to suggest a point that will be explored in the last chapter: deconstructing tradition-as-truth should not preclude using tradition-as-cobbler’s-last. Thus, I am by no means advocating a return to some past golden age, but recognizing, rather, that most of us would rather re-sole a pair of old, comfortable shoes than risk the likely blisters engendered by the new.

18 That these three kinds of appeal were “from” rather than “to” demonstrates Aristotle’s intent that these appeals were to be controlled by the orator, not his hearer.
Rhetoric, he asserts that while “Persuasion is achieved by the speaker’s personal character ... this kind of persuasion ... should be achieved by what the speaker says, not by what people think of his character before he begins to speak” (1356a 4-10). He continues that “the orator must not only try to make the argument of his speech demonstrative and worthy of belief; he must also make his own character look right and put his hearers, who are to decide, into the right frame of mind” (1377b 21-24). “... Any one who is thought to have all three of these good qualities (good sense [phronesis], good moral character [arete], and goodwill [eunoia]) will inspire trust in the audience” (1378a 15-16).

Because of the suggestion that the orator can make his character look right, Aristotle’s work has been considered by many to suggest manipulation of the listener (reader). And it is on this question of intent that much of rhetoric’s scholarship on ethos devolves. Considering Aristotle’s “emphasis on portrayal ..., a foundation for dissimulation” (45), George Yoos states

For Aristotle ethos is a quality of a speaker that can be a cause of persuasion. In his discussion of artistic proofs Aristotle attempts to show how the audience’s perception of ethos can be altered to make ethos causally effective or rhetorically persuasive. A speaker has two choices in making ethos causally effective. He may distort the audience’s perception of his own personal qualities, or he may develop rhetorically effective personal qualities by being a good person. Aristotle discusses the first choice. (44)

In defense of Aristotle, Thomas E. Corts suggests that a confused interpretation of Aristotle’s meaning derives from the transliteration of the two Greek words, ηθος and ηθος, as one English word “ethos.” [Two significations are conflated into one signifier, as I mentioned above.] Because ηθος is “morally neutral and refers to behavioral traits,” and ηθος “has connotations of right and wrong, virtue and vice, moral ‘oughtness,’” Corts suggests that “rhetorical
scholars would do well to transliterate ηθος as ethos... and emphasize its positive moral quality," as he suggests was Aristotle's intent (201-02). Lois Self examines "the relationships between the art of rhetoric and the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom" [phronesis] to assert Aristotle's ethical stance:

Aristotle believed that, "It is impossible to be practically wise without being good" (Nichomachean Ethics 1144a 36-37). It is only when practical wisdom is applied to rhetoric that we witness the ideal case in which the name "rhetorician" denotes excellence both of artistry and purpose. (143)

Arthur B. Miller suggests as a plausible argument that Aristotle omitted an explicit discussion of the relationship between ethos and ethos [because] his students were sufficiently knowledgeable of Greek to make explicit commentary necessary. And, of course, it is entirely possible that Aristotle's students were familiar with the Ethics, and thus with his comment on the relationship between ethos and ethikee. (314)

Christopher Lyle Johnstone concludes that rather than being immoral or even amoral, Aristotle's theory of rhetoric is grounded in and guided by the ethical principles developed in his moral theory. The proper practice of rhetoric is intrinsically ethical because the nature and function of the art are conceived against the background of Aristotle's ethical theory. He links the two arts intimately. (11)

Despite these arguments\(^{19}\) and perhaps because "the majority of instructors in rhetoric" (as Johnson denotes them) are more likely familiar with the Rhetoric than with the Nichomachean Ethics, the historicized Aristotle is associated with the concept that ethos represents aspects of credibility or personality that can be written into a text and are, therefore, extrinsic to the morality of the writer. This

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\(^{19}\) Similar defenses of Aristotle are also advanced by Edward P. J. Corbett (1984) and Robert C. Rowland and Deanna F. Womack.
view is exemplified by Joseph F. Trimmer and James M. McCrimmon in the ninth edition of their popular *Writing with a Purpose*. They state

The character (or *ethos*) of the writer, not the writer’s morality is the basis of the ethical appeal. It suggests that the writer is someone to be trusted, a claim that emerges from a demonstration of competence as an authority on the subject under discussion.

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You can incorporate the ethical appeal in your argument either by citing authorities... or by following the example of authorities in your competent treatment of evidence. (144)

Similarly, Robert Connors suggests “There are only two ways writers can exert ethical appeal (outside of the physical appearance of a handwritten or even a typed manuscript), and they are found in a writer’s style and in the sort of arguments he or she chooses to use” (285).

In an influential article in business communication, Craig Kallendorf and Carol Kallendorf not only locate *ethos* in the text rather than in the writer, but they also totally strip *ethos* of any ethical content:

The rhetorical notion of *ethos* refers to the image a writer or speaker projects to an audience; as commonly understood, it does not really involve questions of ethics as we use the term today. This distinction is especially true of Aristotle; an Aristotelian rhetorician need not actually *be* a good person, but must only be *perceived* as one. (42)

In opposition to this view of a rhetoric in which the orator adjusts his oration to create a favorable image in the minds of his listeners is the Platonic idealization of an orator who, already being good,\(^\text{20}\) can properly transmit truth and

\[^{20}\text{Maribeth Impson believes that all the “most influential rhetoricians have considered *ethos* to be the inherent moral character of the rhetor... [except] during periods of political} \]
value to his listener. The textual authority for this interpretation is usually taken from Plato's dialogues *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*. In the *Phaedrus*, Socrates avers that the goal of the true rhetorician is the pursuit and representation of truth. In the *Gorgias*, Socrates distinguishes between two sorts of rhetoric: "one which is mere flattery and disgraceful declamation; the other which is noble and aims at the training and improvement of the souls of the citizens, and strives to say what is best, whether welcome or unwelcome, to the audience" (282).

Hence, Socrates asks

> Will not the true rhetorician who is honest and understands his art have his eye fixed upon these [temperance and justice], in all the words which he addresses to the souls of men, and in all his actions, both in what he gives and in what he takes away? Will not his aim be to implant justice in the souls of his citizens and take away injustice, to implant temperance and take away intemperance, to implant every virtue and take away every vice? (283)

suppression." While the moral character of the orator has, of course, been valorized, Yoos reminds us that *ethos* was not a word used by Plato in references to rhetoric; nor did it emerge in the Roman rhetorics.

21 I am not ignoring here the valuable role of Isocrates who was himself a student of Socrates and a contemporary of Aristotle. Significantly, Isocrates assailed "those who profess to teach political discourse. For [they] have no interest whatever in the truth" (*Against the Sophists* 9) and stated that "... the argument which is made by a man's life is of more weight than that which is furnished by words. Therefore the stronger a man's desire to persuade his hearers, the more zealously will he strive to be honorable and to have the esteem of his fellow-citizens. (*Antidosis* 278)" But inasmuch as the historicization of *ethos* is derived from Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, and Quintilian, I am limiting this discussion to these figures. Susan Jarrett's *Rereading the Sophists, Classical Rhetoric Refigured* provides an important re-interpretation of non-Platonic, non-Aristotelian concepts of rhetoric.

22 In addition to the *Phaedrus* and *Gorgias*, Johnson refers readers to "The Philosopher Ruler" and the "Immortality of the Soul and the Rewards of Goodness" in *The Republic* (p. 99 and notes 4, 5, p. 273).

23 Later in *Gorgias*, Socrates reiterates that the pleasant is not the same as the good and the "pleasant is to be pursued for the sake of the good" (284). This can be contrasted with Aristotle's *Eudemonian Ethics* which offers human happiness as the good.
The two other classical figures who have influenced contemporary practice are the Roman orators and rhetoricians Cicero and Quintilian. That Cicero, who was himself an orator, regarded oratory as based on knowledge, wisdom, and honor is demonstrated in *De Oratore* ("The Character of the Orator"). He states that

no man can be an orator possessed of every praiseworthy accomplishment, unless he has attained the knowledge of everything important, and of all liberal arts, ... since, unless there be beneath the surface matter understood and felt by the speaker, oratory becomes an empty and almost puerile flow of words.(17)

[and that] By the judgment and wisdom of the perfect orator, not only his own honor, but that of many other individuals, and the welfare of the whole state, are principally held. (21)

However, by also describing "the proper concern of the orator ... [as the] language of power and elegance accommodated to the feelings and understandings of mankind" (27), Cicero is considered an advocate of locating the semblance of virtue in the oration.

The first chapter of the twelfth book of Quintilian’s massive *Insitutio Oratoria*, the book which is the culmination of Quintilian’s curriculum for the development of an orator, has been traditionally titled “Non posse oratorum esse nisi virvm bonvm”—He cannot be an orator unless he is a good man. And he states

The orator then whom I am concerned to form, shall be the orator as defined by Marcus Cato, “a good man skilled in speaking.” But above all he must have the quality which Cato places first and which is in the very nature of things the greatest and the most important, that is, he must be a good man. (XII i 1)

For Quintilian, "oratory is in the main concerned with the treatment of what is just and honorable" (XII i 8). He said, the "advocate who is called to defend the accused requires to be a man of honour, honour which greed cannot
corrupt, influence seduce, or fear dismay” (XII i 24). But unlike the Platonic belief that virtue is an inherent quality, Quintilian believed that the “orator must in all things devote his attention to the formation of moral character and must acquire a complete knowledge of all that is just and honorable” (XII ii 1).

For the orator will have much to say on such topics as justice, fortitude, abstinence, self-control, and piety. But the good man who has come to the knowledge of these things not by mere heresy, as though they were just words and names for his tongue to employ, but has grasped the meaning of virtue and acquired a true feeling for it, will never be perplexed when he has to think out a problem, but will speak out truly what he knows. (XII ii 17)

Regardless of the origin of virtue, its locus in the orator—the constructs of Plato and Quintilian—differs from the constructs of Aristotle and Cicero, who locate the appearance of virtue in the oration.

But unlike the Aristotelian and Ciceronian concepts of ethos which have currency—and a name—today, the doctrine of the vir bonum dicendi peritus is neither practiced nor named except by students of rhetorical history. It may well be that the concept of the vir bonum was institutionalized in the late 18th and 19th century American university whose mission was broadly construed as preparing civic and church leaders. Corbett suggests, in fact, that it was Quintilian’s insistence “that in addition to being intellectually fortified for his office [that] the orator must be trained to be a man of strong moral character” that made Quintilian one of the “most potent classical influences on rhetorical education in England and America. The moral bias was especially important because from the seventeenth through most of the nineteenth century the English and American school systems were dominated largely by clergymen” (602). As the mission of the university changed, so did the teaching of rhetoric. When the context for the vir bonum—classical study, purposeful public discourse, an emphasis on rhetoric—
disappeared, the concept disappeared as well; and substituted for its explicit nature was the less tangible notion of the humanizing effect of a "good liberal education." When rhetoric re-emerged in the mid-twentieth century, explains Halloran, the component of public discourse had been replaced by a "primary emphasis [on] expository essays." And while "the new rhetoric . . . addresses students under three aspects of their identity: personal, intellectual-academic, and professional[,] it does not address students as political beings, as members of a body politic in which they have a responsibility to form judgments and influence the judgments of others on public issues" (263).

Thus, in our time, two divergent constructs have emerged from the classical tradition: one in which *ethos* is widely understood as "personality" or "credibility," most frequently expressed in a text and the other which locates ethical, responsible behavior in the speaker (or contemporaneously in a writer). The former view of *ethos*-in-the-text, with which most of us in compositional rhetoric are familiar, stresses the credibility of the text and its adaptation to meet the perceived needs of audiences. The latter view of those who conduct themselves "ethically" is a faint vestige of the *vir bonus dicendi peritus*, the good man speaking well. This elaboration of the relevant classical tradition should help us understand current theory and practice. For if we are to change

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24 Paul Rosenthal suggests that "Classical Tradition" is synonymous with "neo-Aristotelian." I think this is an overly reductive but widely accepted representation. I am also mindful that collapsing 500 years of history into the easily spoken "classical tradition" is subject to the same interpretational dangers as collapsing the years from 1492 to 1992 as "the American tradition."

25 Johnson has characterized these as the neo-Platonic and neo-Aristotelian views. Because my concern here is the significance of the text, I have chosen a different nomenclature.

26 An unfortunate reflection of current understanding may be John Schell's 1982 heuristic "... if sentences are to reflect the writer's good judgment, they should be grammatically correct; if good character, they should refrain from insult; if good will, they should be clear, concise, and coherent."
current practice and "restor[e] to rhetorical education a focus on the moral obligations of rhetoric and the ethical responsibility of the writer," we will first have to reconcile the seeming opposition between *ethos*-in-text and *ethics*-in-writer.

A focus on texts is an appropriate development in rhetorical studies that are situated in departments of English study. More than 100 years of literary criticism and theoretical considerations of authorship have deflected considerations of the "real, flesh-and-blood" author, which has, consequently, obviated the need to examine an author's ethical intent—a critical turn that has further hindered the recovery of the notion of "the good person speaking well." The Romantic view of the author mythologizes the flesh and blood writer of a paper and ink text into a cultural hero, a totemic figure who possesses numinous powers to communicate his genius to the society-at-large. The formalist New Criticism decontextualizes the text, calling instead for a close reading that would reveal such formal characteristics as tension, ambiguity, irony, the inherent and organic unity of the theme and technique of the theoretically constructed "speaker," and, consequently, bracketed from consideration the historical author. And most recently, the post-structuralists refer to a decentering of subjectivity that disperses responsibility for meaning throughout "overdetermined" fields of identity as "the death of the author." These three forces in literary theory are mirrored in composition studies by three similar views of texts and writers. A Romantic view of writing is reflected in the early days of the teaching of writing in those who encouraged their students to emulate the "great" writers and more recently in those who focus on the writer's individuality and personal voice (Peter Elbow, Donald Murray, Ken Macrorie, etc.). Formalism,

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27 Of passing interest may be the fact, that in 1954, Donald Murray himself won the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing before he turned to academic life.
particularly structural formalism, is reflected in the work of those who concentrates on structural features of the text, including, for example, Christensen, Young, Becker and Pike, and O'Hare, as well as in those who examine cognitive structures, such as Flower and Hayes and Bereiter and Scardamalia. Those who adhere to a social-constructionist view of composition (Bruffee, Brodkey, and Trimbir, etc.) join a range of post-structuralist thinkers such as Gayatri Spivak in literature, Derrida in philosophy, Kristeva in psychology, and Foucault in history who are reexamining the constitution of meaning. But while these movements have emerged diachronically, they co-exist synchronically. Hence, a "balanced" English department might be expected to have romanticists, new critics, and post-structuralists on its faculty teaching literature. That same English Department might also have romanticist, structuralist, and post-structuralist faculty teaching writing.28 (cf Graff 249-51)

Such romanticist, formalist, and social constructive views are reflected in some current scholarship on ethos. Preston Lynn Waller has studied "how writers of proposals and manuals project their personalities [which Waller defines as ethos] in their discourse." In applying literary criticism to a study of essays, Eleanor Gordon asserts "the dominance of the persona, the fictional I, over the 'objective' third person" in achieving a dominance "of ethos over logos and pathos." Roger Cherry offers ethos as an analytical tool for describing self-representation in written discourse. Jim W. Corder asserts that "the consequence of some recent theories is clear: ethos is chiefly our creation as we read, not the author's creation and not in the text" (310). Thus, faculty in English, whether they

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28 This contemporaneity, which might appear to be an intellectual anachronism to those whose disciplines tend to abandon old practices as they embrace the new, demonstrates the extent to which much of English studies is theoretically rather than empirically driven.
teach literature or writing, and regardless of the theory that informs their pedagogy, have precedents for not being concerned with an individual author nor with the ethical intent of the writer.

While the heritage of literary studies has had perhaps the most influence on our understanding of ethos, the use of such terms as “ethos,” “ethics,” and “ethical” in other disciplines and in workplaces outside the academy have also influenced the way these concepts are incorporated into the teaching of writing—particularly in the wake of the writing-across-the-curriculum movement. For example, in sociology or other studies of culture, ethos may refer to those elements or characteristics that distinguish a group: as in “the academic ethos,” “the ethos of the Black community,” “working class ethos,” and so forth. In psychology, ethos may refer not only to a group but to the personality of an individual. Rosenthal defines as ethos “the speaker’s total personality . . . encompass [-ing] all aspects of the speaker’s character, intellect, temperament, or other physical traits including physical appearance, that may function in [a] communication” (114). The use of ethos as “source credibility” in the experimental wing of speech communication permits its measurement as an empirically assessable entity.29 These uses of ethos are essentially morally neutral and permit such statements as “A writer’s ethos can be positive, negative, or neutral” (Guinn 31).

Obviously, juxtaposing a measurable ethos that can be “positive, negative, or neutral,” with an ethos connoting an inherent moral virtue that advances the common good—our ethical and moral dimension—is a formidable but not insurmountable task. But just as we are faced with the difficulty of deriving a

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clear understanding of “ethos” from a multiplicity of meanings, “ethics” and “ethical” with their own Greek roots originating too in ηθος also have a considerable range of meaning and of usage today. And we do not need to stray into philosophy’s thicket when we can become sufficiently lost in our own domain of the teaching of writing where ethical behavior may be perceived as “an ordering of our own minds and our own passions . . . to prevent becoming a creature of evil public forces and a victim of [one’s] own thoughtless rhetoric” as espoused by Richard Weaver in The Ethics of Rhetoric (232) or as a response to the call for education in ethics as a public response to ethical lapses in government and business. Bruce W. Speck and Lynette R. Porter identify 140 “works that discuss ethics in professional writing,” the earliest published in 1976, and most published within the last 10 years. To Jennie Hunter, editing an issue focusing on ethics for the Bulletin of the Association for Business Communication, “Ethics is simply the ability to distinguish right from wrong” (4). This widely shared view informs codes of ethics which define which actions are right and which actions are wrong for the members of a given organization or profession or for the employees of a given company in a given situation. Instruction in ethics, then, becomes, most frequently, teaching how to distinguish right from wrong in context and teaching how to avoid doing wrong. Steven Golen, Celeste Powers, and M. Agnes Titkemeyer suggest that “a unit of two fifty minute periods [in a course on business communication] should establish a basic orientation

30 Miller explains that “the word for ‘moral or ethical virtue’ is ηθική (eethikee)—from the same stem as ηθος.”

31 Ethics-as-course-content can now be found in schools of law, business, and journalism and has been encouraged in business writing, but still rarely finds a place outside philosophy departments in traditional colleges of arts and sciences.
toward the need for ethics, an understanding of basic ethical concepts, and practical application of ethical questions to specific situations” (78). Barbara A. Spencer and Carol M. Lehman’s students are taught “how to develop ethical messages [by] provid[ing] them with ethical principles and systems—some analytical tools they can use to choose ethical content for their messages.” They include such systems as The Golden Rule (Do unto others, etc.); the concept of Social Utility; the concept of Universal Law; and Rotary International’s Four Way Test (19). Dean Hall and Bonnie Nelson see as their goal in the teaching of ethics in technical communication “that students are realistically made aware of the codes and standard practices of their chosen professions and are given the opportunity to apply those practices” (60).

Without the external work-world focus of the business, professional, or technical writing class, considerations of “ethics” or “the ethical” are far less common in the general composition classroom, where we are more likely to find the considerations of “ethos” I discussed above. Compared with the hundreds of articles on the pedagogical treatment of business and professional ethics in writing classes, there are few that relate to more general composition. Drawing on what she calls the “historical intertwining of ethics and rhetoric,” Sally Harrold recommends analyzing, researching, and responding to ethical issues as a means of fostering growth in both the writing ability and the cognitive, psychological, and moral development of basic writing students (9-11). Valerie Balaster suggests the collaborative composition classroom is the best environment for teaching “what is meant by ‘good’” because it provides students with a community which has its own standards. Frederick J. Antczak offers ethical criticism of rhetorical texts as “enabling” the formation of character without “inculcating
morality.” This reluctance of writing teachers to “inculcate morality” is addressed by Eugene Garver:

While today’s writing teachers respond to student writing morally, recognizing that there is a moral side to good and bad writing, they are most hesitant to profess to be teaching moral goodness. There is always something odd about claiming to teach virtue, but that discomfort is compounded, and the divergence between actual practice and professional ideology made even greater than it need be, by the now current view of morality that makes it a private matter, one of personal choice—if it can be called a choice—beyond argument, such that one person does not have the right to judge another, and such that any attempt to make morality the subject of discussion is seen as the imposition of a set of values on someone else. (53)

This reluctance “to impose values” together with the conceptions of “ethos” as paper-based personality or credibility and of the “ethical,” as behavior that avoids doing wrong conjoin to hinder recovery of the vir bonum—the ethical and moral dimension of ethos, the good person working for the betterment of community. The metaphoric aptness of “dimension” to describe the “ethical and moral” qualities of ethos allows us to see that when we consider ethos in the text and ethos in the writer as separable entities, we are describing the separates axes of a figure; we can see surface but no depth.32 Furthermore, if our goal is to encourage action on behalf of goodness, we must be aware that both the act of controlling a text in response to perceived audience need and the act of avoiding or becoming a creature of evil forces or learning how to respond to a potentially unethical situation are reactive. Neither implies a fundamental sense of honor or virtue, but rather an ability to control the appearance of good or evil. And because the teaching of writing has traditionally emphasized practice rather than

32 The less geometrically inclined might think of butter, flour, sugar, and eggs, which can be identified, discussed, and appreciated separately, but are not a poundcake until they’re mixed and baked together (nor as tasty).
principle, we have, in effect, privileged practical wisdom over virtue and goodwill (in Aristotelian terms, phronesis over both arete and eudonia).

Recovering the qualities embodied in the *vir bonum* as more than theoretical wish-fulfillment requires demonstrating first, that *ethos*-in-text and *ethos*-in-writer—the concepts with which we are the most familiar—should be considered together rather than separately, and second, that a model exists in which all three dimensions (*ethos/ethics/vir bonum*) are located. The influence of our various English studies traditions (literature as well as compositional rhetoric) together with the pedagogical need for students to learn how to compose appropriate texts readily explains both the orientation towards the text and the need to locate *ethos*, not in writers, but in texts. This orientation is most notably articulated by Edward P. J. Corbett in his landmark *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*. But Corbett’s words also provide the solution to resolving the first part of our dilemma: reconciling ethos in text and writer.

Notice that it is *the speech itself* which must create this impression ["that the speaker is a man of sound sense ..., high moral character ..., and benevolence..."]. Thus a man wholly unknown to his audience (and this is often the case when we listen to a speech or read an article in a magazine) could by his words alone inspire this kind of confidence.... It is not the province of rhetoric, however, to form such a character. ...Rhetoric can train only those faculties involved in the discovery, arrangement, and expression of ideas. (93-4)

But the examples Corbett uses of hearing a speech by an unknown speaker or of reading a speech in a magazine do not acknowledge the realities of discursive presentation. We do not listen to speeches by “unknown” speakers. A speaker may be legitimized by the venue that permits her to speak. She may be given an introduction by a moderator. She may have a political title which establishes her credibility: senator, congresswoman, or mayor. Even if we were
to turn on a radio or television in the middle of a speech by an unidentified speaker, the broadcast itself authorizes the speaker, just as publication in newspaper, journal, or periodical sanctions a writer. A scientist’s credibility in reporting experimental results or requesting funding is represented in and out of his text. Cicero’s analyses of the character of the orators of his day are little different from assessments of political figures rendered on the *MacNeil-Lehrer Report*. Despite Aristotle’s prescriptive intent, the reputation of the orator preceded his oration. In fact, Aristotle’s need to state that the ethical argument should be present in the oration covertly acknowledges the fact that the *ethos* of the orator was extra-textual. The classical rhetoricians knew, as must we, that ethical character cannot—should not—be constrained to the text. To use the post-structuralist catchphrase, the ethical character of the speaker/writer is always already there. It may not have been “the province” of Aristotle’s rhetoric “to form such a character,” but our province need not be bound by his constraints.

Having provided a theoretical, alternative definition for *ethos*, one that requires melding traditional notions of *ethos* and ethical behavior and the concept of the good person writing well (in essence, forging a continuity out of discontinuities), my final task is to offer a practical model which my theoretical construct describes. Michael Halloran asserts that the “focus on public discourse,” “the rhetoric of citizenship” that “helped to shape reasonable and sound opinion on matters of public policy” in the late eighteenth and the nineteen centuries, “remains quite dead” (263-64). I suggest, however, that the tradition of public discourse is very much alive, but that it has been relocated to the newspaper editorial page, where the editorial writers I studied seem to embody all three axes of the *ethos/ethics/vir bonum* construct. They strive for
credibility and integrity in their texts, they subscribe to codes of ethics, and they
demonstrate the characteristics of the good person devoted to the public welfare
and to public service—embODYING the standards of the Pulitzer Prize for
editorial writing which is awarded

For distinguished editorial writing, the test of excellence being
clearness of style, moral purpose, sound reasoning, and power to
influence public opinion in what the writer conceives to be the
right direction....

It should be noted that the separate concepts of \textit{ethos} and ethics are also
recognized in journalism. In a chapter on “Editorial Credibility,” Harry
Stonecipher defines “Aristotle’s classic writing on \textit{ethos} [as] the distinguishing
character, tone, or guiding beliefs of man,” and interprets the components of
\textit{ethos} as “good character, good sense, and concern for the welfare of the
audience.” H. Eugene Goodwin explores such issues as conflicts of interest,
deception and misrepresentation, accountability, privacy, and responsibility in
his extensive \textit{Groping for Ethics in Journalism}. The National Conference of
Editorial Writers maintains a standing ethics committee. A member of that
committee, \textit{Calgary} (Alberta) \textit{Herald} Associate Editor Catherine Ford, writes,

As a rule, when any question of ethics arises, I try to remember a
quote from the \textit{Meditations} of Marcus Aurelius: “Never value the
advantages derived from anything involving breach of faith, loss
of self-respect, hatred, suspicion or execration of others,
insincerity, or the desire for something which has to be veiled and
curtained.” (4)

But while editorial writers have concepts for the words “\textit{ethos}” and
“ethical,” the \textit{vir bonum} is not part of their lexicon. But it is certainly represented
in their attitudes and conduct. The first part of my interview with self-described
“do-gooder” Thomas Hylton in Pottstown was conducted in his car as he drove
his regular Meals-on-Wheels route delivering dinners to local senior citizens.
While other editorial writers would consider "off limits" any involvement at all with organizations or associations that might compromise their impartiality, they will take unpopular positions that may enrage readers and advertisers when they believe the cause is right. Still others see themselves as advocates for issues which they consider in the best interest of community, city, state, or nation.

To provide an example of a model in which ethos, ethical behavior, and the concept of the vir bonum are simultaneously present, I will draw on my experience with one newspaper, The Miami Herald, whose editorial board won the Pulitzer Prize for editorial writing in 1983 for a series on the plight of Haitian refugees.

The composition of the editorial page staff alone reflects a commitment to advancing the goals of a multicultural society. Its size permits the development of considerable expertise on complicated issues. At the time of my visit, the Herald's editorial board comprised the editor Jim Hampton, associate editor Joanna Wragg (then president of the National Conference of Editorial Writers), seven full-time editorial writers, and a page editor who produces and designs the daily pages and writes headlines and captions; their work is supported by the editorial cartoonist, the "Reader's Forum" editor, and a secretary who is described as the individual who "talks most regularly with readers." In a profession characterized nationally by a preponderance of white males, half the members of the Herald editorial board are women; one member is black, one writer (who had lived in Cuba) and the letters editor (born in Honduras) are bilingual in Spanish and English. Six members of the editorial board have advanced degrees. Although editorials, which represent the voice of the newspaper, are unsigned, the editorial writers are not kept anonymous. Their photographs, a brief biography, and direct phone numbers are published
annually as part of a comprehensive feature described by editor Jim Hampton as “an opening to refresh our established readers' understanding of how our opinion pages operate. It’s an opportunity as well to explain American-style opinion to emigres from cultures whose press traditions often are radically different from America’s” (October 7, 1990, 2C).

But even as credibility is represented by the experience and knowledge of the writers and while the dedication to a just society is exemplified in the composition of the staff, the editorials themselves illustrate the ideals of public discourse (which Halloran states are “to shape reasonable and sound opinion on matters of public policy” [263]). In an interview with me, Joanna Wragg explained that training reporters to be editorial writers required that they learn how to be better reporters, because the responsibility involved in opinion formation and persuasion was so much greater than that for reporting the news. That high level of reporting and knowledge was demonstrated in the four editorials published on Thursday, September 12. (Figures I and II).

The first describes in depth the backgrounds of new members of Florida’s Environmental Regulation Commission and encourages them to consider their “task[s] a calling to public service, not just a political challenge”; the second details the unemployment situation in Florida and castigates President Bush for failing to enact an unemployment compensation extension; the third, a sophisticated analysis of a House Banking Committee report, takes the committee to task for avoiding “actual hard work and tough politics”; and a fourth assails Chilean Gen. Augusto Pinochet’s “obscene” comments about the exhumed corpses of some of his regime’s victims while praising a chemical weapons accord between Argentina, Chile, and Brazil. Each editorial contains highly informed opinion; in each, an appeal for a better state, nation, or world.
Changing of Nature’s guard

GOV. LAWTON Chiles has named four new Environmental Regulation Commission members who, he avers, are “committed” to his agenda of protecting Florida’s environment. Good.

The new appointees give the governor and Department of Environmental Regulation Secretary Carol Browner control of the commission that sets Florida’s air- and water-quality standards. With control comes a clear line of accountability. Thus voters now can hold the governor directly responsible for assuring that Florida’s precious wetlands, rivers and lakes, and still-breathable air are indeed preserved.

The four new ERC members are:

- As chairman, former state Rep. Dick Batchelor. An Orlando-based management consultant, Mr. Batchelor is best known for his advocacy for children. As a member of the Legislature from 1974-82, he was also a strong supporter of environmental protection and received the Florida Sierra Club’s “Conservation Award” in 1976.

- Former Escambia County Commissioner Muriel Wagner of Pensacola. She replaces Phyllis Saannen, who was one of former Gov. Bob Martinez’s strongest pro-environment appointees. Ms. Wagner’s admirable environmental advocacy and voting record has won recognition and support from the Florida Audubon Society and the Florida Wildlife Federation.

- Stephen Humphrey of Newberry. He’s a curator in ecology for the University of Florida and former Florida-chapter chairman of the Nature Conservancy.

- Attorney Mitchell Berger of Coral Springs. The governor describes him as experienced in “development issues,” but he’s better-known in Broward County’s political than environmental circles.

They join holdover members A.L. Buford, Jr., a Tallahassee developer; Florida Power & Light attorney Nancy Koen of West Palm Beach; and agribusinessman Steven Gold of Bradenton.

Each new ERC member will have an opportunity to build a record of protecting Florida’s environment, to turn Governor Chiles’s vision of Florida as a “cleaner, more-responsible state” into reality, and to fashion a legacy for all our grandchildren. May each consider the task a calling to public service, not just a political challenge.

Jobless-pay cutoff is cruel

THE AUGUST unemployment figures aren’t encouraging. Though the national rate stayed at 6.8 percent, Florida’s is a stunning 8.1 percent.

That’s the percentage of the work force looking for work in August. However, only 2.4 percent of Floridians who qualify for unemployment insurance are receiving benefits. Most of Florida’s unemployed fall into nebulous categories. They may get welfare, or be secondary wage earners hoping to shore up family finances or students.

Federal rules require that the proportion of unemployed insured workers receiving benefits would have to reach 5 percent before Florida could extend benefits by six months. The 2.4 percent of insured unemployed doesn’t include those — 96,000 Floridians — who have exhausted their benefits. By comparison, a total of 88,600 exhausted theirs in all of 1990.

The maximum weekly unemployment payment in Florida is $225, but not everyone qualifies for that much. Payments can last a year. When payments run out, some people have to sell their homes or exhaust whatever savings they may have left.

Others may find low-paying jobs and simultaneously learn a new skill. Federal programs pay for tuition then. The irony is,

SAY ‘EMERGENCY,’ MR. BUSH

most people getting jobless benefits can’t apply for retraining aid until jobless benefits run out. Florida’s Labor Department sensibly wants the Feds to change the rules.

Forcing unemployed workers to desperation levels before helping them learn new skills is demoralizing. It can destabilize communities where unemployment is widespread. Florida has many, Dade County among them. Congress ought to change the education rules, but it has already provided help now. It voted to extend jobless benefits across the board for six months, calling the economic situation an emergency.

President Bush signed the bill but not the emergency declaration needed to trigger extensions. He thus cast adrift millions of jobless Americans struggling to recover from layoffs and plant-closings. Their decline will further erode communities. The President’s cold-hearted attitude ill bespeaks his “kinder and gentler” rhetoric.


Figure 1: Lead and Second Editorials Published in The Miami Herald, 9/12/91
Zero-coupon cheap shots

Before it sinks into well-deserved oblivion, a new House Banking Committee report warrants a special rebuke from anyone sincerely interested in the regulation of U.S. banks. The report tried to compare three regulatory agencies according to how much public money has been lost on the banks that they oversee.

The theory of this “analysis,” although tenuous, may be defensible. The committee says that it wanted to know which agencies regulate banks most effectively. But it didn’t probe regulatory methods in any detail, which would be actual hard work.

Instead, the committee chose to crunch a few numbers of doubtful significance into one big number with no significance at all.

Here’s what the committee “found”: A huge percentage of the “net losses” in the Bank Insurance Fund were incurred by banks regulated by the Comptroller of the Currency. The other two major regulators — the Federal Reserve and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. — were “responsible” for much smaller net losses.

Comptroller Robert Clarke recently survived attacks from bankers and White House pols for being too tough. Now this report says he’s too lenient. What gives?

The caudillos’ last strut?

Gen. Augusto Pinochet, Chile’s erstwhile dictator and still head of its armed forces, made an obscene comment recently about the exhumed corpses of some of his regime’s victims. After congratulating the exhumers with bilious irony, he noted that it was more economical to bury two bodies in each grave.

The garish insensitiveness of General Pinochet’s remarks shows total disregard for the sentiments of the victims’ families and for Chile’s open wounds. What better could show the blindness and immorality of despots accustomed to acting with impunity?

Happily, the military’s era of impunity may be coming to an end in parts of Latin America. In Chile, Argentina, and Brazil, democratic civilian governments have taken steps to diminish the military establishments’ strength and to place them under strict civilian control.

As if to rebuff Mr. Pinochet, whose remarks were redolent of a time when caudillos still strutted in South America, the foreign ministers of Argentina, Chile, and Brazil signed an agreement to curtail the manufacture, development, and deployment of chemical weapons.

Though largely symbolic — the three countries do not manufacture chemical weapons and reportedly were not in the process of developing the capability — the accord deserves plaudits. It constitutes yet another sign that former enemies are diminishing hostilities in the push toward economic integration.

In August, Argentina and Chile also reached agreements that resolve long-standing border disputes.

The chemical-weapons accord also is significant because it was made by civilian heads of state who did not go out of their way to consult their armed forces. All three countries have been misruled by their military in recent times. All three have moved to “downsize” the bloated military.

Democracies, as many have observed, do not go to war with each other. Brazil, Argentina, and Chile also have agreed to curtail the manufacture, development, and deployment of chemical weapons.

Though largely symbolic — the three

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Figure 2: Third and Fourth Editorials Published in The Miami Herald, 9/12/91
And that appeal is not restricted to the text of the editorial proper. Unlike many newspapers whose call to action is limited to what is said in the editorial (and frequently, in far milder terms), *The Herald* sees part of its mission as encouraging reader participation.

The “Jobless-pay cutoff is cruel” editorial might have been considered complete in its final paragraph:

> President Bush signed the bill but not the emergency declaration needed to trigger extensions. He thus cast adrift millions of jobless Americans struggling to recover from layoffs and plant-closings. Their decline will further erode communities. The President’s cold-hearted attitude ill bespeaks his “kinder and gentler” rhetoric.

But this editorial was followed by the bold-face note to encourage readers to call or write to the President. An editorial “For Homeless Awareness” (August 26, 1991) used the same tactic to encourage readers to help solve the plight of homelessness by contributing funds to increase the numbers of beds for the homeless in Dade County:

- **Earmark checks Homeless Beds Fund.** Make payable to: Archdiocese of Miami, Greater Miami Rabbinical Association, or United Protestant Appeal.

These bold face notes are not simply design elements, although they do provide visual relief to the grey text. Additionally, they demonstrate the use of a public forum to advance public welfare.

And finally, beyond the policy of developing a cultural diverse staff who can bring a wide range of concerns and voices to the editorial page, beyond the carefully researched, well-written texts which advance public and private morality, and even beyond commitments to openness, honesty, and accuracy, are the attitudes of the writers themselves. My interview with two *Herald*
editorial writers, Martha Musgrove, and Ramon Mestre, were particularly revealing.

After an extensive journalistic career, Ms. Musgrove joined the editorial board in 1983, specializing in environmental, agricultural, and growth management issues as well as concerns specific to the Palm Beach area. Very slightly edited excerpts from that interview follow. The level of concern is evident.

PRK: What’s important to you in an editorial?

Musgrove: In an editorial? That I reach the reader. That I communicate to the reader. The idea that I persuade that reader.

PRK: How many editorials do you write every week?

Musgrove: I try to average five editorials a week and one column. ... When I first came to The Herald, [as well as writing editorials about the Palm Beach area] I had always written one or two editorials for all runs [all editions of the newspaper]. That was part of the deal. And I made that deal with a very specific issue in mind—which was saving Everglades National Park—and I needed to reach Congress and the Interior Department and the national public. And I made a specific deal that I would be allowed to write about Everglades National Park."

PRK: Were you successful?

Musgrove: Was I successful about the Everglades issue? Yes. The issue—which I've been writing about since 1981, I had started writing about it at the Palm Beach Post —was the flow of polluted water to Everglades National Park. When I say polluted water, you have to remember that the definition of pollution is something that's not supposed to be there. Highly phosphorus-rich water coming off of farmland. Farm water has never been regulated in the state of Florida.

We had a national park superintendent who had come to the South Florida Water Management Board and he had declared that Everglades National Park was dying. This was not a new problem. In 1972, the same concerns had been elicited but at that time the problem was the quantity of water. This time the problem was the quality of water. Making that issue understandable first to the
political establishment, then to the people, then at the national level, has resulted finally in a series of state legislations, the last bill of which passed in June and does require the Water Management Board to change its priorities for the delivery of water so that the environment gets the kind of water it needs.

It also culminated in a lawsuit—which I really had nothing to do with—by the federal government against the state. ...That suit is on the verge of settlement. The federal government and the state have reached an accord to settle the suit. It has not been signed off in the federal court yet, but it will do, and the legislation that was passed mimics the settlement.

Every item that I had hoped for is in the settlement agreement or in the legislation. But it will be ten years in implementation. I figure that there will probably be five years screwing around and that will bring me to my retirement. And I will feel like I have done something to change America.

As long as I have The Herald behind me, I think I can assert the pressure necessary to get that thing implemented. The serious problem with implementation right now is going to be the economics of it, financing it, changing industry attitudes about it, about the issue about water, changing the price structure. And there is the serious problem out there hanging fire called the North American Free Trade Pact, that's going to be a fight.

PRK: Did you get individual feedback from legislators? from the Department of the Interior? Good? Bad? Both?

Musgrove: I get a lot of feedback, a real lot of feedback—I've gotten a mixture of good and bad, at every particular pressure point. I have never written an editorial on this subject without touching base with everyone that I perceived had an interest in it. They never knew what direction I was going to write in that they didn't have an opportunity to tell me what they saw the problem was. I also, on every new ground, every new position went to the full [Editorial] board, so that I would never lose the support of The Miami Herald.

We have been through two publishers. Two publishers have been up in the helicopters looking at the Everglades water system. It is very clear from the air that not just at stake is the environment but the drinking water supply for the South Florida region. The Southern part of Florida is like a giant sponge. You can only suck
so much water out of it before the sea water comes up and bubbles in. It is so large an area, they call it the rain machine—that's a very simplification of it—but even the Office of Congressional Technology says that the vast water area is responsible for moderating the climate. We would be a desert without the Everglades.

PRK: Do you know more about this issue than most of the reporters who cover it?

Musgrove: Yes. Without doubt. And I have briefed many reporters who come in there. Flat out they don't understand the issue. They haven't seen the politics of it. They've never seen the water management board. They don't see the chairman there. If they ask for my help on the issue, they get it.

While Ms. Musgrave's area of greatest concern has been the environment, Ramon Mestre's focuses have been human rights and the Hispanic-American community of Miami. He, too, has found a forum for those commitments on the Herald's editorial pages. Mr. Mestre joined the editorial staff of the Herald three years ago having worked for the government news media, the Voice of America. Born in Miami, he spent his grade school years in Cuba and is bilingual. His educational background had been in philosophy, theoretical psychology, and Latin American studies. One can see in the interview excerpts below how Mr. Mestre's ethical principles are also the foundation for the reasoning within his editorials and the passion which he brings to them.

Mestre: One of the things I've discovered in the two years I've been at the Herald is that I actually harbor very few opinions about anything. Partly as the result of my own temperament, which is inherently skeptical, and partly as a result of my training, I am very wary of reaching precipitous conclusions knowing very little about the subject matter at hand. And here, of course, we have to write opinion pieces. For the most part I find myself listening intently, trying to work through my colleagues' reasoning. ... I try to apply general ethical principles to specific topics, news items, situations. So much of my reaction in this role is thoroughly examined.
To a degree, I must bring to the board the sentiments the complex prejudices, positions, current thoughts that exist in the Cuban community. And that, of course, is brought to bear on a number of topics. I don’t think of myself as spokesperson for the Cuban community by any means. I don’t think of myself as a representative; but I think I carry the red flag whenever we are being impervious or blind to concerns that are of importance to people in the Cuban community or in the Hispanic American community. The Herald has been notoriously insensitive to their concerns; more than anything, insensitive to their suffering, to their pain. And the editorial board is not exempt. That is one of the ways I see my role. But I also see my role as a scout or observer that observes more than a normal reporter’s eye, events in Latin America. ...Latin American news is local news in Miami.

I’ve never thought of myself as someone who is the Delphic Oracle attempting to influence public opinion in a substantial way. I think of myself more in a Socratic vein. If I am given the opportunity, I will help readers reason through an issue. I want them to know what the arguments are for reaching a conclusion on topics which I write about. That isn’t always possible.

And you also want to express moral indignation over such things as massacres, disappearances, human rights violations, which we are probably powerless to alter. But I think there is an affect, an emotional component. And you want to jolt some people.

PRK: What happens in that process? Do you bring it to the attention of the board and say “I want to write on this”? Do you get to most of the time?

Mestre: By and large, in my area. I follow human rights, unfortunately superficially, as I have to follow many other topics; the range is so broad and the demands on the writers are so great. I think that the depth comes with time. But if I choose to—and I have on many occasions—to write to denounce a government for failing to prosecute, or failing to act, or for being the perpetrator of a human rights violation, most of the time any time I have brought the topic up, we have written about it.

And I have innumerable sources in the human rights community. Both here in the States and abroad. Yes, I have no trouble writing about human rights violations. Realizing of course that when you denounce the Burmese government, very little will come of it. But one never knows the indignant reader will write a letter to a
congressman that sets a process going whereby credits are cut or something happens that makes life more difficult for the government or the people who live in the country.

In Latin America, we have an impact whenever we write about it. I brought up the issue, I think the first time anywhere, about Haitian slave labor in the Dominican Republic. We had letters from the vice president of the Dominican Republic. Quite a ruckus was created.

Logos: Reasoning from Ethical Precepts

If I am given the opportunity, I will help readers reason through an issue. I want them to know what the arguments are for reaching a conclusion on topics which I write about.

Ramon Mestre (September 12, 1991)

For Ramon Mestre, “reasoning,” “ethical principles,” and “moral indignation” are quite literally parts of the same conversation. He, like many of the writers I interviewed, embodies in a practical way the contemporary theoretical re-interpretations of Aristotle which see the three pisteis of rhetorical persuasion (logos, ethos, and pathos) as united within the individual. This binding of the pisteis is also demonstrated in two of the principles enumerated in the NCEW’s “Basic Statement of Principles” (Appendix C):

1. The editorial writer should present facts honestly and fully. It is dishonest to base an editorial on half-truth. The writer should never knowingly mislead the reader, misrepresent a situation, or place any person in a false light. No consequential errors should ever go uncorrected.

2. The editorial writer should draw fair conclusions from the stated facts, basing them upon the writer’s considered concept of the public good.

In this construct, the proper presentation of facts is a matter of basic honesty. The conclusions from those facts should be based both on the weight of the
evidence and considerations of the public good. In this way, *ethos* and *logos* are bound even before arguments are generated. Thus, we can see in the concept of *logos*, as we had in our considerations of *ethos*, both the intrinsic nature of the editorialist as well as features of the text. In fact, the nature of “reasoning” emerged explicitly far less frequently in my conversations with editorialists than might be suggested by descriptions of and prescriptions for logical argumentation which tend to dominate the textbooks (in composition as well as editorial writing). Discussions of argumentation were more likely related to “where” arguments might be found or “how” they might be developed. Thus, the means by which an editorial writer might develop her reasoning is explored further in the section *Invention*, below. However, the classical nature of argumentation in editorials is particularly amenable to textual analysis. The editorialist’s “power of proving a truth, or an apparent truth, by means of persuasive arguments” (*Rhetoric*, Contents 587) to use Aristotle’s definition of *logos* is ultimately the expression of his or her work. Editorials, like orations, might be considered of three kinds: what Aristotle would have called epideictic or ceremonial (praising or censuring someone), forensic (dealing with accusation and defense, justice and injustice), and political or deliberative (which “urge us to do or not to do something” (1358b 1-20). Thus, editorials which commemorate a national holiday or extol the virtues of a worthy citizen on his or her death or receipt of honors—could be considered epideictic or ceremonial. But editorials of censure are also epideictic. “The caudillos’ last strut” editorial (Fig. 2) is principally an attack on Gen. Augusto Pinochet, framed by the contrasting praise for South American democracies. The juxtaposition of dictatorship with democracy provides the logic for this editorial, democracy obviously considered the good. Inasmuch as the American legal system is
expected to be uninfluenced by the press, true forensic editorials might be considered rare. Nonetheless, a newspaper’s role in uncovering injustice can be played out on the editorial pages. And while guilt or innocence can not be adjudicated there, the force of public opinion can render other kinds of verdicts. Thus, an editorial which in calling attention to the moral or ethical lapses of an elected official precipitates a public outcry which in turn results in the official’s resignation could be seen as an argument for a guilty verdict in the court of public opinion, if not in a court of law. But by far, the most prevalent type of editorial is the political, “exhortation or dehortation” “about things to be done hereafter” (1358b 14). Thus the editorial “Changing of Nature’s Guard” (Figure 1) calls on members of a new Environmental Regulation Commission to consider their task “a calling to public service, not just a political challenge.” In exhorting this audience of four, The Miami Herald also tells a wider audience of voters that they “can hold the governor directly responsible for assuring that Florida’s precious wetlands, rivers and lakes, and still-breathable air are indeed preserved.” In opposing “public service” represented as “a protected environment” and as “a legacy for all our grandchildren” by “political challenge” with “political” considered pejorative in much American discourse, the line of argument is eminently Aristotelian. The editorial is concerned with achieving happiness for the greatest number (all our grandchildren) by the doing of good things (protecting the environment). As well as editorials which could be described by the Aristotelian pattern, many editorials are actually a combination of types. The “Jobless-pay Cutoff is Cruel” both condemns George Bush and encourages readers to act on the concern aroused by the editorial by communicating with the President. Providing the facts on Florida’s unemployment, depicting unemployed workers forced to desperation levels,
establishes the grounds on which the President is accused of cold-heartedness and not fulfilling his rhetorical promise of being kinder and gentler. While the President might not be moved by this admonishment (although such editorials in major American dailies are not without impact), the newspaper’s readership might be.

The ability to present facts logically is considered a base-level skill of newspaper writing—reporting as well as editorial writing. The difference between editorial and newswriting is perceived by editorialists as the ability to state an opinion on the basis of these facts. Thus making sure that arguments are logical or that all the necessary points are present in an editorial are considered simple matters for editing. Ann Daly Goodwin explained why.

Goodwin: When you get to a big daily, obviously, you aren’t lacking in writing skills. So it [what might need editing] is usually just a question of clarification or bringing in a point.

To be a good writer, you have to be a person first, and a writer second. You have to love language—its power and beauty. It would probably be possible to learn how to be a skillful writer without being a person. Most people rarely understand how revealing writing is. The more depth you have as a person, the more depth you’ll have as a writer.

A revised understanding of pathos together with the concept of ethos discussed earlier suggests a perspective for envisioning “depth” in a writer.
Pathos  A Place in Rhetoric for Empathy and Sympathy

I hope we never get so intellectual that we forget the power of emotion to move and persuade. Indignation sometimes works best in a compact piece; likewise grief, joy, delight, and admiration.


Like ethos, pathos has been of rhetorical concern since at least the time of Aristotle. But unlike the many very different views and interpretations of ethos over the centuries, approaches to pathos have been far more consistent, at least until the late nineteenth century.33 After first dealing with ethos in the Rhetoric, Aristotle turns his attention to the second “mode of persuasion,” “putting the audience into a certain frame of mind” (1356a 3). “To understand the emotions,” says Aristotle, “... is to name and describe them, [and] to know their causes and the way in which they are excited” (1356a 25). Underscoring the importance of emotional appeals in his time, Aristotle comments that “present day writers on rhetoric direct the whole of their efforts” towards effecting emotions (1356a 16) and he, himself, dedicates fourteen chapters of the second book to a detailed analysis of emotion. Cicero observes that “the minds of those before whom the cause is pleaded should be moved as much as possible to a favorable feeling, as well towards the speaker as towards him for whom he speaks” (Book II XLIII 147). And as if anticipating the caveats of twentieth century rhetoricians, Cicero says

I never yet, upon my honor, tried to excite sorrow, or compassion, or envy, or hatred when speaking before a court of judicature, but I myself in rousing the the judges was affected with the very same

33 Nan Johnson notes that “Despite modifications in the configuration of the pathos principle since the classical period, rhetorical theory has consistently reiterated the basic view that response to discourse is influenced measurably by subjective factors. (Pathos Principle, 160)
sensations that I wished to produce in them. For it is not easy to
cause the judge the be angry with him with whom you desire him
to be angry, if you yourself appear to take the matter coolly; or to
make him hate him whom you wish him to hate unless he sees you
first burning with hatred; nor will he be moved to pity, unless you
give plain indications of your own feelings, by your expressions,
sentiments, tone of voice, look, and finally by sympathetic tears. (II
XLVII, 150)

Even the rational Locke acknowledged as passions love, hatred, desire,
joy, sorrow, hope, fear, despair, anger, and envy all of which could be moved
[affecting by language] as they appear to be “the cause of pleasure and pain”
(176-7). Hugh Blair states that “The most virtuous man, in treating of the most
virtuous subject, seeks to touch the heart of him to whom he speaks; and makes
no scruple to raise his indignation at injustice, or his pity to the distressed,
though pity and indignation be passions” (358). And Campbell discusses the
proper employment of tropes and figures in

rousing the passions. ... awakening all the tenderest emotions of
the heart. In this case, the address of the orator is not ultimately
intended to astonish by the loftiness of his images, or to delight by
the beauteous resemblance which his painting bears to nature; nay,
it will not permit the hearers even a moment’s leisure for making
the comparison, but as it were by some magical spell, hurries them
on, ere they are aware, into love, grief, pity, terror, aversion, fury,
or hatred. It therefore assumes the denomination of pathetic,34
which is the characteristic of the third species of discourse, that
addressed to the passions.

Richard Whately adamantly reiterated the role of the “Passions” in effecting
persuasion citing Campbell in his own Elements of Rhetoric.

“To say that it is possible to persuade without speaking to the
passions is but at best specious nonsense. The coolest reasoner
always in persuading, addresseth himself to the passions some

34 Campbell’s own note at this point reads, “I am sensible that this word is used in a more
limited sense, for that which only excites commiseration. Perhaps the word impassioned
would answer better” (147n).
way or other. This he cannot avoid doing, if he speak to the purpose. To make me believe, it is enough to show me that things are so; to make me act, it is necessary to show that the action will answer some End. That can never be an End to me which gratifies no passions or affection in my nature.” (Philosophy of Rhetoric, book i. chap. vii.§4 in Whately, 177)

Furthermore, anticipating twentieth century opposition to emotional appeals, Whately observes the intimate association of “dishonest artifice” with rhetorical address “to the feelings or Active Principles of our nature.” “This,” he says, “is usually stigmatized as ‘an appeal to the Passions instead of the Reason;’ as if Reason alone could ever influence the will, ...which it no more can than ... a ship provided with a compass can sail without a wind” (180). According to Nan Johnson, the nineteenth century rhetoricians “followed the lead of the New Rhetoricians [Campbell, Blair, and Whately] in addressing the traditional principles of pathos and ethos as epistemological issues, ... implicitly address[ing] pathos as a a dynamic to which all strategies of persuasion are committed” (1991, 124-25).

The emotional appeal has experienced a growing disfavor since World War I. Chilton R. Bush’s 1932 textbook Editorial Thinking and Writing carefully differentiates between “opinion, which is “an intellectual judgment” (261), and “sentiment” which is a “feeling about some object, usually a person or a place” (261n) Affirming a logical approach to the writing of editorials, Bush says “It is only when we consider how these primary drives ['six interests' and 'four wishes' that Bush derives from his era’s sociology] are conditioned by intellectual factors that we can really approach an understanding of how to control attitudes” (264). Significantly, however, his discussion of such attitude control—even in its intellectual and analytical mode—characterizes such “nonrational appeals” as the realm of the publicist and propagandist (260-88). “The editor . . . ought not to descend from the intellectual level” (286). Trimmer
and McCrimmon warn that “the emotional appeal is often used to stampede an
audience into thoughtless action,” but admit that it does have value.
Nonetheless, they state that “the emotional appeal should never replace more
rational appeals” (144). Corbett, too, suggests that “In some cases, there is
something undignified about a rational man being precipitated into action
through the stimulus of his aroused passions” (99). Robert Scholes and Nancy
Comley distinguish between “rational argument and the emotional appeal of
persuasive language,” warning that “every citizen needs to be able to deal with
persuasion in two ways: to produce it when necessary and to defend oneself
against it constantly” (61).35

Wayne C. Booth and Marshall W. Gregory tell us that

emotionally charged language of the right kind—true eloquence—
can transform isolated individuals into a community fused
together by the passion of the speaker or writer. ... [But] not all
kinds of emotionally charged language produce community and
healing. ... Some kinds, in fact, go in the opposite direction and
are specifically created to manipulate, coerce, or exploit. Our
natural responsiveness to skilfully charged language makes us
potential prey to a more sinister use of connotations: slanted
language. (266-67, authors’ emphasis)

Their solution to such “underhanded” and “sleazy” tactics is for readers to
“acquire the critical skills and insights that can help us create another and better
world” (274).36 Thus, despite a rhetorical history that warrants the emotional
nature of the human species and values appeals to the emotions recognizing, to
use Hugh Blair’s words, that “passions are the great springs of human action”
(358), contemporary pedagogical practice, of which the above are examples.

35 The Instructor’s Manual which accompanies the Scholes and Comley 1989 text offers
“gamelike situations” for studying persuasive discourse, because “certainly, today many
teachers will have questions about the ethical propriety of teaching persuasive discourse”
(20).

36 Apparently Booth and Gregory are unable to see the slant in their own language.
warns against emotion as a negative force. As we have seen earlier in the discussion of ethos that the teaching of morality is suspect in the twentieth century, incorporating appeals to emotion in the teaching of writing is, to say the least, suspect.37

Contemporary conventional wisdom suggests, as articulated by Waddell, that “the privileged position enjoyed by logos in Western culture has often led to the denial of any appropriate role for pathos ...” (381).38 Speaking to this opposition between logos and pathos, Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede discuss Father William Grimaldi’s analysis of the interaction between the three pisteis of logos, ethos, and pathos with the “two central methods of rhetorical demonstration” the enthymeme and the paradeigma, an interaction which they state dissolves the apparent contradiction between reason and emotion in the Rhetoric and demonstrates that the contradictory interpretations of classical rhetoric [emphasis on logical rather than emotional proofs, in a rhetor-audience relationship emphasizing “manipulative one-way communication” rather than “emphatic two-way communication,” with a goal of persuasion rather than communication] represents a false dichotomy. (40-42)

37 In their essay “Classical and Modern Rhetoric,” Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede cite a number of modern rhetoricians who, in distinguishing between classical and modern rhetoric, suggest that the emphasis in modern rhetoric is on “emotional (or psychological) proofs” (37-40). I am arguing that the writings of academic rhetoricians notwithstanding, persistent pedagogical practice favors the so-called rational argument. The textbook references I quote are not isolated. James Moffett, for example, in The Universe of Discourse, in referring to “public generalization and inference,” states “In these upper reaches of the spectrum, rhetoric becomes increasingly synonymous with formal, explicit logic” (45). Even Knoblauch and Brannon locate the writing process in “the need to discover coherence amidst diverse information” (64). In fact, it is our “preference” for the linearity of logic that privileges what we perceive as the progression of intellectual history or when we speak of academic/intellectual rigor. I suspect that this “preference” owes more to the heritage of B.F. Skinner—in assessing behavior—and Joseph McCarthy—in affecting behavior—than we would want to admit.

38 Waddell notes that “one crude measure of the prejudice against pathos is the relative poverty of articles on this topic cited in the Philosopher’s Index database.” In his 1988 search of the 136,000-record database, he reports finding 237 citations for logos, 114 for ethos, and only 20 for pathos (397n). My own search of the massive ERIC database yielded even fewer citations for pathos; and 61 in the MLA database, of which only eight were relevant—even peripherally—to rhetoric.
However, that perceived primacy of *logos* cannot be attributed to inappropriate interpretations of Aristotle alone. The acceptance by seemingly rationalist philosophers/rhetoricians of a place for emotion would suggest, instead, that the widespread practical (as opposed to intellectual) antipathy towards *pathos* is of relatively recent date, fueled in part by the hostility of nineteenth century literary critics toward emotion and sentimentality, in part by a more recent fear of propaganda and demagoguery, and in part by the positivistic reliance on objectivity, logic, and rationality that have characterized the natural and social sciences. According to Richard Weaver, in this "narrow reasoning" which lowered the status of rhetoric "whenever emotion is allowed to put in an oar, it gets the boat off true course. Therefore emotion is a liability" (306).

Emotion and sentimentality have been considered such a liability in the criticism of literature since the mid-nineteenth century (witness the critical response to the immensely popular and sentimental *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and to other so-called women's novels), that it perhaps should come as small surprise that the approach of literary studies to *pathos* has been so narrow—generally invoking the Aristotelian *pisteis* as analytical lens: e.g., E.F. Dyck's "*Ethos, Pathos,* and *Logos* in *Troilus and Criseyde*" or Jose Francisco Renato Wendling's dissertation, "A Study of the Scarlet Letter using Aristotle's Rhetorical Schema: 'Ethos,' 'Pathos,' and 'Logos'/'Mythos.' More recently, literary critics of the reader-response ilk are discovering *pathos* anew. Citing their disciplinary circumscription in recognizing the rhetorical tradition, Nan Johnson in her essay "Reader-Response and the *Pathos Principle" criticizes reader-response critics for the stance of the reader-resonse movement itself which proclaims its originality persistently and does not invite exploration of parallel or contiguous viewpoints. In addition, a widespread failure of the art of contemporary literary critics to assess accurately the range of rhetoric as a theoretical discipline mediates
against the recognition of the critical application of rhetorical principles such as the *pathos* principle. (162)

A more comprehensive view of language occasions has pedagogical as well as theoretical implications. The conflation of reader-response theories of affective response with rhetorical assumptions about *pathos* provides a theoretical foundation for teaching writing and reading as activities implicated in essentially the same process: the construction of ideas and experience .... . (164)

Restoring *pathos* to respectability in the teaching of writing, like restoring the ethical-moral component, requires understanding why it is construed so negatively today—the result of rhetorical, literary, and scientific epistemologies which have valorized the rational and denigrated the emotional—accepting Johnson's theoretical argument as briefly stated above, and becoming aware of the contemporary work-world essayists' unapologetic use of what Johnson would call the *pathos* principle in their editorials and what classical rhetoricians (and some of their modern counterparts) would consider inherent qualities of the rhetor.

In my interview with her, Ann Daly Goodwin told me of her own conversation with Pulitzer Prize winner Richard Aregood.

*He told me, 'Feel it before you write it.'*

I don't think you can write if you can't feel. It sometimes takes me a while; I'll pace around (I call that 'sharpening my pencil.') In my office, I kept a picture of a face pinned up—for when I wanted to feel the pity, the passion, of the human condition. It's that worn wonderful lined face of Mother Theresa and clasped in her hands is the face of a small child.

Mrs. Goodwin is renowned for her "feeling" editorials. In presenting her second Walker Stone Award, Scripps Howard officials noted, "Thinking isn't what makes the *St. Paul Pioneer Press dispatch* writer's concise editorials vibrate. It's the feeling she puts into them" (5).
His own feelings also motivate *Pottstown Mercury* editorialist Thomas Hylton. Describing his attitudes for a collection of Pulitzer Prize-winning writing, he explained why he took so active a role in saving Pennsylvania farm land. "Nobody wanted to do anything about it. Nobody seemed to think there was anything to do about it. I felt otherwise. To me, suburban sprawl is a modern evil—bland, inefficient, and environmentally destructive." Protecting the open space of Pennsylvania's Chester County is one of the few issues on Thomas Hylton's "agenda," and it was his successful series of editorials supporting a $50 million bond issue to preserve farmland and open space that won him the Pulitzer. Hylton's culminating editorial, the seventh of the *Mercury* series and scheduled for a Sunday when it might have the greatest impact, was the most passionate. He not only appealed unashamedly to the hearts and souls of his readers, to their sense of identity, and to the pride in their home and surroundings, but he also incorporated into his editorial a highly personal and emotional column by another writer on the *Mercury*'s staff. The editorial is reproduced here in its entirety and is notable for its oratorical tone (Fig. 3).

Unlike most editorial writers, who are constrained by requirements of page style and space, Mr. Hylton, as the one-person editorial page staff, controlled almost all the elements of the seven-day presentation. He stated

> As far as I was concerned, this was the most important vote on the most important issue of my generation. If the referendum passed, it didn't necessarily mean farmland would be saved, but if it failed, it meant the eventual demise of agriculture in southeastern Pennsylvania.

> I decided to write a week-long series of editorials summarizing everything I had written in the previous two years, packaged with accompanying cartoons. The series would be published two weeks before the election, enough time for a pro-farmland group, Chester

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39 During my visit with him, Mr. Hylton told me "I write my agenda. I'm trying to write about fewer things more often to get action." Paraphrasing Aristotle, he said "he who has too many editorial topics will not get anything done."
County Citizens to Save Open Space, to photocopy the editorials and ensure their distribution to key leaders throughout the county. I believed the sheer volume of material, as well as the words, would help demonstrate the referendum’s importance.

Mr. Hylton believes that “editorial writers can be more visionary than politicians,” but this series of editorials is describable as political oratory, deliberative “speeches,” appealing directly to those who will have the power to enact a political decision. In Aristotle’s words, “in urging his hearers to take up or to avoid a course of action, the political orator must show that he has an eye to their happiness” (Contents: Rhetoric, 587), clearly Mr. Hylton’s goal. A bond proposal deals with “Ways and Means,” one of the main matters on which political speakers make speeches (1359b 20). Like the “political orator [who] aims at establishing the expediency or the harmfulness of a proposed course of action,” Hylton delineates what can happen if Chester County does pass the bond issue and what will happen if it does not. Aristotle cautions that a “comprehensive view of these questions cannot be gained solely from experience in home affairs; [but] in order to advise on such matters a man must be keenly interested in the methods worked out in other lands” (1359b 32-34). In his commentary, Hylton talks of visiting England, and being “impressed by how carefully the English protect their country-side and encourage people to live in towns.” And five of the seven editorials (though not the one reprinted here refer to the experience of other countries or communities. As well as the general aspects of deliberative oratory, some of which are described above, this editorial (and the others) make particular use of those arguments which affect the emotions. By comparing the destruction of Chester County’s environment with the destruction of Rotterdam at the hands of Hitler, Mr. Hylton certainly invokes anger (especially among the many thousands of descendants of Dutch and English settlers in the area. To calm his readers, he quotes a column which talks
The land is ours to protect for our children and grandchildren

As this century dawned, Rotterdam was Europe's greatest harbor and one of its most ancient cities. It was a fairytale setting of clocktowers and gables, tile roofs and narrow cobbledstone streets. Then, on May 14, 1910, the German bombers came. In less than three hours, 600 years of history were wiped from the face of the earth.

The paving over of rural Chester County lacks the drama, the malevolence — and the shocking suddenness — of the blitzkreig on Rotterdam.

The result will be the same.

The Dutch rebuilt Rotterdam, and it is a great and vibrant city. But its history is confined to the library, and we are all the lesser for it.

Chester County will always have Valley Forge, Longwood Gardens, the Wyeth museum, and other monuments to its magnificent past.

But when its gently rolling hills are covered with housing projects, and its quiet country roads are widened, straightened, and lined with convenience stores, then the heart and soul of Chester County will be gone forever.

The transformation of historic countryside into modern suburbia will come not at the hand of a madman, but through our own folly. Unfortunately, many people do not realize the scope of recent commercial and housing construction. They don't appreciate how close Chester County is to permanently losing its rural character.

A sense of identity, a pride in our home and surroundings, is what we need. Chester County is beautiful beyond compare. The rolling farmland, the wooded hillsides, the streams and wildlife are precious endowments we all enjoy. They have been handed down to us from generation to generation, and they are ours to protect for our children and grandchildren.

We have a responsibility to be good stewards of our land. It makes no difference how much farmland is left in the Midwest, or how many forests there are in the Appalachians. Chester County is our home.

The proposed $50 million bond issue on the Nov. 7 ballot will provide funds for open space and farmland preservation. The bond issue is indispensable to protect our heritage. The cost is small, measured in terms of generations, it is trivial.

Last fall, Mercury columnist Cindy Mitch described feelings that many of us share:

"A few days ago I trekked up a hill in Chester County. You get to this hill by making your way through a tangle of branches and fallen tree limbs. Your feet slide off small rocks hidden by a thick carpet of moss and dead leaves. If you look up at just the right time, and are very, very quiet, you come eyeball to eyeball with a doe and her fawn. There is no sound except for the birds and the movements of small animals and the rhythm of your heart beating in unison with the life of the forest."

I sit up here on this hill and I think about the vegetable stand next to the Country Tavern. I think of how my grandmother used to chop firewood on cold winter days just a few yards down the hill from where I'm sitting. I think of my grandfather and how he once broke wild horses on this land.

I remember nights in this forest when the only illumination was the light streaming down from the moon and stars. I remember how we could stand out here alone and not be afraid in the darkness, because there was nothing out here that would hurt us. When I was a kid I knew the land would be good to me simply because I was good to the land.

Back then, we had an unspoken pact with Mother Nature. In the ensuing years, we broke it.

There are people coming around here now destroying this land. They pay lip service to it. They claim they have a feel for the land and its history. They're lying.

When you have a feel for this land you don't destroy it to build houses and resorts and office complexes. When you have a feel for the land you nurture it. You respect it. You treat it the way you would like it to treat you.

And then you pick up a multi-colored leaf and some cool, damp moss and a dried twig or two. And you hold these things as close to your heart as you possibly can before they slip away from you.

The Chester County we love is slipping away from us. Once it's gone, it's gone. The $50 million bond issue is essential to protect what we have left. We urge all Chester County voters to go to the polls Nov. 7 and vote yes to save open space.
of the quiet beauty of nature and which recalls being unafraid in the darkness “because there was nothing out there that would hurt us.” He invokes fear by painting a “mental picture of some destructive or painful evil of the future” editorial would exceed the scope of this dissertation. Nonetheless, this abbreviated version demonstrates the considerable conguence between classical form and this contemporary “oration.”

There are probably few editorialists today who have the latitude to write this kind of editorial. However, most editorial writers (unknowingly) follow the Aristotelian precepts for considering the “persuasive arguments connected with the emotions [and the] various types of human character, in relation to the emotions and moral qualities” (1388b 30-31). Don Harrison, associate editorial page editor of the Philadelphia Daily News describes his newspaper as “unabashedly a blue collar paper” that encourages its relationship with readers. “We have as little pretense as possible,” he says. “Our readers love to fight with us.” Empathizing with their readership allows the Daily News’s highly sophisticated, highly educated editorial page staff to write—without sacrificing intellect or sophistication—editorials which are read and responded to by their working-class readership.

Linda Wright Moore graduated from Stanford and did her graduate work at Columbia. After a number of years in broadcast journalism as a reporter and anchorwoman in major metropolitan markets, and six months as press secretary to the mayor of Philadelphia, she turned to newspaper journalism, working first as a columnist and now as an editorial writer. Writing colloquially, she artfully relates to her readers in a complex editorial that attacks political patronage (Figure 4, next page).
WHAT HIRING FREEZE?

Welcome back, Curt and Lana

You work for an outfit that's losing money big-time and has officially announced a hiring freeze. You quit your job for another gig, one with potential. A few months later, the new gig is gone, taking its potential with it. You look up your old employer — still beyond the red and officially not hiring. Nobody. No time. No way.

QUESTION: Do you get re-hired?

ANSWER: Of course not, unless the employer is the city of Philadelphia and you have the right political connections. Then you might even get a raise.

It worked for two city officials who left the Goode administration to run the primary campaigns of two losing mayoral candidates, and now are back on the payroll at City Hall.

Curt Jones quit as deputy finance director, in charge of the Minority Business Enterprise Council, to run Lucien Blackwell's campaign for mayor. But this week, Jones is back in the Finance Department with an undefined $65,000-a-year job.

After running George Burrell's mayoral primary campaign, former Deputy City Representative Lana Felton-Ghee took the direct approach. She simply came back to work a couple of weeks back. Al Spivey Jr., a Goode campaign worker in 1983 and 1987 who had been hired to replace her at $65,000 a year, had to move over to make room.

Spivey, still on the payroll, gets a consolation prize — a $30,000 position in the Mayor's Office of Community Service, which is mandated to run social service programs with federal funds, with what's left after it's tunneled through the state.

Defending this hiring-in-a-hiring-freeze policy, the mayor says the city head count has gone steadily down since last year. It's hard to tell when there aren't enough chairs for everybody. Maybe the mayor's counting the wrong end.

The mayor also says the city hires only when it "needs" to.

This need apparently arises even when the jobs surrendered by well-connected former workers have been filled.

The "need" is not the city's; it is for those who "need" paychecks.

Spivey's new job, the mayor points out, will be paid for with federal funds, "dolla Harrisburg" if not spent.

- Maybe the money belongs the state has a bigger budget deficit.

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Figure 4: Editorial in the Philadelphia Daily News 6/14/91

Another Philadelphia Daily News editorial appearing the same day (June 14) used sarcasm to express indignation. The editorial (the composing of which will
be discussed further in the following chapter) was written by the Pulitzer Prize winning editorial page editor Richard Aregood.

**COLUMNIST ON LIDDY’S HIT LIST**

'Too severe'

G. Gordon Liddy finally talked. The nuttiest man ever to hang out in the White House (excepting, of course, his boss) has admitted he whomped up a plan to bump off Jack Anderson.

It was not to be an act of journalism criticism. Anderson was to be whacked for getting a story right.

But, Liddy told Anderson this week, the guys at the top said “it was too severe a sanction.” At last. Something Nixon wouldn’t do.

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Figure 5: Editorial in the *Philadelphia Daily News* 6/14/91

Lest it be thought that the integration of *ethos, pathos, and logos* is only a recent feature of the editorial page, I quote from a Gayle Waldrop\(^{40}\) article which discussed the “salutory editorial of the newly created editorial page” of the May 19, 1946 *Denver Post*.

The editorial page must be dedicated to the welfare of all the people, not merely the interest of one exclusive and fortunate class.

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The effective editorial page may be either liberal or conservative, but it should be put together with some consideration for style, it must be vigorous, independent and free, and its judgments must have perspective, while permeating the whole there must be passionate concern for the truth.

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\(^{40}\) Waldrop was, at that time, Professor in the College of Journalism of the University of Colorado.
When Waldrop says the editorial "must be vigorous, independent and free," that "its judgments must have perspective," and that "permeating the whole there must be a passionate concern for the truth," he asserts a foundation for editorial writing which precedes the mechanical construction of the editorial—that which "should be put together with some consideration of style."

Recognizing the association these intrinsic values have with *pathos*, *logos*, and *ethos*—as values, not simply as means of persuasion—has allowed us to see

- Why, if not how, editorial writers generate their texts
- The contexts in which the editorial writers under study write and
- Some of the ways in which these writers and their writings are similar to and different from other writers described in the literature

So we have seen that while *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos* can certainly be seen in texts, they also can be seen in writers.

The remainder of this chapter looks briefly at some distinguishing features of invention and arrangement which relate more to text production than to human qualities.
Invention

The common worry of teachers who have tried to teach (and use) invention is that the techniques create too much clutter: a clutter of time in trying to show students how to use the techniques and a clutter of ideas making for an embarrassment of riches and refuse that students cannot distinguish.

—Peter DeBlois (paper presented to the Conference on College Composition and Communication, March 1980)

We’re not going to do a Flag Day editorial, for crissakes!


The canons of rhetoric—invention, arrangement, “style,” “delivery,” and “memory”—particularly the first three, are important features of editorial writing. Textbook discussions of editorial writing style, however, differ little from other style manuals and need not be repeated here. And as any student of Rhetoric knows, “invention” and “style” are the rhetorical topics about which the most has been written, from antiquity to the present day. The wealth of research and explication generated by such contemporary writers as Sharon Crowley (The Methodical Memory: Invention in Current-Traditional Rhetoric); David V. Harrington et al (“A Critical Survey of Resources for Teaching Rhetorical Invention”); and Richard Young (“Invention: A Topographical Survey) to say nothing of the (no doubt) hundreds of inventiona heuristics from Aristotle, to the Ad Herennium, to Kenneth Burke, to Young, Becker, and Pike: from topoi, to tagmemics, from questioning to clustering, would render superfluous (to say nothing of exhausting both readers and writer) my further review of the subject.

41 At the time of this writing, a strike by Teamster’s at the Pittsburg, PA newspapers has essentially quieted the editorial voice by shutting down all delivery of the newspapers.
I would, however, like to discuss briefly several invention methods used by editorialists that may have received little or no attention in the composition and rhetoric literature.

When the typical editorial page publishes three or more editorials daily, at least six days a week (some newspapers do not include a Saturday opinion page or reserve it for readers' letters), year in and year out, considerably more ideas and arguments must be generated that the typical first-year composition student who may need to generate six essays in her quarter or semester. Many composition classes have relied on readings as the basis for essays, not only because of composition's traditional locus in literature or the value of well-written models as exemplars, but in order for students to have a common ground on which to write; they didn't have to go far afield to get the substrates for their argument. To some composition theorists, various psychologically oriented pre-writing techniques such as freewriting, clustering and mapping, allowed the student to liberate ideas that supposedly the student already had locked within her mind. Both these views reinforce the notion that research is not an appropriate activity for the composition class, the research paper being a distinguishable genre from the persuasive essay.

How are the subjects for editorials generated? Responses to current news, events, and situations are starting points. But for the professional editorialist, research is an integral part of persuasion. Some editorialists may write from the tops of their heads—indeed this appears to have been a prevalent mode in the past and still is for those who are considered mediocre by the profession's leaders. But for the editorialists I studied, the discovery of argument requires

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42 The notable exception, of course, is Ken Macrorie's I-Search.
considerable research—exhausting computerized databases, getting on the phone and talking to people, getting out into the field, often for an editorial of no more than 750 words. To reiterate the words of Joanna Wragg about training editorial writers, "they have to be better reporters than the reporters because they'll be influencing decision-making. They have to know both sides of the case and be able to make value judgments." Mrs. Wragg emphasizes, "Nobody writes out of their head." Jane Healy, Pulitzer Prize winning associate editor of the *Orlando Sentinel* states "the writer proposing a stand has to talk on both sides of an issue. We better be ready to refute or we're on shaky ground." Ellen Belcher of the *Dayton Daily News* has "covered" education for years but still considered it necessary to do extensive research to generate the background she needed to write an editorial on layoffs at Dayton City Schools. She explains:

Belcher: I didn' know where I was going but I felt we needed an editorial putting some perspective on the issue. Sometimes that can't be done quickly, but I just didn't want to say "Oh, isn't this too bad." I just hate those [kind of] editorials. I'm not sure they don't need to cut back—I had to research that —that wouldn't be informed opinion to me, and I didn't want to write the obligatory rhetoric.

So I started calling around and made some six calls including one to the reporter on the story. And I asked for their thoughts, and that's when I came across this thing [the basis for her editorial] about the site-based management. And obviously that's a buzzword in education right now. It's sort of a hot topic. It was a way to put a new spin on a story that already had a lot of copy on it and not just rehashing stuff that's already been in the paper. And that's just a personal style that I have. I don't like to write an editorial solely and exclusively based on information from the New York Times. I like to take it at least one step farther if not five or six steps farther.

That's how this came to be. I started working on it day before yesterday. Probably spent an hour making calls and getting folks to talk the first day. And then spent probably three hours
yesterday talking on the phone again and then maybe an hour writing it. And now what you're seeing is certainly more than a draft—it's a skeleton with most of the meat on it, but maybe not the epidermis.

As on other editorial pages which value a writer's knowledge, Ms. Belcher has been allowed to specialize in education. The writer, as what compositionists might call a "content-area"-specialist, certainly goes beyond the notion that students' personal opinions are valid by virtue of their holding them. Robert Sanchez, a member of the Miami Herald's award-winning editorial board told me, "we offer great deference to expertise in a given subject area." He says, "I tell students, 'of course, you're entitled to have an opinion; you're just not entitled to have your [unsubstantiated] opinion taken seriously.'"

Another aspect of "invention" which characterizes the editorialists I studied is the function of the editorial board. While the nature of the editorial board as both response group and collaborative group will be discussed more fully in the next chapter, the role of the editorial board in generating topics, arguments, and approaches for discussion is worth mentioning here. Before pen is put to paper (fingers put to keyboard?), editorialists bring their ideas to the editorial board to work their arguments out orally before they start writing. At one of the Miami Herald editorial board meetings I attended, writer Kathleen Krog enunciated as a subject for an editorial, a problem with liability for taxi accidents, a problem exacerbated by "a labyrinthine system [for taxi licensing] fostered by the city. A solution she offered would be to attach the vehicle to the license, making sure that drivers were qualified as chauffeurs, that they had liability insurance, and that their vehicles were inspected. "No one [in the taxi industry] would like it," she said. "But it's needed to protect the public and citizens." In response to Ms. Krog's basic idea, editor Jim Hampton suggested "Sounds almost like democracy ... is there an analogy there to de-regulated
airlines.” From Robert Sanchez, “Let’s get it down to the level of the basic person.” And from Joanna Wragg, “Let’s point out that taxi service is not just for pinstriped suits and well-healed tourists—but affects older people, the handicapped, those in remote areas.” This pattern of response was re-affirmed at all the editorial board meetings I attended.

A third means by which experienced editorialists develop the pieces they write is their need to find new ways of writing the holiday editorial or set piece. Writing in a Masthead symposium, Catherine Ford, associate editor of the Calgary Herald states

There was the Christmas Eve that publishing the Bible verses about the shepherds and flocks for another year seemed so prosaic, so we worked on an entire editorial page that reflected the diversity of this holiday and what it meant to all of us as a cross-section of our community—and next year we ran the Bible again. Not because anyone objected to the secular tone of the Christmas Eve page, but because it required an extraordinary effort that could only come together with such pizzazz once.” (8)

Explains Beth Barber, associate editor of the Norfolk Virginian-Pilot, in that same symposium, “Holiday editorials aren’t favored duty. Usually they end up in the hands of whoever has the time, the inclination, or the misfortune not to have a pressing topic on his or her plate the morning the holiday line-up comes up” (8).

Obviously, the duty editorial (not only needed for holidays, but also for United Way kick-offs, PTA membership drives, and the like) requires extra work to enliven the same basic subject matter year after year. Philadelphia is home to Betsy Ross and by extension to the American Flag. Flag Day, thus, is important in Philadelphia, but the idea of her newspaper running an obligatory Flag Day editorial generated Signe Wilkinson’s comment that began this section. The Philadelphia Daily News editorial response to Flag Day used the holiday to chide the city.
ANOTHER HOLIDAY FOR CITY EMPLOYEES

For Old Glory

To celebrate Flag Day, all city recreation facilities are closed today. So is City Hall, health centers and most municipal operations.

Federal and state agencies, post offices and schools will operate as usual, as will most other businesses.

So what else is new? Last week, city workers got Memorial Day off. Two weeks before that, city workers got Election Day off. During the year, city workers got 14 paid holidays while most taxpayers get about seven or eight.

You begin to understand why the city never has money to open swimming pools on time, keep recreation centers in good shape, etc.

Flag Day's great, but 25,000 city workers don't need the day off to salute it.

Reprinted by permission of *The Daily News*

Figure 6: Editorial in the *Philadelphia Daily News* 6/14/91

Similar concerns are expressed at other newspapers. Shortly before Memorial Day, *Dayton Daily News* editorial writer Martin Gottlieb asked “If Max [editor Max Jennings] seriously doesn’t believe in Memorial Day editorials, why don’t we skip it? I don’t believe in them unless we’ve got something to say.” Like students who balk at the perpetually assigned essay topic about which they may have nothing to say, professional editorial writers are similarly undermotivated. Yet *Daily News* editorial page editor Hap Cawood wanted to recognize the soldiers from the Miami Valley who had been lost in the Persian Gulf War.

While writing the editorial, he developed the point of view to vary it from the ordinary. He told me

Cawood: Basically the point of this, is that we’re trying to do something for Memorial Day and I was thinking that the War has made this Memorial Day different, even if only for a year. So I was trying to
build on that notion, and then when I got halfway through it, I thought that the real Memorial Day isn’t Monday because it’s kind of a holiday period. It was really during the buildup of the Persian Gulf War. Because that’s when we started thinking about those who had died before, and that’s when we were concerned that others would die in massive wars. And you begin thinking about the Vietnam veterans and all the vets who came out, and all the focus was on the military people.

What Cawood wrote is excerpted below:

So if 1991 had to mark the real Memorial Day, it would have been Jan. 16, when the fighter pilots streaked into the Baghdad night. or weeks later as the young soldiers dug into the foxholes on the Kuwaiti front and spoke of their fear. Then the fate of all our other fallen soldiers came to mind as the backdrop of our prayers.

Not only by ceremony and honor but also by our hesitation to wage war again do we remember them.

In her article “A Case for a Modern Commonplace Book,” Gayle Price tells of devot[ing] class days on a regular basis to having students read magazines and newspapers for the sole purpose of locating and recording potential essay topics. The activity included noting not only facts but personal reactions to them.

Reading newspaper editorials might not only provide students with facts but also with ideas for treating commonplace topics. to see what kind of alternatives to the mundane professional writers develop. Alternatives to the usual treatment of topic is one way successful writers retain readers. Variations in the structure or organization of their editorials is another.
Arrangement

The teaching of arrangement in our composition classes over the past 100 years has been largely a promoting of atrophied and inflexible structures which seriously inhibit perceptions which are not culture bound.”
—Donald C. Stewart (1987, p. 97)

When you need to “write as short as possible but as long as needed,” to use the words of Robert Pittman, vice president and editor of editorials for the St. Petersburg Times, the arrangement of your argument becomes part of the argument itself. Explains Mr. Pittman, “you have to write to the ideal length for that subject.” Getting opinion early in the piece is a necessity. Jane Healy says, “I try to encourage people to be creative, to use a different device for getting into an editorial—not a gratuitous device—but a different one, a letter, a dialogue, for example. What’s important,” she says is that “the reader shouldn’t have to get beyond the third [para]graph to learn what the newspaper’s opinion is. Ms. Healy won the Pulitzer in 1988 for a series on the mismanaged growth of Orange County, FL. Segment of three editorials in the series are included on the following pages. The full editorials run in two columns almost the entire length of the page. Each of the six editorials in the Pulitzer series uses a different arrangement, a different device.

Increasingly, too, “arrangement” to the editorial writer might, in fact, be closer to the classical canon of delivery. Particularly as computerization has given newspaper editors more flexibility, and especially because competition from other media has created different reader expectations, few newspapers today retain the solid gray look of 20 years past. Visual arrangement—using such art as, cartoons, graphs, drawings, or photographs; increased white space;
This is the first of six editorials on Orange County's mismanaged growth.

Today: A county in crisis.

How would you like to live in a place where:

☐ (A) Some elementary school children must eat lunch at 10:30 a.m. because the cafeteria is too crowded to seat everyone during normal lunch hours.

☐ (B) All but one high school is overcrowded. Some academic classes have to be held in the school gym or, worse, the gym's storage room.

☐ (C) Cars jam up bumper to bumper on dozens and dozens of roads, and the worst is ahead. A place where in just seven years half of the major roads will be carrying more cars than the roads were built for.

☐ (D) Parks rank so low on priority lists that total park acreage must increase by 60 percent just to meet state standards.

☐ (E) All of the above.

Welcome to Orange County, Fla., the 13th fastest-growing area in the country, where you never have to choose between the rotten fruits of unmanaged growth. In Orange County, the answer is always (E), "All of the above."

The Sun Boom? No question, Orange County is right in the thick of it. The economic statistics look jim-dandy on paper, but kids don't go to school on paper. Nor do roads and parks get built on it. Beneath all those rosy data-bank projections, Orange County is being sold out for a quick buck. It's a county in crisis.

The illusion? The tough new law the Legislature passed two years ago, the one that said services must go hand in hand with growth.

The reality? In the Orlando area, the law won't go into effect for at least three more years. That's a year later than originally scheduled. Too much paperwork for everyone, the state says. Let's wait just a little bit longer, it says. The rest of us can only wonder how many more times this deadline will be delayed.

This means at least three more years of business as usual in Orange County. Hold on to your steering wheel.

As for that thick, serious-sounding growth management plan Orange County has, yes, it exists. But try to get a majority of Orange County commissioners to take it as anything other than an annoyance. Just look at the pitiful record:

August 1985: Orange County updates its 5-year-old plan for growth, leaving enough land in urban areas to accommodate developers for the next 20 to 30 years. In other words, the county says it won't be necessary to leapfrog out to rural areas and waste money building roads, utility lines and schools all over the place. Commissioners even agree that developers won't be able to ask for changes to the plan every time they walk in the door. They now can ask for changes only twice a year. Hallelujah, a new day.

Or perhaps we should say, it looked like a new day. Turns out most of these commissioners are leapfrogging fools.

Spring 1986 — County commissioners

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Figure 7: Excerpts from the Lead Editorial in the Orlando Sentinel's Pulitzer Prize-Winning Series 11/1/87
Meal for a monster

This is the second of six editorials on Orange County's mismanaged growth. Today: The east Orange disaster.

Drive out the Bee Line Expressway east of Semoran Boulevard and you'll see woods, woods and more woods — pine, oak and wild wax myrtle. Now picture that same area in five or 10 years:

The woods? Forget 'em. Subdivisions now flank the expressway, and 10-story office buildings dot the landscape. Turn off at any of the many exits, and you'll run through the usual strip shopping center: an Exxon station, a McDonald's and Taco Tico and Kentucky Fried Chicken — the pine, oak and wild wax myrtle of the New Florida.

Drive through the housing developments, and you'll see the houses are new, but cars already jam the roads. Schools? When you finally do come across one, you can hardly see the main building through all the portable classrooms sitting outside. Parks for the kids to play in? Please, this is the Great Florida Land Boom. Who has time for parks? Come on back in another 10 years, and maybe someone will have gotten around to providing them.

A nice way to live? Hardly. Yet it might be the latest nightmare-come-true because Orange County commissioners have done nothing to insist that they, rather than developers, call the shots on growth for a big chunk of southeast Orange County. It's the latest chapter of the old Florida story, "Gimme, Gimme, Gimme."

Industrial park came — through fast talking. One property owner already has had engineers come up with a plan for offices, homes and stores on about 2 square miles of the land. It even has a name — "Bal-Bay." Don't think for a minute that other property owners aren't readying their own versions of "Bal-Bay."

Is there still any hope? It's hard to think why there might be. After all, why should the rules change now? Why should commissioners ever say no to anyone? Judging by their record, these commissioners take to unplanned, piecemeal development like a glutton to double chocolate cake.

For the moment, though, let us dare to dream. Let us dare to imagine that commissioners have the gumption to:

- Ban development west of the industrial park until they know how much growth that area can handle.

Is this too much to ask? Hardly. The commission's duty is to the voters, not to the developers and their smooth-talking lawyers. Without a ban, this land is going to get gobbled up for urban development.

We can just hear the lawyers arguing now: "Where did the commissioners expect the 40,000 people who will be working at the industrial park to live? Way on the other side of Orange County, so they can add to the already massive traffic jams? Ladies and gentlemen, get serious!"

Right now, the commission has no way to refute such arguments. It did, after all, approve the industrial park. Beyond that, commissioners must have some legal reason to turn down a development. The solu-

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Figure 8: Excerpts from the second Editorial in the Orlando Sentinel's Pulitzer Prize-Winning Series, 11/2/87
This is the third of six editorials on Orange County's mismanaged growth. 
Today: Who jammed our schools?

Students at Palm Lake Elementary might not be hungry for lunch at 10:30 in the morning, but for some of them that's just tough luck. That's when the school has to start shuffling children into the cafeteria. A new class follows every three minutes.

Absurd? Of course, but there's no other way to get the students fed. Take a look at the numbers:

**Palm Lake Elementary School**
- Capacity: 600 students
- Students: 900 plus
- Date opened: August 1987

Too bad, also, for the students who enrolled at Dr. Phillips High School thinking they would get the best Orange County has to offer. Oh, the school is modern enough. That is, unless you're one of the students who has had to attend class in a physical education storage room.

**Dr. Phillips High School**
- Capacity: 2,537 students
- Students: 3,008
- Date opened: August 1987

Pathetic? You bet it is, but not half so pathetic as what happened Sept. 21, just one month after Dr. Phillips High School opened to overflow crowds.

The place: The Orange County Commission chambers. Developers stand before commissioners arguing that they should gang — landowners and developers, their architects, engineers and attorneys. Land values skyrocket and fees come rolling in every time the county commission allows urban development of rural land. Worst of all, the ones who make the killing don't have to live there when they're through. Let the poor suckers who buy the houses worry about schools and roads and all that nonsense.

Don't look to the school board for any help. It's the co-conspirator in this mess. School officials didn't even protest the commission's decision to see how many people it could fit in Dr. Phillips High at one time. Not a peep out of them.

They say they didn't know it was coming up. Huh? Everyone else did. Two quarter-page newspaper ads announced the proposed change. What's more, the commission only considers such changes twice a year. Can't school officials keep track of two hearings a year if it means trying to prevent their schools from being unnecessarily crowded?

One more bit of high nonsense from the school board: Its staff now has asked the county commission if it can start building schools in the rural areas even though the county's plan for growth prohibits that — and for good reason. Nothing short of a four-lane highway can encourage high-density growth in rural areas more than a school. To their credit, county planners will ask the county commission to deny this ludicrous request.

How do you turn this dreary record around?

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Figure 9: Excerpts from the third Editorial in the Orlando Sentinel's Pulitzer Prize-Winning Series 11/3/87
accenting text with bullets or rules—serves to involve the reader in the page. Because pages are no longer laid out in composing rooms by typographers who had no involvement with the writing of the text, the writers and editors can have far more control. At the Dayton Daily News, each writer writes the headline that will accompany the editorial he or she has written and selects art to accompany it. Although this practice is not prevalent, it would have been unheard of a decade ago. When the writer has control over all of her editorial, she may be better able to achieve her purposes than when she produced only gray text. Thomas Hylton’s Pulitzer Prize winning series included a page-wide photograph to underscore the scenic beauty he was trying to protect and a 12-frame over-sized cartoon strip to reach readers who may not have chosen to read the editorials.

Conclusion

Whether cartoon strips or graphs and charts, innovative forms or innovative approaches to old subjects, humor or indignation, sarcasm or colloquialism, the work of the editorialist is quintessentially rhetorical. So when we ask “how do editorial writers generate their texts?”, we can answer that they begin with rhetoric, with a deeply-felt, highly motivated sense of purpose, with an acute awareness of their audiences; with an understanding that persuasion is effected textually and visually. The practices of the contemporary editorial writer—the good person, speaking well—echo the practices and tenets of the classical orator, as this chapter has demonstrated. Classical rhetoric, then, provides the framework by which we can analyze ethos, logos, and pathos, not only as textual features but as intrinsic core values of the producers of text. Aristotle has called these three pisteis the “sources of persuasion” (1403b 9), and I
am suggesting that these "sources" are located within the writer. Rhetoric also provides a traditional ground from which to view contemporary practice. Thus we can understand how "invention" in the present day can include multifaceted techniques of discovery—from electronic databases to telephone interviews to the group discussion of an editorial board meeting. Further, we can see that the rhetorical principle of "arrangement" affords in print opportunities that were unavailable to a speaker, and that computerized text production expands rhetorical choices even more. Visual devices are arranged in ways to effect persuasion that could not have been imagined in the past.

But even as classical rhetoric allows us to account for many features of the editorialist's work, there are others which are better seen through the lens of contemporary composition studies. As well as speaking the voice of his or her newspaper, the editorialist may also be a member of a writing group, a group which collaboratively constructs that voice. In the actual production of their texts, the writers demonstrate their individual processes in composing and interacting with technology. Interpretation of these activities—those that involve technology, collaboration, and individual writing processes—the manifestations of contemporary composition practice in the workplace constitute the next chapter and help answer the remaining questions I raised at the beginning of this dissertation.
CHAPTER IV
CONTEMPORARY COMPOSITION IN THE WORKPLACE

Your life is part of the writing task.
—Richard Aregood, June 13, 1991

While the previous chapter examined the manifestations of classical rhetoric in the writing of editorials, this chapter looks at evidence of contemporary composition practice on the editorial page. This division is certainly not intended to set up an opposition between rhetoric and composition, but instead to acknowledge that certain aspects of the teaching of writing derive from different parts of our tradition. Peer response, collaboration, the concept of personal voice, revision, the writing process, and the use of computers are aspects of the editorialist's work which appear to resonate with modern composition theory. In fact, the impelling force for some composition practices has come from outside the university. Much of the impetus for the use of collaboration in the classroom, for example, derives from studies of collaboration in business and industry, and certainly the accelerated use of computers in the classroom reflects a perceived need to prepare adequately students for their future work. "Peer response," as Peter Elbow would describe it, however, has not previously been reported in the workplace. Nor have we examined the revision practices of professional writers on the job, nor, for that matter, collaboration as practiced by those whose profession is
writing. Thus, as well as discussing revision and the use of technology, this chapter adds to what we already know about collaboration, provides work world affirmation of the value of peer response and offers these writers' viewpoints on what compositionists would consider “personal voice” and “the writing process.” This brief overview suggests that the use of computers, collaboration, revision, concepts of voice, and so forth, will all fit easily into appropriate segments of a chapter, like units in a lesson plan. Describing actual practice, however, belies simple categorization. As I will explain, all writing, revision, and editing at a newspaper are done electronically. As a result, the other “categories” must at some point intersect with technology. Revision, therefore, cannot be discussed without reference to the computer. Similarly, although the collaborative nature of the editorial board precedes the generation of text, “peer response;”—which is considered a form of collaboration by many composition theorists—will, on the editorial page, most likely be done electronically. And, of course, because composition is not their field, the editorial writers I talked to do not think in the typology of academic composition. Questions I asked about genre provided answers about voice; questions about voice brought forth thoughts on technology; questions about collaborative practice generated philosophic responses. This overlap is difficult to represent linearly but is important to understanding the contexts in which the writers I studied worked. To try to preserve this vantage, I will arbitrarily discuss technology first along with the computer-related elements of other aspects of composition. Then I will return to these topics as they can be discussed without reference (or with minimal reference) to computers.
Technology

For me, the scrolling up and down is therapy. Really! Going up and down makes things physically jump out at me that otherwise don’t.

—Ellen Belcher, May 23, 1991

For many of us, our only concept of a newsroom derives from 1940s’ movies: men in hats or eye shades; the one hard-boiled woman reporter; the racket of typewriters punctuated by a voice yelling “copy!”; the thus-summoned copy boy rushing the just-typed story\(^1\) to the copy desk for blue-penciled editing and from there to the composing room. A visit to today’s newspaper, a far quieter place, might well seem anticlimactic.\(^2\) The newspaper industry began the shift to computerization more than 20 years ago, with individual newspapers gradually joining the trend as budget and union contracts with typographers would allow. The first report of an “electronic newsroom” in *Editor and Publisher* (February 19, 1972) said that the “interface of the video typewriters with a mini-computer and editing and proofing video display terminals [VDTs] ... will eliminate standard use of paper in the newsroom” (9). According to James N. Dertouzos and Timothy H. Quinn in a Rand report prepared for the U.S. Department of Labor, between 1970 and 1982, the number of VDTs in U.S. newspapers increased from 23 to 46,217 as the number of conventional hot-metal linecasters dropped from 10,290 to 194 (qtd. in Lindley, 485). Thus, the old Remington (or

\(^1\) The one that would inevitably “blow this town wide open!”

\(^2\) The shift from the white men’s club to a workplace far more representative of American society is, of course, far from anticlimactic. A number of the editors with whom I spoke have worked for many years to bring women and members of minority groups both onto the staffs and into the pages of their newspapers.
Underwood) manuals have been replaced by the relative hush of the keyboard. According to the Miami Herald's Joanna Wragg, "the major papers custom design their software. It isn't a big deal to do." When she comes into her office first thing in the morning she signs on to her computer for emergency messages. When she is ready to edit material for future pages, she retrieves the text from computer directories she has chosen to have set on her computer: a "daily basket," "editor basket" (labels retained from the days of the wire baskets on the editor's desk), the international wire service, and an "edit hold" file for the material used regularly (such as a brief biography of columnist David Broder).

Regardless of the level of sophistication of their system (Thomas Hylton told me that the Mercury's was second-hand, acquired when another paper upgraded its system), today, nearly all American journalists do all their writing and revising and proofreading on the screens of their computers. And unless an intermediate printed version of an article, story, or editorial is needed for some special and rare purpose, that piece of writing will probably remain as electronic text until a proof of the entire newspaper page, of which the writing is a part (along with headlines, art, photography, and any ads), appears on the editor's desk for final checking.

3 A story I was told during one of my newspaper visits, though perhaps apocryphal, is that the technology exists to make computer keyboards completely quiet, but that keyboards retain a subdued clicking because people didn't feel as if they were working when they couldn't hear themselves typing.

4 Such as providing them for academic researchers.

5 Describing the process for a news story, William R. Lindley reports

In the course of a single production cycle, the copy may be written, stored, called from storage for additions and again stored, routed to the city desk, changed and again stored, picked up by the slot editor, then by a copy editor, routed back to the slot after editing and finally typeset by decision of a slot editor. However, the story also may be sent back along the route at any time for a rewrite, a new headline, or other
In anticipation of my visit with him, Walker Stone Award-winning editor Hap Cawood of the Dayton Daily News saved copies for me (printing them specially for me) of his notes, drafts, page proof, and final printed version of an editorial on solid waste. Unlike many microcomputer word processing programs which allow the writer to see exactly how her printed copy will appear, on VDT screens type sizes, headlines, use of bold face, etc., only appear as codes. The writers and editors become familiar with them without the luxury of illustrative icons or pulldown menus. Segments of Mr. Cawood's electronic note taking and drafting follow. At the computer, he begins by entering his research notes, sometimes typing at the keyboard as he talks on the phone (Fig. 10). He fills in his impressions, then sketches a first draft from those notes (Fig. 11). Needing to stop work on his draft, he subsequently recalls it and continues where he left off (Fig. 12). With the text essentially written, he "H & J's" it—puts in the headlines and has the computer set the text for column width (Fig. 13). The last two illustrations in this series (Figs. 14 and 15) show how the computerized text appears on the printed page.

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6 Known as WYSIWYG (pronounced wizzywig) for "what you see is what you get."

7 Because the original computer print-out could not be copied satisfactorily to meet the technical requirements of the Graduate School, I have reproduced the text and coding exactly as they appear on the originals.
Ruling by George C. Smith, Southern US Dist Ct Columbus. [PAR]
invalidates key provisions HB 592.[PAR]
Provisions allow state and local waste mgt district to increase
surcharge on out state waste. Says violates clause on constitution. [PAR]
Called 592 "transparent attempt to encourage the shipment of solid
wastes into Ohio."[PAR]
Suit by National Solid Waste Management Assn. trade group in DC.[PAR]
State uses money to fund hw wast clean up pgms. Mont Cou Solid Waste Dist
uses money to fund recycling and other waste mgt efforts.[PAR]
3 tiers of charges: lowest on garbage from within local region. then
out of the region, then out of state.[PAR]
More than 60 percent of $12.7 m fees Ohio toon in 90 came out of
region or out of state garbage, according to OEPA.[PAR]
Dunno if will appeal.[QL]
Of course is attempt. Not hiding it. Political campaign [PAR]
Wrestled with way to do it. [PAR]
[QL] Previous bill tried to imitate Ala. law, which said if states don’t
have capacity plan, won’t take your waste. Southern Dist fed court struck
down law.[PAR]
was telling toehr states wouldn’t take waste if had no plan when Ohio
had no plan.[QL]
Celebrezze bill. Voin wanted to stop and inspect at the border.[PAR]
[QL]
Ohioans gen appx 12 m tons solid waste annually. 90% to landfills.[PAR]
Growing each year.[PAR]
[QL]
Landfills decreasing. 360 licensed landfills in 71. 129 in 89.[QL]
[QL]
Ohio low-cost state for dumoing. Truck of trash cost $100 to dump in
Jersey, $13 in Ohio.[QL]
[QL]
592 passed in June 88.[QL]
[QL]
Voin advocate inspecting trash at border and inspecting it. Charged a per
ton fee to cover cost of program.[PAR]
Make able to monitor kinds of wastes.[PAR]
Thinks not unconstitutional because mainly health and safety reasons,
only incidental effects upon interstate commerce.[PAR]
Voin cites 1978 case, says high court has changed since that ruling.
Says solid waste cris more extensive and more complicated.[PAR]
[QL]

Figure 10: Samples of Computerized Notetaking from the *Dayton Daily News*
Mr. Cawood recalled his notes to begin the next “draft” of his editorial which begins at the bottom of the next page (165) with what will be the lead (opening) paragraphs of the editorial. The short paragraphs are newspaper style.
More than 60 percent of fees Ohio toon in 90 came out of region or out of state garbage, according to OEPA.

Wrestled with way to do it.

Previous bill tried to imitate Ala. law, which said if states don’t have capacity plan, won’t take your waste. Southern Dist fed court struck down law.

Was telling toehr states wouldn’t take waste if had no plan when Ohio had no plan.

Celebrezze bill. Voin wanted to stop and inspect at the border.

Ohioans gen appx 12 m tons solid waste annually. 90% to landfills.

Growing each year.

Landfills decreasing. 360 licensed landfills in 71. 129 in 89.

Ohio low-cost state for dumping. Truck of trash cost $100 to dump in Jersey, $13 in Ohio.

592 passed in June 88.

Voin advocate inspecting trash at border and inspecting it. Charged a per ton fee to cover cost of program.

Make able to monitor kinds of wastes.

Thinks not unconstitutional because mainly health and safety reasons, only incidental effects upon interstate commerce.

Voin cites 1978 case, says high court has changed since that ruling.

Says solid waste crisis more extensive and more complicated.

Called for congressional action to allow states to regulate out of state trash.

Trash mainly from Pa, NJ, NY, RI.

CELEB position: for ame to fed law to allow any state with comp sol waste mg plans to ban out of state waste.

How much does Ohio export?

The Soviets won’t bury us, as the late Soviet leader Nikita Khruschev threatened in the 1960s.

We Americans are going to bury themselves, thank you [MD] perhaps in trash.
What Ohioans would like is to bury themselves in their own trash, as opposed to the trash of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island. But the federal courts are saying that other states get to dump on Ohio without paying extra.

More specifically, the courts are saying that the Constitution protects interstate commerce, and shipping garbage from one state to another has become interstate commerce. It's hard to imagine the Founding Fathers talking or thinking about garbage dumping when they wrote this provision, but here we are, neck deep in the refuse of our progress.

Judge George C. Smith of the Southern U.S. District Court in Columbus this week struck down provisions of a 1988 state law, known by its House bill number 592. That law allowed waste management districts to charge extra for waste that came in from outside the district and even more for waste coming in from outside the state. The money was used to pay for waste-management and clean-up programs.

Judge Smith called the graduated fee scale a 'transparent attemot to discourage the shipment of solid wastes into Ohio. Darned right.'

Politicians and environmental groups make no bones about not wanting this state to become the dumping ground of the Midwest. Ohio imports more trash than it exports, and is importing more as landfill space in the northeast gets more expensive.

What does Ohio do now? For starters, appeal. That may be a lost cause, but the decision knocked down the entire fee structure of the law and heretofore [QL]

For the third draft (Fig, 12, overleaf), Mr. Cawood recalled the second draft text continuing from where he had left off. The text is organized, but still needs to be edited.
The Soviets won’t bury us, as the late Soviet leader Nikita Khruschev threatened in the 1960s.

We Americans are going to bury ourselves, thank you (MD) perhaps in trash.

What Ohioans would like is to bury themselves in their own trash, as opposed to the trash of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island. But the federal courts are saying that other states get to dump on Ohio without paying extra.

More specifically, the courts are saying that the Constitution protects interstate commerce, and shipping garbage from one state to another has become interstate commerce. It’s hard to imagine the Founding Fathers talking or thinking about garbage dumping when they wrote this provision, but here we are, neck deep in the refuse of our progress.

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Judge Smith called the graduated fee scale a “transparent attempt to discourage the shipment of solid wastes into Ohio. Darned right.”

Politicians and environmental groups make no bones about not wanting this state to become the dumping ground of the Midwest. Ohio imports more trash than it exports, and is importing more as landfill space in the northeast gets more expensive.

What does Ohio do now?

For starters, get some clarification and consider an appeal. That may be a lost cause, but the decision knocked down the entire fee structure of the law and heretofore it has been legal for waste districts to use different rates for, say, trash from within and from outside a county.

Another old idea: Gov. George Voinovich, in his campaign last year, proposed inspecting out-of-state shipments of trash to assure they didn’t contain hazardous waste. Out-of-state haulers would be charged for the inspection. Then the state would try to defend the practice on health and safety grounds. Such a program, though, might have only a marginal effect.

Another option that has gotten some talk is to push Congress to give states the right to refuse trash from states that don’t have solid waste management plans. Alabama tried that and got shot down. Some lawyers nevertheless say that approach, authorized by Congress, can get around the constitutional hang-up. But then, some lawyers in the Ohio Attorney General’s office three years ago said the fee scheme in 592 would pass muster.

Unless the appeal in utterly hopeless, Ohio ought to make it.

Figure 6: Subsequent Draft

For the fourth draft, he added headlines, encoded as “hed,” and rearranged the text in column format, justified on the newspaper page. “Ohio lost a maneuver to avoid being a dump” would appear as the main headline in 42-point type, and “Motives the judge calls unconstitutional still make sense” the 18-point subhead. The text is trimmed and corrected.
Ohio lost a maneuver to avoid being a dump to avoid being a dump.

Matters the judge calls unconstitutional still make sense.

The Soviets won’t bury us, as the late Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev threatened in the 1960s. We Americans are going to bury ourselves, thank you perhaps in trash.

What Ohioans would at least like the right to bury themselves in their own trash, as opposed to the garbage of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island. But a federal court is saying that other states get to dump on Ohio without paying extra.

More specifically, the court is saying that the Constitution protects interstate commerce, and garbage is the stuff of commerce these days.

Judge George C. Smith of the Southern U.S. District Court in Columbus this week struck down provisions of a 1988 state law, known by its House bill number 592. That law authorized waste management districts to charge a fee for waste from within their district, extra for Ohio waste outside the district and even more for waste coming in from outside the state. The money was used to pay for waste-management and clean-up programs.

Judge Smith called the graduated fee scale a "transparent attempt to discourage the shipment of solid wastes into Ohio."

Politicians and environmental groups...
make no bones about not wanting this
state to become the dumping ground of
the Midwest. Ohio imports more trash
than it exports, and is importing more as
landfill space in the northeast gets more
expensive.<el4>[PAR]
What does Ohio do now?<el4>[PAR]
For starters, get some clarification and
consider an appeal.<el4>[PAR]
The decision knocked down the entire
fee structure of the law. Until now it has
been legal for waste districts to use dif­
erent rates for, say, trash from within
and from outside a county, as long as
out-of-staters don’t get dinged extra.<el4>[PAR]
Another old idea: Gov. George Voinov­
ich, in his campaign last year, proposed
inspecting out-of-state shipments of
trash to assure they didn’t contain haz­
ardous waste. Out-of-state haulers
would be charged for the inspection.
Then the state would try to defend the
practice on health and safety grounds.
Such a program, though, might have only a
marginal effect.<el4>[PAR]
Another option that has gotten some
talk is to push Congress to give states
the right to refuse trash from states that
don’t have solid waste management
plans. Alabama tried that and got shot
down. Some lawyers nevertheless say
that approach, authorized by Congress,
can get around the constitutional hang­
up. But then, some lawyers in the Ohio
Attorney General’s office three years ago
said the fee scheme in 592 would pass
muster.[PAR]
Unless the appeal is seen as utterly
hopeless, Ohio ought to make it [MD]and
hope that Ohio doesn’t get into the posi­
tion of having to export more trash than
it imports. [QL]

(END)
Ohio loses in smart bid to avoid being a dump

Motives the judge calls unconstitutional still make sense.

The Soviets won't bury us, as the late Soviet leader Nikita Khruschev threatened in the 1960s.

We Americans are going to bury ourselves, thank you; perhaps in trash.

Ohioans would at least like the right to bury themselves in their own trash, as opposed to the garbage of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island. But a federal court is saying that other states get to dump on Ohio without paying extra.

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Judge George C. Smith of the Southern U.S. District Court in Columbus this week struck down provisions of a 1988 state law, known by its House bill number 592. That law authorized waste management districts to charge a fee for waste from within their district, extra for Ohio waste outside the district and even more for waste coming in from outside the state. The money was used to pay for waste-management and clean-up programs.

Judge Smith called the graduated fee scale a "transparent attempt to discourage the shipment of solid wastes into Ohio." Darned right.

Politicians and environmental groups make no bones about not wanting this state to become the dumping ground of the Midwest. Ohio's landfills are loaded up mostly with in-state trash, but the state also imports more trash than it exports, and is importing more as landfill space in the northeast gets more expensive.

What should Ohio do now?

For starters, get some clarification and consider an appeal.

The decision knocked down the entire fee structure of the law. Until now it has been legal for waste districts to use different rates for, say, trash from within and from outside a county, as long as out-of-staters don't get dinged extra.

Another old idea: Gov. George Voinovich, in his campaign last year, proposed inspecting out-of-state shipments of trash to assure they don't contain hazardous waste. Out-of-state haulers would be charged for the inspection. The state would try to defend the practice on health and safety grounds. Such a program, though, might have only a marginal effect.

Another option that has gotten some talk is to push Congress to give states the right to refuse trash from states that don't have solid-waste management plans. Alabama tried that and got shot down. Some lawyers nevertheless say that approach, authorized by Congress, can get around the constitutional hang-up. But then, some lawyers in the Ohio Attorney General's office three years ago said the fee scheme that was just shot down would pass muster.

Unless the appeal is seen as utterly hopeless, Ohio ought to make it.

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Figure 14: Page Proof Dayton Daily News Editorial
Ohio loses a crafty bid to avoid being a dump
Motives the judge calls unconstitutional still make sense

The Soviets won't bury us, as the late Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev threatened in the 1960s.
We Americans are going to bury ourselves, thank you; perhaps in trash.

But Ohioans would at least like the right to bury themselves in their own trash, as opposed to the garbage of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and Rhode Island. But a federal court is saying that other states get to dump on Ohio without paying extra.

More specifically, the court is saying that the Constitution protects interstate commerce, and garbage is the stuff of commerce these days.

Judge George C. Smith of the Southern U.S. District Court in Columbus this week struck down provisions of a 1988 state law, known by its House bill number 592. That law authorized waste management districts to charge a fee for waste from within their district, extra for Ohio waste outside the district and even more for waste coming in from outside the state. The money was used to pay for waste-management and clean-up programs.

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What should Ohio do now?
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Another old-idea: Gov. George Voinovich, in his campaign last year, proposed inspecting out-of-state shipments of trash to assure it doesn't contain hazardous waste. Out-of-state haulers would be charged for the inspection. The state would try to defend the practice on health and safety grounds. Such a program, though, might have only a marginal effect.

Another option that has gotten some talk is to push Congress to give states the right to refuse trash from states that don't have solid-waste management plans. Alabama tried that and got shot down. Some lawyers nevertheless say that approach, authorized by Congress, can get around the constitutional hang-up. But then, some lawyers in the Ohio Attorney General's office three years ago said the fee scheme that was just shot down would pass muster.

Unless the appeal is seen as utterly hopeless, Ohio ought to go for it.

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Figure 15: Final Published Version, 5/9/91
In the "old days" all the work on the above editorial would have been done by hand. The design element (if one had been used at all) would have required the making of a special mat for its reproduction. The headlines might have been written by hand atop the type-written text with instructions for the compositor. If something didn't fit, the compositor himself (the skilled-trade typographers were invariably male) might make the changes. Style would have been checked against the newspaper's printed style manual. Spelling errors would have been spotted by a sharp-eyed copy editor. But in today's computerized newspaper, the work on the preceding pages, except for the few hand-written changes, was all done electronically.

As well as note-making, writing, and editing on their computers, editorialists I visited used their computers for such seemingly diverse tasks as conducting data-base searches and maintaining personal and work phone lists. For Ellen Belcher of the Dayton Daily News, Nexus and Lexus database searches are necessary preludes to many of her editorials. As well as the computer knowledge of the writers and editors, Ms. Belcher explained to me that at the Dayton Daily News (as on many other papers), the newspaper's librarian, (who in the past would have presided over the "morgue" of a newspaper's printed past), is "like having an encyclopedia at your fingertips." She said, "He knows all the databases which we have like VuText and Compuserve, and he manipulates those things to find the most bizarre facts for you. And he's so smart, he knows what you're looking for before you know what you're looking for. While Don Harrison, associate editor of the Philadelphia Daily News editorial pages edited a letter to the editor on parking lot charges, he called up his phone list on the VDT, found AMTRAK, and called them to confirm (or if necessary clarify) the writer's
point. As well as a personal phone directory, Joanna Wragg maintains world, Florida, and Washington, D.C. directories. Computer use and quick and easy access to a world of accurate information are, quite simply, taken for granted.

While computers have become increasingly a part of academic life, their use is not yet routine, constrained in part by budget and in part by attitude. Few teachers of writing grew up using computers to write, and for many, their use is still a novelty. “My early computer experience” is a common trope among composition-associated writers. Nearly all of us have a story to tell about when first we used the wonderful/infernally (depending on our preference) machine. Those who have warmly embraced their computerized freedom speak with the zeal of converts; yet others begrudgingly use the computer only to copy the texts they have truly written with pen and paper. In her recent textbook, Writing With a Computer (1989), Joan Mitchell begins each chapter “with a statement by a computer writer describing how the computer radically influenced his or her writing” (xvi). Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff tell their readers,

The most important effect of using a word processor is probably on one’s attitude toward writing. It often leads to a subtle but deep change; it can make writing feel more like play, experimentation, even fooling around—less sacred and ‘heavy.’ (439 [authors’ emphasis])

In the teaching of writing, the computer or word processor still represents a new technology. In 1987, Gail Hawisher reported on the 16 studies of word processing that had appeared in the professional journals and Dissertation Abstracts International since her review the year before of 24 total studies appearing since 1981. Her research demonstrated that the area of
greatest concern had been how the use of a computer facilitated writing, revision, editing, etc., and explicitly or implicitly, how that computer use compared with the conventional methods of paper and pen. As computer technology has become more sophisticated, academic research on computers and composition has moved with the trends: research on straight word processing giving way to that on hypertext, and now hypertext giving way to the use of electronic mail and on-line conferencing.8

Perhaps because there are not yet computers on the desks of every writing teacher, the literature has yet to reflect the computer-writing practices of workplaces where there are, in fact, computers on every desk, and where the novelty of those computers has long since worn off.9 As Christine Barabas's has noted, “What other skill-related disciplines, I wonder, have developed theories of proficiency by studying the aberrant behavior of students?” (46), it might not be surprising that the only research in Hawisher's review to use “experienced writers” was the work of Lilian Bridwell, Parker Johnson, and Steven Brehe who examined the effect of computers on the essay writing of graduate teaching associates who were using word-processors for the first time in the study. Booth and Gregory tell students “Even if you work carefully at a computer, you need to run off at least one [authors’ emphasis] printed copy (preferrably two or three) before

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8 Of some 50 sessions listed under “computers” at this year's College Conference on Composition and Communication, five focused on hypertext, seven on collaboration, and 22 on electronic conferencing and networking.

9 Current journalism textbooks assume that all journalists and journalism students will use computers; current composition textbooks are likely to encourage students to use computers; there are current business communication texts which still tell students to make clean erasures.
you print the final draft, so that you can do extensive revision and proof-reading with pencil in hand” (14). Elbow and Belanoff warn,

Trying to revise on screen leads to an overload in your own head—makes you slow, tired, and confused. With printed copy, you’ll find you can proceed much more crisply and quickly—and with a clearer head … It’s always worth printing a copy to revise from unless you are making only [authors’ emphasis] tiny changes at the word level—and even here most [my emphasis] people find it easier to spot misspellings, typos, and other small mistakes on paper than on screen. (442)

Elbow and Belanoff’s emphatic statement to composition students that, “the truth is that you cannot revise well on a screen because you can’t see enough of the document on the screen” just isn’t born out in the practice of editorial writers. Printed full-page proofs are checked (and usually by all the writers in the editorial department) and occasional changes are made (such as those on Hap Cawood’s editorial shown above), but the demands of newspaper production minimize such last-minute changes. The ability to revise competently on one’s computer seems more a result of practice and preference. Opposition to computer revision appears more ideologic, than of overcoming an inherent, cognitive challenge. More than 100,000 working journalists almost never write, revise, or edit on paper, and the majority of editors responding to Lindley’s survey of their attitudes toward the new technology reported that “VDT editing is faster than editing on paper” (489). The younger editorialists with whom I spoke either didn’t talk about what it was like to “use a computer” because professionally, they always had done so,

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10 While the average VDT screen today is larger than, say, the average older Macintosh screen, larger screens are features of many new computer models, and early versions of the VDT used only a 5 x 10" cathode ray tube.

11 As I discussed in the last chapter, the discipline’s partiality to the paper-printed text perpetuates a certain pedagogic tradition. I will return to this issue in the last chapter.
or like Miami Herald writer Ramon Mestre, they reaffirmed the value of word-processing.

Mestre: My discovery of the word processor did not play a role in my self-definition, but it has helped me enormously, quadrupled my productivity. It liberated me from my own handwriting and my own thought processes. One of the impediments, I think, in writing for me for many years was my wretched drafts. My handwriting is very bad, and I would go over and over the work. I'm not terribly organized, and my drafts were hideous. It was torture to go back through a manuscript I had written. I'm not an especially good typist. Whereas with the word processor, I have the illusion of reading myself in a book or a printed page. Since I discovered it seven or eight years ago, I haven't been able to write without it. It has become more than an addiction. I cannot imagine myself writing without a word processor.

The older writers who had experienced the transition were also enthusiastic. However as Lindley suggests,

Some editors who balked at VDTs may have changed jobs; some have retired. Even those who at first might have thought electronic equipment impossible have had to adapt to it. Some remember the hot-type era as some enthusiasts remember the days of the steam locomotive. (489)

In fact, Joe Stroud’s comments about the change to computers came about in his discussion of the difference between writing editorials and writing his own column. A portion of that interview follows.

PRK: When you write your columns, does it feel any different from writing unsigned editorials?

Stroud: Deliberately. When I started as editor in 1973 I had written a few columns—I had been associate editor for 5 years. I had written some columns but they had just been scattered. There was a lot of concern at the time about the distance of the editorial page—and the paper as an institution—from the readers. And I wanted to establish a conversational tone in the column and establish it as a place where I just talked to readers.
And at that time, we were still writing on manual typewriters, and the effect of writing on the typewriter was much more staccato. Sentences tended to be shorter. I tend to write very rapidly, and your mind is racing, and you get caught up in pounding away at it, and the effect really was very staccato. And I decided then, that I wanted a different rhythm to the column. I wanted it to flow, to be more conversational, to be more approachable to the reader, maybe to be less structured. (I don’t know—I think in a lot of ways, the ones I do well are carefully structured.)

And because I was hard-pressed at the office, ... we were over-extended at the time, ... I started writing the column at home on Thursday night for Sunday publication, and write it out in longhand, because I discovered that writing with a pen on a yellow sheet of paper gave it a whole different feel. And, you know, the mechanics of the writing itself were so much slower for me. (I don’t take great notes because I don’t write all that fast.) And it really did produce a totally different rhythm.

I’ve never gone through and systematically compared sentence structure, but the effect—whether it was because sentences tended to be more complex or more informal, or whatever—but the feel was very different. And I expect if I analyzed it, there would be some difference in the pattern itself.

And then, later on, probably the middle ’70s, we went to the electronic system. And I thought I would hate it, and never be able to use it, and it would mess up everything. And particularly I was concerned about the column. And gradually I got so accustomed to it, and so pleased with what I could do and how I could manipulate copy, that I find it hard to write in longhand now. And I think that the effect on the column has not really changed as radically as I would have guessed. But it was an interesting process, and to this day, I think there is a significant difference in the tone. I can’t take something I started out to do as an editorial and make it a column very easily. It just feels really different.

I asked Paul Greenberg specifically if he thought there was a difference between writing long-hand and writing on a computer.
I tend to outline very briefly by hand. And then I sit down at the tube. I once was unable to use the tube to write. I had a very difficult time adjusting to the electric typewriter from the manual. And I'm sure if the manual typewriter had just been invented, I would have had a hard time going from the pen to the typewriter.

There is a discussion in academic circles regarding the use of computers, that the student needs to "feel the muse" flowing through his arm.

I would like to believe that, but I think it's largely a bunch of crapola. When we write something very well, we associate it with that nice cursive feeling of the pen, so we become attached to it. Right now, I associate it with those little blips of light. And it's just as much music to my ears as once the old Underwood manual was.

Richard Aregood, editorial page editor of *The Philadelphia Daily News*, says "I love the VDT. When you write, you just go back and clean it up. I think it's smoother with fewer rough edges—which is mostly good." As I interviewed Mr. Aregood, he turned to his VDT to finish editing the page for the next day's newspaper. While he was talking to me, he called up a Cal Thomas syndicated column, marking the paragraphs for *Daily News* style. As we continued to chat, he said "I have to dummy a headline and two inches, outside to write." What follows relates verbatim what happened next: the writing of the editorial discussed in the previous chapter. It was 5:08 in the afternoon.

He types. G. Gordon Liddy finally talked.

The nutties man ever to hang out in the White House (excepting of course his boss) has acknowledged that he whomped up a pkan to bump off Jack Anderson. This was not

---

12 Translated, "I have to write a headline and write a short editorial to fill a two-inch space on the page."
to be an act of journalism criticism. Anderson was to be whacked for getting a story right.

But the guys at the top demurred.

He stops to check his copy, then continues.

"It was too severe a sanction," Liddy said in a meeting this week with Anderson.

We have thus discovered

He stops to think.

He goes back and adds a "t" to "nutties." Changes "discovered to "disc."

He stops to think again, moves the computer cursor to "We" and takes out "We have thus disc" and writes

Finally. Something Nixon wouldn’t do.

He stops, changes "acknowledged" to "admitted" and changes "pkan" to "plan." Changes "This was not to be" to "It was not to be. Changes "The guys at the top demurred," to "the guys at the top said."

He types But liddy told anderson this week;

He moves the cursor back up the screen, capitalizes Liddy and Anderson and then cuts out "Liddy said in a meeting."

He rechecks. With his cursor on the last line at "Finally," he adds,

This like finding the grail.

He speaks to me aloud, “Mostly I’m just diddling around for length. I still have to hone the punch line; I’m not really happy with it.”

He calls up the Flag Day editorial (discussed in Chapter III) on the screen and edits it.

Seconds later, he recalls his own editorial and changes the last line again.

At last. Something Nixon wouldn’t do.

The published editorial is printed below.
COLUMNIST ON LIDDY’S HIT LIST

‘Too severe’

G. Gordon Liddy finally talked. The nuttiest man ever to hang out in the White House (excepting, of course, his boss) has admitted he whomped up a plan to bump off Jack Anderson.

It was not to be an act of journalism criticism. Anderson was to be whacked for getting a story right.

But, Liddy told Anderson this week, the guys at the top said “it was too severe a sanction.” At last. Something Nixon wouldn’t do.

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Figure 16: Editorial in the Philadelphia Daily News 6/14/91

When he finished, the time was 5:18. The speed and vitality of Mr. Aregood’s writing are legendary in newspaper circles. Nonetheless, the way he writes and edits at the computer demonstrates the professional writer’s facility with technology.

Unlike the writing style of Richard Aregood, Dayton Daily News editorial writer Ellen Belcher revises extensively—but still on the screen. She described for me how she wrote an editorial on an abandoned factory

Belcher: I wrote it over two days. I wrote the bulk of it in one day, and then I wrote the rest of it the next day. And then I rewrote it. I must have rewritten it 50 times. I mean I swear I rewrote it 50 times. And when I say “rewrote,” I mean doing a complete read, changing things, moving paragraphs then going back to the top of the text, you know how you scroll up and scroll down—I’d go back to the top of the text and go down again and change things constantly during that scroll down. Not just
copy editing but really saying “I’m going to take this out and I’m going to put this back in. This sentence doesn’t say what I mean. This quote is in the way. This gets in the way of the flow.” That kind of stuff. And I’m sure I did it 50 times.

As she writes at her VDT, Ms. Belcher frequently scrolls her text up and down and often moves the cursor around the screen. I asked her why.

Belcher: For me the scrolling up and down is therapy. Really. Going up and down makes things physically jump out at me that otherwise don’t. And I write so much better on this word processor than I did at a typewriter. I can’t imagine writing anything at a typewriter. There’s just—I don’t know how to say it—it’s kind of like a diversion. Some people bite their nails, [I] just move the cursor up and down.

PRK: I noticed that as well as scrolling up and down you move the cursor around. At first I thought when you moved the cursor you were going to make a change but—

Belcher: I can’t read [with the cursor] as if it were a pointer. But I do play around with it. There’s also a command “shut up” and it makes that “H and J complete” line stop flashing up there. “H and J complete” means it’s been justified, and if you write “shut up” then it stops it flashing. So if you can’t think of a word, you just write “shut up” and blame it on that flashing thing at the top of your screen.

Ms. Belcher’s humorous interaction with the computer, typing the code “shut up” to turn off the signal that headlining and justification had been completed was the only “play” I saw between writer and computer.

When she finished writing the editorial discussed above, Ellen Belcher said to me, “I want to move this editorial (reproduced as Fig. 17) to Hap pretty fast because he needs to start laying out the page and give other folks the chance to read it and offer their criticisms.” These “criticisms,” which compositionists would consider “peer response,” would be offered electronically.
Electronic Peer Response

Wachsman presented himself as reluctant to keep repeating the horror story. He wanted to believe he was doing this only because the other side was being nitpicky <NO> the word is nitpicking eb I think nitpicky is OK. hc <RO> about what kind of questions may be asked. [PAR]


As well as what are now conventional computer editing and revising practices at the newspapers I visited, the computer programs most use also feature a "notes mode" that permits editors or other readers on the system to insert comments to the writer that will not appear in the final printed version. At the Dayton Daily News, the three members of the editorial board routinely read and respond to each other's editorials and columns in this way. Some of Martin Gottlieb's comments to Ms. Belcher's draft and her response are reprinted below (Figs. 18, 19). The notes and editing suggestions are identifiable by the codes <NO> which I have reproduced in bold face for ease of identification. The first version (Fig. 17) is Ms. Belcher's draft, which she had already revised before "sending" it off for response.
There’s no good way for Dayton Public Schools to lay off 80 teachers. When the district cuts an additional 59 jobs through attrition, there will be holes in the dike. Good people will be gone. [PAR]

These cutbacks couldn’t come at a worse time for Dayton’s schools. With its magnet schools, the system is trying to do things smaller schools systems can’t. After the cutbacks, some of the extras, the things that make individual schools distinct and attractive will be gone. [PAR]

Despite the gloom, at least one thing good come from the financial mess. Two schools (MD) Belmont High School and Stivers Middle School (MD) want the chance to keep a bad situation from turning terrible. [PAR]

They don’t want to abide by the traditional seniority system that says when a teacher at one school gets a pink slip, he or she can bump a teacher with less seniority at another school. They want to keep the team they have in place, don’t want to jeopardize the camaraderie they have just because some think seniority is sacred. [PAR]

More than two-thirds of the faculty in each of these schools have voted that they don’t want seniority to be the sole determining factor of who teaches in their building. [PAR]

Belmont and Stivers, along with five elementary schools can push on this issue because they’re experimenting with site-based management, meaning that principals and teachers theoretically get to make most of the decisions relating to their building. [PAR]

To encourage the schools to be innovative, they have the option of asking for waivers from district policies and even union contracts, provided two-thirds of
the staff in the building want the waivers and that a management-union commit-
	een signs off.[PAR]

Belmont and Stivers are asking to break out of the mold. Seniority has been a staple of Dayton’s teachers con-

tracts and in the professional nationally. Some school systems are moving away from the practice, but only slowly.[PAR]

One thing in Dayton that should make the teachers’ union give a little on se-
niority and at the same time force man-

agement to be sensitive to young teach-
ers who don’t want to wait all summer to find out if they’re going to be called back in the fall is this: <IT>Fifty percent of Dayton’s teachers will be eligible to retire in five years. Dayton schools can’t afford to jerk around people who are new and ex-
cited about teaching.[PAR]

The school administration and the Dayton teachers union should give Bel-
mont and Stivers some slack. If the school system is going to try site-based man-

agement, then it really ought to try it, not just edge up to it.[PAR]

What Belmont and Stivers are asking for isn’t unreasonable, just a little revo-

lutionary. That thinking ought to be encouraged.[QL]

(END)

As he read the editorial on the screen, Mr. Gottlieb explained to me how he reads a draft and why he made the comments he did.

Gottlieb: I read it through quickly just for the general idea of what it is and I made this comment. The reason being that on Sunday the paper has a circulation outside the Metropolitan area that it doesn’t usually have. It goes into the small towns that have daily newspapers but don’t have Sunday newspapers. So we frequently think about trying to get something that has in-

terest beyond the city proper. We’ve been trying to remind ourselves that the city proper is a smaller and smaller part of the county all the time, smaller and smaller part of the metropolitan area. The city is only 175,000 people; and the county is like 600,000, and the metropolitan area is 800,000. We have a tendency to focus on it too much, I think. So... [He types.]
Gottlieb: I will expand on whatever you want me to expand on. I'll let you have it, hows that? Maybe this needs—I should just put a paragraph there. It makes clear that you're starting to explain a long subject here rather than saying it's good that they want the chance to keep it from getting worse and worse.

From MG: Not a great Sunday lede. Too City of Dayton, and too narrowly focused within the city. Too nuts and boltsy. Seriously boring.

Seniority not enough for Belmont, Stivers. Good people will be gone. These cutbacks couldn't come at a worse time for Dayton's schools. With its magnet schools, the system is trying to do things smaller schools systems can't. After the cutbacks, some of the extras, the things that make individual schools distinct and attractive will be gone. (Good point. It really might go some distance toward obviating the whole point of magnet schools, because I suppose the city is going to be shrinking all the time in numbers of students.)

Despite the gloom, at least one thing good come from the financial mess. Two schools [ND] Belmont High School and Stivers Middle School [ND] want the chance to keep a bad situation from turning terrible.

They don't want to abide by the traditional seniority system that says when a teacher at one school gets a pink slip, he or she can bump a teacher with less seniority at another school. Belmont and Stivers (They) want keep the team they have in place; don't want to jeopardize the camaraderie they have just because some think seniority is sacred.

More than two-thirds of the faculty in each of these schools have voted against seniority being the sole determining factor of who teaches in their building.

Figure 18: Draft With Electronic Comments
Belmont and Stivers, along with five elementary schools, have the power to push on this issue because they're experimenting with site-based management, meaning that principals and teachers theoretically get to make most of the decisions relating to their building.

To encourage the schools to be innovative, they have been given the option of asking for waivers from district policies and even union contracts, provided two-thirds of the staff in the building want the waivers and that a management-union committee signs off.

Belmont and Stivers are asking to break out of the mold. Seniority has been a staple of Dayton’s teachers contracts locally and in the professional nationally. Some school systems are moving away from the practice, but only slowly.

One thing in Dayton that should make the teachers’ union give a little on seniority and at the same time force management to be sensitive to young teachers who don’t want to wait all summer to find out if they’re going to be called back in the fall is this: Fifty percent of Dayton’s teachers will be eligible to retire in five years. Dayton schools can’t afford to jerk around people who are new and excited about teaching. (I don’t understand that graf. Needs to be thinned out somehow. Shorter sentences, maybe. Maybe it’s upside down.)

The school administration and the Dayton teachers union should give Belmont and Stivers some slack. If the school system is going to try site-based management, then it really ought to try it, not just edge up to it.

What Belmont and Stivers are asking for isn’t unreasonable, just a little revolutionary (an oxymoron). That thinking ought to be encouraged.

Some of the changes or suggested changes in the above texts are proof-reading changes, for example, the addition of a comma, or editing changes, for example starting a sentence with “And” for a better cohesion. But other responses look at concerns for audience (“Too City of Dayton”), a problematic
metaphor ("holes in the dike"), or a misunderstanding (an oxymoron).

Other responses don’t call for changes but are responses to the text: “Good point. It really might go some distance to obviating the whole point of magnet schools, because I suppose the city is going to be shrinking all the time in numbers of students;” Another more complex comment, expresses the reader’s concerns with possible suggestions for change rather than making explicit changes: “I don’t understand that graf. Needs to be thinned out somehow. Shorter sentences, maybe. Maybe it’s upside down.”

After Ellen Belcher revised her draft (Fig. 10) to accommodate some of Mr. Gottlieb’s comments, she transmitted the changed version to editor Hap Cawood explaining what she had done and what she still needed.

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Figure 19: Draft with Response to Response
distinct and attractive will be gone. Despite the gloom, at least one good thing could come from the financial mess. [PAR]

Two schools [MD] Belmont High School and Stivers Middle School [MD] want the chance to keep a bad situation from turning terrible. [PAR]

They don’t want to abide by the traditional seniority system that says when a teacher at one school gets a pink slip, he or she can bump a teacher with less seniority at another school. What they’re really asking is to reconsider the notion that seniority is sacred, that longevity guarantees jobs. [PAR]

Belmont and Stivers, along with five elementary schools, can ask for an exemption because they’re experimenting with site-based management. This means that principals and teachers theoretically get to make most of the decisions relating to their buildings. [PAR]

To encourage the schools to be innovative, they have the option of asking for waivers from district policies and even union contracts. The only provisos are that two-thirds of the staff in the building have to be in favor of the waivers and a management-union committee has to sign off. [PAR]

Seniority has been a staple of teacher contracts locally and nationally. Some school systems are moving away from the practice, but only slowly. [PAR]

Unions are reluctant to give up the protection that seniority offers their long-time members. Unions negotiate hard for job protection, particularly in businesses that are cyclical or that often find themselves strapped financially. [PAR]

Unions proceed on the notion of last hired, first fired. That principle works politically for union leaders, but it’s not necessarily good for business [MD] or, in this instance, good for students. [PAR]

A reality for the Dayton teachers’ union [MD] and the profession [MD] is that it’s getting young. <IT>Half <RO>[TH] of Dayton’s teachers will be eligible to retire in five years. Not all of the younger teachers like the idea that their careers can be derailed not because of what they do (or don’t do) in the classroom, but because of the short time they’ve been there. [PAR]

The school administration and the Dayton teachers union should give Belmont and Stivers some slack. If the school system is going to try site-based
management, then it really ought to try it, not just edge up to it. [PAR]

What Belmont and Stivers are asking for isn’t unreasonable, just a little revolutionary <NO> (an oxymoron)<NO> <NO> i meant this to be a contradiction. elb<NO> That thinking ought to be encouraged. [QL]

When Ellen Belcher transmitted her revisions to editor Hap Cawood, she asked for his response to the earlier comments. “The notes remaining are matters about which I disagreed or couldn’t fix.” Where she particularly disagrees, she includes her own response: retorting to the questionable oxymoron, “I meant this to be a contradiction.” The final editing (Fig. 20) mediates the differences of opinion—leaving the opening, changing the conclusion. Editorial page editor Hap Cawood prepared the final version of the editorial late on the afternoon of May 22. In one day, the editorial had been drafted, responded to, and readied for publication in the following day’s newspaper.

Figure 20: Final Edited Version
These cutbacks couldn’t come at a worse time for Dayton’s schools. With its magnet schools, the system is trying to do things its smaller suburban competitors can’t. After the cutbacks, some of the extras, the things that make individual schools distinct and attractive will be gone. Despite the gloom, at least one good thing could come from the financial mess.

Two schools [MD] Belmont High School and Stivers Middle School [MD] want the chance to keep a bad situation from turning terrible.

They don’t want to abide by the traditional seniority system that says when a teacher at one school gets a pink slip, he or she can bump a teacher with less seniority at another school. What they’re really asking is to reconsider the notion that seniority is sacred, that longevity guarantees jobs.

Belmont and Stivers, along with five elementary schools, can ask for an exemption because they’re experimenting with site-based management. This means principals and teachers theoretically get to make most of the decisions relating to their building.

To encourage the schools to be innovative, they have the option of asking for waivers from district policies and even union contracts. The only provisos are that two-thirds of the staff in the building have to be in favor of the waivers and a management-union committee has to sign off on them.

Seniority has been a staple of teacher contracts locally and nationally. Some school systems are moving away from the practice, but only slowly. Unions are reluctant to give up the protection that seniority offers their long-time members. Unions negotiate hard for job protection, particularly in businesses that are cyclical or that often find themselves strapped financially.

Unions proceed on the notion of last hired, first fired. That principle works politically for union leaders, but it’s not necessarily good for business [MD] or, in this instance, good for students.

A reality for the Dayton teachers’ union [MD] and the profession [MD] is that it’s growing young. Half [RO] of Dayton’s teachers will be eligible to retire in five years. Not all of the younger teachers like the idea that their careers can be derailed not because of what they do (or don’t do) in the classroom, but because of the short
time they've been there.<el4>[PAR]
The school administration and the Dayton teachers union should give Bel­mont and Stivers some slack to encour­age this kind of thinking. If the school system is going to try site-based management, then it really ought to try it, not just edge up to it.<el4>[PAR]

The 'last hired, first fired' principle works politically for union leaders, but it's not necessarily good for business [MD] or, in this instance, good for students. [MC][MC][QL]

This "electronic peer response" diverges from traditional newspaper practice in two ways. The first, of course, is the replacement of the editor's blue pencil with computerized editing. The second, however, disperses the total responsibility for editing (though not the final responsibility for the editorial page) throughout the entire staff. This is facilitated by the computer because suggestions and changes can be made instantaneously without paper intermediaries. Furthermore, alternatives can be retained for writers or editors to choose an appropriate version. This pattern of response (which may not be true for all journalists) seems to have its history in the practices of the National Conference of Editorial Writers, an organization which has engaged in peer critiques almost since its founding.
Peer Response—Without Technology

Does it hold our attention from the very first to the very last? Does it have suspense, transition, drama, humor, all the elements of a great story? Is it literature?

Does it go to a second level, a level beyond the superficial that any intelligent well informed reader would already have reached on his or her own? Do readers need us to tell them what's in this editorial?


The concept of peer response—which in composition studies emanated from Peter Elbow’s workshop methods first described in Writing Without Teachers in 1973—has been a part of the convention of the National Conference of Editorial Writers for at least 40 years. The critique sessions, called by many the “heart” of the convention, give editorial writers the opportunity to respond to the writing of others and to receive similar advice from their editorial writing peers. An early issue of Masthead, (Winter 1951-52) reported on the critique sessions held at that year’s convention. Included in the article’s summary were the following observations.

1. **Poor organization:** “When the writer started out, he didn’t know where he was going,” was a complaint voiced by several critics. “This editorial meanders,” said one. “It needed better planning and organization.” One editor was told that “I had a feeling several times that you tacked on afterthoughts after making your point.”

2. **Inadequate research:** This was a widespread criticism. “A little more digging for facts would beef up your editorials a good deal,” one editor was advised. Two editors were criticized for using nothing more than clippings and opinions.

3. **Graceless writing:** An occasional quotation or an analogy drawn from literature, said one editor “spruces up an
editorial now and then." One page was criticized bluntly as "pleasant but pallid"—and "pedestrian."

4. **Careless writing:** unfamiliar words, superlatives (extravagant statements), incomplete sentences, cliches, nouns as adjectives, split verbs, second person usage, muddy writing, lame metaphors, stilted writing, overlong sentences, overlong paragraphs, no change of pace. (5-8)

Twenty-five years ago in "The 1957 Critiques," Merlo J. Pusey (a writer with *The Washington Post and Times Herald*) registered a complaint not dissimilar from that which might be heard in a typical first-year composition class.

Among the enthusiasts, however, there is considerable complaint that a few members have failed to meet their obligations to the group. Some failed to submit pages; others did not do their homework and were not prepared to discuss any of the submitted editorials for the benefit of the groups of which they were a part (72).

Today's critique sessions are taken extremely seriously by the NCEW participants. Typically, a critique group consists of five editorialists assigned by a "critique chairman." Some weeks in advance of the convention, each participant sends to the other members of the group copies of representative editorial pages from his or her newspaper accompanied by a critique cover sheet which provides readers with the writer/editor's name and the name and publication data (ownership, circulation, frequency, etc.) of the newspaper. To place the newspaper in an appropriate context for examination, the cover sheet also asks for the "paper's philosophical orientation," the "size and composition of editorial section staff," the duties of the individual who is submitting samples for the critique, "who has the major say on your editorial policy," "who is in charge of your op ed or commentary section," and "how long have you been involved in editorial
sections." At the convention, two members of each group will have prepared a detailed response to the pages they have read, commenting not only on the writing, but frequently on editorial position, headlines, choice of op-ed pieces, or the design of the page(s). After the detailed analysis, the other members of the group will present their thoughts. The year I attended the convention (1991), the critique sessions were scheduled from 9:00 a.m. till noon and from 1:00 till 3:00 p.m., each group working together for five hours. Comprising most of the first business day of the convention, they followed the welcoming address by the Governor of Utah.

In their booklet Sharing and Responding, Elbow and Belanoff describe a number of ways of responding for classroom use: "sharing," "descriptive responding" which includes "summarizing," "structure" (voice, point of view, attitude towards the reader; level of abstraction; language, diction, syntax); "analytic responding," "reader-based responding," and "criterion-based or judgment-based responding." The substance of NCEW critiques has never been similarly codified. Rather, over the years, the professional editorialists have identified for themselves and each other shared concerns. Yet the teacher of writing will find amazing congruence in the kinds of responses prepared for the 1991 convention.

It was the task of John Simonds, editorial page editor of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, to respond to the highly regarded Atlanta Constitution. In a hand-written critique, he began

This is a newspaper of unquestioned prestige in the community of American newspapers. Its record of fighting for social justice (when many others looked the other way or gave lip service to civil rights) is well known and deserved.
That record of heightened concern continues today, though management has changed many times under the Cox family in recent decades. Having a reputation as a serious newspaper can be a tremendous burden. The Constitution seems to be bearing it well.

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The editorial pages are much a part of the newspaper’s serious tradition. They comment with assurance and familiarity on matters in the Soviet Union and the state of Georgia.

Having thus established a positive approach to the newspaper he is examining, Mr. Simonds begins first with visual observations before addressing the writing. He includes with his comments on the visual elements the columns of editor Tom Teepen because they all “bring cheer” lightening “pages heavy with news.” Furthermore he uses specific examples from the Constitution itself to show how they could do more of what they are already doing.

As with other papers we’ve examined, the Constitution risks being too gray for its readers. This is not true of the Sunday, Aug 18, “Perspective,” which offers a bright display of cover color, an inside page sampler or cartoons, a variety of art devices and seems lively enough.

But grayness does threaten the daily editorial page. The people who lay them out should look into more uses of photos and drawings in editorials and columns.13

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13 While the visual aspects of documents in business and professional communication have received considerable attention (as Kitty Locker notes, “an attractive document looks inviting, friendly, and easy to read [BAC 172]), the nation’s newspapers are recognizing increasingly that grayness of page deters readers. Thus the notion of “reader-based” goes beyond the writing of the text. When reading a text is optional, as it is for a newspaper, designing newspapers or pages that people will want to read is an economic imperative. The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal, with more steadfast audiences, have resisted changes to their traditional formats. USA Today has made the most radical changes through design and use of color in its editorial section as well as throughout the paper. Many newspapers try for an appeal between the two extremes. The “rhetoric of design” is not discussed in newspaper circles, but is a consideration nonetheless.
Efforts to put some cheer into pages heavy with news of global events and Georgia government include:

- Short bottom editorials . . .
- Cartoons to illustrate letters, such as July 26 on the U.S. Senate pay raise . . .
- Good, big cartoons by Mike Luckovich
- Clever, spirited, humorous columns by editor Tom Teepen, not always funny, but bats a high average. Teepen has a good sense of the language.

He includes one more positive, specific comment.

The editorial about layoffs (Aug. 18) was one I appreciated, in that it tackled a tough problem, a political dilemma for which there are no pat solutions. It didn’t solve the problem of how to protect minorities while cutting the state payroll, but it did outline the goals and acknowledged complexity of Governor Miller’s mandate. Sometimes editorials have to bite into tough issues even when they don’t have all the answers, and this was such an occasion.

Only after these comments, which incorporate positive analyses of the editorial pages, does Mr. Simonds attend to the more negative.

In spite of the strengths, the Constitution shows some specific problems:

- The July 26 “George Berry” editorial has too many acronyms. The ACOG vs. MAOGA fight seems unnecessarily confusing.

- Piedmont Park partnership editorial of Aug. 1 was hard to unravel. Using terms like “financial wherewithal” (money?) doesn’t help.

- Regulatory fun and games at the PSC (Jan. 17) also seems a bit too dense in the detail.

- Mark Silk’s (Jan. 17) column exploring affirmative action ends disappointingly with a group of questions and an invitation to provide the options.
Mr. Simonds concludes his evaluation with overall observations which relate to readability.

The Constitution [sic] comments on a range of world and local issues, but it needs to be careful that its own message doesn’t get lost in a style of editorial that runs on at length, and overwhelms the readers.

More and shorter editorials, with indent mugs\textsuperscript{14} or other illustrations, would get more of Atlanta’s readers into stories, commentary and pages that may now scare them away.

*The Kalamazoo Gazette* has a circulation (63,833) less than a quarter that of the *Atlanta Constitution* (284,000), and aims for local rather than regional or national influence. Nonetheless, critique session comments for this small midwest newspaper were no less carefully offered by Dale Davenport, editorial page editor of the Harrisburg, PA *Patriot-News*. Like John Simonds, Mr. Davenport also begins with the positive in his two-page printed evaluation.

The *Kalamazoo Gazette* takes its role as a community opinion leader seriously. This is readily apparent not only from the amount of space it devotes to editorials but by the wide variety of topics covered and the depth of the reporting and writing.

I was impressed by the research that obviously goes into the editorials, especially noteworthy considering the size of the staff. The editorials are full of facts, and that alone makes for more forceful opinion. They are well-reasoned, and even the analytical pieces, that don’t call for direct action, offer insightful interpretation for readers.

The *Gazette* has chosen a steady, reasonable voice for its opinion, never shrill or hysterical. That reinforces the seriousness of purpose; on the other hand, it probably scares away occasional readers. Their appearance and style suggest: “Read this, this is im-

\textsuperscript{14} Small photographs of a person’s head indented into the text, such as that of the writer.
important,” but none of the samples given to us beckon: “For a good
time, read this.”

And in addition to the occasional light touch, I also thought there were some missed opportunities for impassioned arguments or succinct zingers. If I had but one suggestion for improving these editorials, it would be to vary the writing style to try to reflect the topic on which you’re writing.

In his individual analysis of each of the 14 editorials in the packet of pages submitted by Mary Wade Tift, the Gazette’s editorial page editor, Mr. Davenport is not only specific but also offers suggestions for rewriting which preserve the writer’s language as well as intent.

**Women’s Equality Day.** This was a well-researched piece with plenty of ammunition to make its point. This covered a wide swatch of feminization. One thing I picked up on this piece and noticed throughout your writing was frequent use of the verb *to be*. I’d make a little note to look for these when you edit and try to insert active verbs where possible.

I was a little troubled by the use of the cliche “You’ve come a long way baby!” This was too good an editorial to clutter with Madison Avenue tripe. If you really wanted to use it as a measuring stick, why not rewrite as a question:

> Have women, as the advertisement proclaims, really “come a long way, baby”? Obviously on some fronts, yes. But there is a long road yet to travel before every day of the year can be recognized as Women’s Equality Day.15

**Keggers.** Good piece. Like so many of my edits, the conclusion appears stronger if inverted:

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15 The paragraph in the editorial read “As the famed cigarette advertisement loudly proclaimed: “You’ve come a long way baby!” It’s true that women have traveled a great distance over the past 71 years. Progress obviously has been made on some fronts. But there is an enormous distance yet to go before women will be able to celebrate Women’s Equality Day every day of the year” (A8, August 27, 1991).
The official end of the “kegger” is a step in the right direction. But it’s only one tiny piece in a massive puzzle.16

Like John Simonds’ responses to the Constitution (above), Mr. Davenport also attends to visual impact and to tone:

**Seat Belts.** This could have used some devices, perhaps bullets to enumerate the various laws ....

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**Labor Day.** The hed [headline] is more succinct than the edit [editorial]. I like the secod graf [paragraph] as a lede [lead paragraph]:

There’s nothing wrong with a day off!

Another case where you can lighten up, try a different style for a softer subject.

The final comments are positive and broad.

**Towards 2000.** The best piece of the bunch, I think, because it takes a strong stand for moral cleansing and then gets rather specific about what it might accomplish. You are advocating treatment of the causes, rather than the symptoms. There’s not much to say except it’s right on point.

I came away from this critique thinking that for all the nitpicking I’d done, and considering all the work that goes into The Gazette’s editorial pages, all I had to recommend was a little refinement. A bit less writing, a bit more editing, concentration on the message rather than filling the space.

These samples of professional peer response demonstrate that the methods advocated by Peter Elbow and his pedagogical colleagues are important means by which highly skilled, highly experienced writers improve their writing. Editorial writers share their writing. And as it is for

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16 The published editorial read “The official end of the ‘kegger’ is only one tiny piece in a massive puzzle. But it’s a step in the right direction” (A10, April 19, 1991).
students that sharing involves taking personal risks. There is perhaps even a greater risk for the editorial writer whose association with her or his peers will go on far longer than a school term. Elbow and Belanoff encourage sharing before moving on to full criticism because it means “moving from safety to risk” (Sharing 1). Furthermore, they encourage student writers to “take charge of the feedback process” so that they can to choose the kind of feedback they need. From the kind of responses generated by the critique sessions, it would appear that what the editorial writers should need has been constructed by their own discourse community. Because these writers share an understanding of appropriate standards for the genres in which they write, because their work involves similar goals, and because they have similar work environments, they are more likely “peers” than today’s college students who are far less likely to represent such homogeneity of professional values and experience. To that extent, it may be easier for editorial writers to respond to each other's work—the risk to professional reputation notwithstanding.

At the critique sessions, those responses are both “out loud” and “on paper,” to use Elbow and Belanoff’s words. As well as the feedback from the detailed written responses, the oral sessions, in which everybody participates, presents an opportunity for “the others [to] chime in and add responses on the basis of their reading and their notes” (4), (again using the words of Elbow and Belanoff to demonstrate the congruences between professional and classroom practice). The styles of response from the editorial writers to their colleagues are also strikingly similar to those encouraged by Elbow and Belanoff. John Simonds “points to” features which are striking or memorable (Efforts to put some cheer into pages heavy with news ... include
He "summarizes" (...) it did outline the goals and acknowledged complexity (...). In his response, Dale Davenport discusses language and diction: (The Gazette has chosen a steady, reasonable voice). He includes specifically reader-based comments: (Their appearance and style suggest, "Read this, this is important," but none of the samples ... beckon: "For a good time, read this.")

Of course, there are, too, the criterion-based responses. "Try to insert active verbs where possible." "I was a little troubled by the use of the cliché ...." and "The conclusion appears stronger if inverted." Yet these responses which in other contexts could have simply been marked on a manuscript are written discursively. The professional writers practice what we encourage our students, crafting responses that are acceptable to the writers.

Seeing that professional writers respond to the published work of their peers in the same way that we encourage students to respond to their peers, as well as how the professionals do it is helpful for three reasons. First, these responses allow us to see how professional editorialists evaluate the work of others, what they consider important, and the many levels of text production and presentation to which they attend. Second, both those students and those instructors who differentiate between an academic and a "real" world may be reassured that thoughtful, gracious, thorough response is practiced in at least one professional realm, that peer response is not merely "touchy-feely" busy work. Third, should NCEW members be willing to share the responses to their editorials, they would provide an important new source of models from which teachers of composition may draw.

The two different kinds of responding discussed above—the electronic interchange within one newspaper and the written and oral response
between writers on different newspapers—represent the most common form of collaboration experienced in composition classrooms. However, editorial writers collaborate in other ways too.

Collaboration

One of the things I’ve learned during the course of editorial writing is that the most important part of having a good spirit among writers is that they in their debates don’t get personal or get on a level that will tear the fabric of cooperation and friendship that exists among the people on the board. You’ve always got to have tomorrow's editorial board meeting, I say, and we should conduct ourselves in a manner that recognizes that

—Robert Pittman, September 25, 1991

As well as collaborating on what has already been written—the more traditional form of “peer response”—editorial boards also collaborate when they determine what should be written, a form of collaboration not previously described in the composition literature.

Increased attention to the nature of collaboration in work groups and writing groups has grown concommitantly with the growing interest in workplace writing. In reviewing the literature on collaboration, Nancy Allen et al. identified a “range of activities” which are considered collaborative:

- a supervisor’s assignment of a document that is researched and drafted by a a staff member but carefully edited by the supervisor (Paradis, Dobrin, and Miller)

- collaborative planning of a document that is drafted and revised by an individual (Odell)

- individual planning and drafting of a document that is revised collaboratively (Doheny-Farina)

- a peer’s critiquing of a co-worker’s draft (Anderson)
• the co-authoring of a document (Ede and Lunsford). (71)

On the basis of their research, they concluded that "collaborative-writing experiences ... exhibited three distinguishing features:

• production of a shared document
• substantive interaction among members
• shared decision-making power over and responsibility for the document. (84)

In their book, *Singular Texts /Plural Authors*, Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede examined collaboration by surveying members of six professional associations. To encourage response to their surveys, they used the term "group writing" rather than collaborative writing and provided their respondents with these definitions.

For the purposes of this survey, *writing* includes any of the activities that lead to a completed written document. These activities included written and spoken brainstorming, outlining, note-taking, organizational planning, drafting, revising, and editing. *Written products* included any piece of writing, from notes, directions, and forms to reports and published materials. *Group writing* includes any writing done in collaboration with one or more persons. (Singular Texts, 14, authors' emphasis)

Barbara Couture and Jone Rymer observed that writers are more likely to collaborate during the planning stages rather than the writing. While these researchers (among others) have looked at collaboration in workplace settings where the writing supports the work of the organization, collaboration among and between writers *qua* writers is rarely considered—and only then when a collaboration is noteworthy or unusual. In their study, Allen *et al.* expressly exclude the work of "collaborators who were also

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17 Mary Beth Debs review article “Recent Research on Collaborative Writing in Industry” (1991) provides a thorough discussion of the current literature on collaboration.
writers by profession ... as they were considered to form a separate group that may or may not perform in the same manner as general writers from the business and professional worlds” (73). And as if to demonstrate the rarity of collaboration between/among professional writers, Leonore Fleischer writing in *Publishers Weekly* described the book co-authorship of Cardinal John O’Connor and former New York Mayor Edward I. Koch as “... perhaps the most celebrated collaboration since Addison was introduced to Steele.”

Yet, by either the definitions of Allen *et al* or by Lunsford and Ede, editorial boards do function as a collaborative unity. The inventive function of the editorial board was discussed in the last chapter—members of a board offering ideas and approaches for a writer before she or he begins to write. In addition, generally by consensus, and only rarely by vote or fiat, the editorial boards of newspapers I visited develop the position of their newspaper on given issues or endorse candidates for office. Editorials are unsigned because they represent the newspaper’s stance, not that of the individual who wrote the text of the editorial. The editorial board of the *Dayton Daily News* (editor Max Jennings, editorial page editor Hap Cawood, writers Ellen Belcher and Martin Gottlieb) discussed how those decisions are reached at their newspaper.

**Jennings:** Sometimes these discussions in here are a lot more acrimonious; as you might imagine, ... there is very spirited debate. And occasionally, we’ll end up at two to two—evenly divided. The dynamics are interesting to me because at one time or another two of us will be paired up against the other two on an issue, but its never in a predictable way. It might be Ellen and me urging against Hap and Martin, and sometimes it might be Martin and me urging against them. The other day, it was the three of us arguing against Hap.

**PRK:** What do you do when it’s two and two? Who gets to decide?
Belcher: [Jokingly] I decide.

Cawood: We never really formally vote. It just seems like that there's almost—correct me if I'm wrong—I'm interested in the dynamics of this myself, because I don't quite understand it—

(laughter)

Jennings. Nobody does. It takes an outsider to explain it.

Cawood: It's almost like the person who is the most eloquent

Belcher: Or adamant

Cawood: Or adamant, can sort of bully everybody else into doing something

Belcher: Or into tolerating it. You don't have to love every editorial that's written by somebody else even though it's arguable that you're responsible for it.

Gottlieb: Well usually, the one that's adamant is the one who's putting some time into it. And is better prepared. Staff morale is better if you cut them some slack.

Jennings For example, in the secretary of state's race, I wanted to endorse Bob Taft,

Gottlieb: (Unbelievable as that is)

Jennings: And these people wanted to endorse Sherrod Brown, and the reason that I made my peace, then shut up was that it was really difficult for me to get very enthusiastic about endorsing. So then I made my speech disagreeing with them and then just faded away because I couldn't get very passionate about endorsing Bob Taft.

Cawood: He wasn't responsible for the endorsement either. It was sort of an expiation of sins.

Maintaining the collegiality of the editorial board requires careful handling when one or more members of the board disagree strongly with the board's majority over a given issue. I asked Hap Cawood what would happen if a writer opposed the newspaper's position on a specific concern.
PRK: Can you ever imagine a situation here where a writer would have to take a position that was not one that he or she agreed with?

Cawood: If so, then they don't write it. Our most agonizing debate has been over abortion. The three of us talked, and there were three different points of view. Our position is basically pro-choice. Basically because we just don't think the government can do this right—can tell women and people what to do. I just don't want Jesse Helms running my daughter's womb. ...Nevertheless, I for example, acknowledge that you're killing people. Personally, I just don't see any other way to characterize it. ... But I don't get along with a lot of right-to-life people. I don't like the way they've locked into conservative politics, like Jesse Helms. And they do some crazy stuff around here, in my view. They endorse some harebrained people just because they agree with this one thing. So I don't fully identify with any one group.

Ellen would be the most anti-abortion. She would say, if she determined the policy, "You just shouldn't do it." But nevertheless, she's kind of bought into some of our arguments, the consensus, too. And she has written on some of the stuff that the prolife people have done in harassing women who go into abortion centers. So there is that consensus. When it came time to write that [pro-choice] editorial, Ellen did not have to write it. Martin wrote it and then I worked on it. But those are the instances when you just have to say, OK you win.

During our interview, Ann Daly Goodwin described a situation at the St. Paul Pioneer Press when everybody did not agree and she was on the losing side of the battle.

Goodwin: The best editorial boards are ones that work by consensus where views are not imposed on a writer. There was one time—only once in seven years—when I went into an editorial meeting to say to the editorial board that a proposed school bond issue in the St. Paul school district should be passed. (There were many reasons why that bond issue should pass, all of which had to do with the welfare of the children in the district. There were a few reasons weighted on the other side; one of which was that many people including the
editorial board were annoyed with the superintendent. There were other reasons; it's not quite fair to the board to weight that reason heavily, because there were other reasons.)

But on the whole, I was absolutely convinced that the bond issue should pass and that we should support it editorially. To my astonishment, there was only one other member of the editorial board who agreed with me. And despite my best persuasive efforts (and I'm Irish and I talk pretty good when I really get riled up), the board voted or came to the consensus or came to the conclusion without the two of us—it wasn't consensus at that point, of course; the only time that I can remember that it wasn't—not to support the school bond issue.

I wrote almost all the editorials on education, the many, many editorials on education that apeared in the paper during the seven years I was there. But the decision was made, and I swallowed very hard and I said to Ron Clark [the editorial page editor] “I cannot write this editorial.”

And he said, “Of course you cannot. You must not write this editorial. What you must do is march right out to your computer and sit down and write a dissenting piece.”

I usually look at notes and I take notes on my notes and I think about it and mull it all over. That day I went to my computer and I steamed out a piece which ran as prominently as did the editorial [opposing the bond issue.] That, to me, is a very healthy editorial page. It [the dissenting piece] appeared under two bylines, mine and the young woman's who also had agreed with me that the school bond issue should pass. But what happened was that the readers got strong views strongly stated and an honest editorial page that day. And I continued then to be proud to be part of the page instead of being absolutely frustrated. So it was quite a difference.

Subsequently at the NCEW convention, I asked Mrs. Goodwin's editor Ron Clark about his decision to encourage dissent by editorial board members on his editorial pages. He told me

Clark: Because the editorials are represented as consensus, a writer doesn't have to be resentful, or embarrassed, or ashamed of a
view that's not the same as theirs. It's not much different from the Supreme Court. It's foolish to pretend that we have unanimity on major issues.

It's also leveling with the readership, to let them know that there is dissent. It enhances the newspaper's credibility. They [the readers] appreciate being able to see both sides of an issue.

The concern for collegiality prompts Miami Herald editor Jim Hampton to take the opposite view, one which permits dissenting opinion in the editorial pages, but dissenting opinion not written as a column by a member of the editorial board. Explained Mr. Hampton,

Hampton: We meet daily and try to operate by consensus. But no one is capable of having the revealed truth on every one of the four editorials we write, 365 days a year. That's 1460 possible topics.

Whoever writes the prevailing view is expected to write the opposing view in his or her editorial—even if it's to demolish that argument. But no one in a signed column [as opposed to an editorial] may disagree with the articulated policy of the newspaper. That wreaks havoc with collegiality.

This is like a family here. The intimacy we have breeds trust.

The level of trust in the editorial writing groups that I observed appears to set the level of freedom that the writers enjoy in pursuing their individual goals (whether for selection of topics or for style and tone in their writing). Thus, at both the St. Paul Pioneer Press, where writers are encouraged to publicly dissent from the newspaper's stated position and at The Miami Herald where such practice is prohibited, the writers still believe in their colleagues and believe in the work of their editorial pages. When Herald writer Robert Sanchez said, "We give great deference to expertise," he was acknowledging the respect the writers have for one another. When, during a Herald editorial board meeting I attended, a question came up about a water issue, the immediate consensus around the room was "We can't talk about
Reaffirming Conley's identification of "five bases of authority" in the evolution of group norms ("in the group itself, from the profession, from the role played in the group, from genre conventions, and from the strength of the member's writing") (qtd in *Singular Texts* 123), editorial boards convey similar authority. Moreover, it is that authority which constructs the corporate voice and the corporate intent in the writing of editorials. Being a member of an editorial board is regarded as an honor. Members will have shared goals and occupy similar cognitive and epistemological levels. They will work together daily and expect to continue in that relationship—unlike groups at many other organizations or in classroom settings which are short-term and are often assembled only for a single project. As members of the same profession, although they may have individual subject-matter expertise, they are likely to have similar professional backgrounds, high levels of education, and be strongly motivated by the ideals of the profession. Even in hierarchical organizations (where an editor may be more than less authoritarian), equal treatment among members is expected and given. Since the convention of the editorial writing genre calls for an unattributed text, there is a greater sense of "the board's consensus" in stating a position that if the writing were signed by an individual, as it is in a column. Finally, because most editorial writers (and all of those with whom I talked) are highly skilled strong writers, their collaboration is more likely to focus on the development of a position and the articulation of arguments than it is on composing the text. At this level, though the individually written text is the
visible end product, the "invisible" collaborative group effort may have had the greater the role in creating the text.

Obviously, the editorial board as collaborative writing group operates differently from both writing groups in the classroom and many others in workplace settings. Individual members will have internalized the group's constraints, will have negotiated their relationships with one another (or will have left), and in most instances, will have learned to accept conflicts and disagreements in which they may be on the losing side of an argument because there will be ample opportunity—given the volume of editorials—to be on the side that prevails.

While collaboration and consensus may underlie the positions editorialist take when they write, they will retain their individuality in how they write.

Writing Processes

And to me, if someone's thought it through, whether it's a freshman essay or an editorial, if they've thought through something and they believe in something for certain reasons, even the organization takes care of itself. And when I look at times when I or other people on the staff have tried to write editorials and have gotten all muddled up and can't seem to do it, it's because we haven't thought it through. And I think that's the central problem with most people's writing. They just don't quite know what they're doing when they start. And a writing craft or technique isn't going to solve that. If you don't have anything to say, you're not going to be able to say it.

—Susan Albright, September 26, 1991

Regardless of the extent to which the staff of any given editorial page work together, the processes by which the individual writer generates his or her text are nonetheless idiosyncratic. The questions of how writers write
and how writers should write have been the source of considerable debate in academic circles. Driven principally by a concern to find the best means to the teaching of writing, the answers to these questions in academic circles are often drawn more from philosophy than from widespread praxis. As Muriel Harris says, "A belief shared by teachers of writing, one that we fervently try to inculcate in our students, is that revision can improve writing [and] this notion ... often pairs up with another assumption, that revision occurs as we work through separate drafts" (174). While she articulates fairly the debate between those who do and do not write multiple drafts, she nonetheless identifies with the revision-through-redrafting camp when she describes one-draft graduate students in a study she conducted as having a "distaste for returning to a completed text [that] can be the source of problems" (184). She concludes from her study of eight "experienced graduate students" that

One-drafters are obviously in danger of cutting themselves off from further exploration, from a richer field of discovery than is possible during the time in which they generate options. When they exhibit a willingness to settle on one of their options, they may thereby have eliminated the possibility of searching for a better one. (187)

And while she acknowledges some problems multi-drafters have, she clearly favors their approach.

Multi-drafters appear to be the flip side of the coin [whose] relative inefficiency causes them to miss deadlines, to create Writer-Based first drafts ... and to get lost in their own writing, [she states] . . . they are more likely to be writers who will plunge in eagerly, will write and rewrite, and will use writing to explore widely and richly. (187)

While Harris's observations help us to see how a range of experienced student writers write, they do not necessarily describe the writing behaviors of experienced professional writers. And as she suggests, "Whatever
arguments are offered, we must acknowledge that no picture of revision is complete until it includes all that is known and observed about a variety of revision behaviors among writers" (178-79). Drafting, revising, and editing seem intrinsically bound together in the work of the writers I studied, affirming Stephen Witte’s observation that “the boundaries separating one composing process from another may not be as rigid as is sometimes thought” (409). And their need to have arguments articulated before writing begins challenges those compositionists who subscribe to a pedagogy based on writing as discovery; a pedagogy which dismisses as “transcription” writing which follows discovery. When a position is to be constructed socially, by a group, discovery—invention—is explicitly “a social act,” to use the construct of Karen Burke LeFevre. Models of the writing process which cannot accommodate composing activities which are undertaken by more than a single individual writer are inadequate to describe the full range of writing processes. Furthermore, for some editorialists—even those who will be establishing their own positions on an issue—generating those arguments and developing a point of view are frequently the result of oral discourse that occurs before the writer starts to write. As Albert Scardino describes writing a 500-600 word editorial, “I seldom spend more than an hour writing, but I spend a lot of time talking it through.” An adequate model of writing processes must also accommodate orality, which is clearly a concern in highly literate discourse communities, such as that of the editorial writer, as well as in those discourse communities where traditionally written discourse may not have a high value.

Furthermore, in considering the models of the writing process—whether staged, linear, or recursive—there may not be agreement on the definition of shared terms from discourse community to discourse community. For example, what are called “drafts” by editorialists may be
conceptually different from the notion of “draft” understood by the composition teacher. Hap Cawood’s “drafts” (above) would be considered by many compositionists to show only minor surface changes. Yet they are certainly drafts to Hap Cawood.

The editorial writers I talked with and watched write are well aware of differences in composing behaviors. And as professional writers, they are highly self-aware of their own writing processes. The following slightly edited transcripts are the writers responses to my questions about how they write. From these writers’ discussions, clearly no one way emerges as the “way that real writers write.”

Tom Teepen, now a nationally syndicated columnist and editorial page editor of the Atlanta Constitution is a highly regarded writer in newspaper circles. He had been the editorial page editor of The Dayton News. Hap Cawood describes Teepen’s writing, in reference to a pre-computer typed Teepen commentary (excerpted below).

Modern scholarship, fortunately, is reviewing the evidence with less prejudice. Though still only in broad and incomplete outline, the real story of Africa’s past is emerging.

Just how far back it begins remains a puzzle, though the research by Dr. Leaky in Kenya suggests that Africa may be the continent where man first raised above his animal origins. (What interesting implications that has for the bigotry rooted in our own time and place.) In any case, the civilization that developed along the Nile and became ancient Egypt clearly was African in crucial ways. From earliest times, there was contact, and in trade and more intimately, between the Egyptians and the black Africans further south, up the Nile river. These black

Figure 21: Examples from a One-Draft Writer
Cawood: The only corrections and changes you see there are little transpositions he might have made when he was typing too fast or maybe a spelling or a block mark or something like that. But other than that, that’s it. Mark Twain wrote that way. Whereas most of us here will think on paper—well it’s not on paper anymore—it’s electronically. You put stuff down; then you visualize it; then you revise it. But for a guy like Tom—it’s just waves of energy, and verve and breadth with which he sees; how that subconscious interacts immediately with all of those associations.

And he would talk that way. Once I was commuting in with him from Yellow Springs, and ... a disk jockey on the radio ... said something like “And I want that blah blah” (he just sort of lost it). and Tom said, “He went out on that curve didn’t he?” In other words, you could just see the car going round the curve and tumble over. Immediately, whatever he’d hear or see was always visual, and he would express it that way.

And that reminded me to always try to think that way—how these really really good writers like Teepen do naturally. Probably from childhood.

Joanna Wragg of the *Miami Herald* described the differences between herself and editor Jim Hampton.

Wragg: If I ask Jim how he’s coming on Friday at 2 o’clock. He’ll say “It’s coming along very well. I only have four inches to go.” That means he only has four inches left to write.

If I say I only have four inches left to go, that means I’ve edited it down to 20 inches, and I have four more inches to cut out.

Jim writes precisely in finished sentences. But I write more toward a stream of consciousness. Writing longer is the quickest way for me to work. You need to know what you want to say and what evidence you have to support it, but then I write very fast and after a half hour or 45 minutes, I will have a piece of writing 20 to 30 per cent longer than I need. I’m well satisfied because I know I’m in the ballpark. I’ve got the facts, the lines of reasoning. Then in a half hour, I can do the editing, the surgery.
Joe Stroud considers himself generally a single-draft writer.

Stroud: In a lot of ways, I think I’m very fast writer. There are pieces over which I have labored a lot and go back over them, but in general I’m not a labored writer. In fact, when I first started, I would write the thing out in longhand—sometimes at 2 o’clock in the morning on Thursday night-Friday morning—and would go almost all the way through and would not miss many words. And when I would look at it in the cold light of day, I wouldn’t change very much.

I’m a good first study, I think; and I find that I don’t always improve it as I go back over it, if it all hangs together. In an essay of that kind of length, 15 or 16 column inches, how every sentence connects with every other sentence is so important to how it flows. If I can sort of going to be compelled to follow me all the way through the rest of it. And its that interconnection that I think you play with sometimes, the transitions and that sort of thing that I wrestle with. But I’m generally very fast.

Ellen Belcher of the Dayton Daily News described her processes in generating a complex editorial on an asbestos-laden abandoned industrial site.

PRK: Do you outline it first?

Belcher: No I can’t do that. I spent a long time trying to find a catchy lead yesterday, and I even put my head down on my desk (and I don’t usually do that). I just couldn’t find it, and I’m still not thrilled with this, but it’s better than it was at two o’clock yesterday.

But I try not to make 50 points in one editorial because then the readers get lost. So I know what the main point is. If I made an outline of an editorial with a number I and an A and an abc in little smaller case letters; it wouldn’t be a number I with fifteen divisions; you can’t put that much stuff in an editorial. So outlining doesn’t work for me.

But I always have to know pretty much where I’m going to end and where I’m going to begin; then the middle comes the easiest. The ending and the beginning are the hardest for me.
And getting everything in that I want to say is hard for me. Because I always know more than I write. And trying to reduce it to the most important stuff, that's hard.

PRK: Do you have notes on this stuff? Once you talk to people and then may be have it written down, is it so much in your head that you don't have to look at it again?

Belcher: I have maybe six pages of notes. And I write questions in the margins. If somebody's telling me something and I have to get more answers from the next guy that I talk to, I write my questions in the margins and then when I interview the next person I can come back and look at the margins to make sure I know what I have to get out of the next interview.

And a lot of times, also in the margins, I'll put a check mark or a star (sometimes even as I'm interviewing). That way I don't have to go back and read all of my notes, although lots of times I do. Then after I've written the editorial I go back to see if all the check marks are in the editorial.

I spent the first part of the week researching it [the editorial] in addition to going to the site for several hours or half a day and doing Nexus searches and Lexus searches and all that sort of stuff. I had so many notes that I went back—and this is the closest thing I ever get to making an outline—I wrote out of all of my notes and all of my documents every pertinent fact that I thought needed to be included in an editorial.

There was some evidence of why I thought somebody was liable, but the shreds were buried throughout the interview and I wanted to pull them together. And there were points I wanted to make, like, for example, Dayton's going after Dayton Tire with nuisance statutes. And it struck me as incredible that we're using nuisance statutes to go after somebody for environmental regulations. It's good, it's creative, but nuisance statutes are what you use to go after people who don't mow their weeds, and I wanted that point in there and that was a pithy way to cover that. And so I wrote down lines like that that came to me that I thought were creative.

I wrote down descriptive adjectives that I had heard somebody use or that I felt at the site. I had two pages of themes that I wanted to make sure that were going to be in the editorial. Some were evidence, some were just words, some were
thoughts, some were quotes, and then that was the closest thing I had to an outline. Then I sat down and I wrote it.

This need to know in advance what you’re going to write—even as there are differences in how the actual writing is accomplished—argues against both the so-called expressivists who prize the discovery that comes during the act of writing, and those cognitivists who view as transcription (a lesser achievement) a stage during which previous ideas and thoughts are written down. Because editorials which take a position must have that position decided before the writer begins to write, most editors think it’s important to know “where you’re headed before you start.”

When I asked Robert Pittman, senior editor of the St. Petersburg Times, “What are some of the first things you tell new editorial writers?” he told me—

Pittman: I tell them to decide in advance what they want to say. What the purpose of a particular editorial will be and what is it that they want to say about it. You have to know those two things. What is the opinion and what is the purpose you hope to achieve? And then I tell them that they should write the editorial as briefly as possible. There is a tendency among most people to write editorials that are too long. I tell them to write a lead that will interest the reader and to write the middle section of the editorial that makes the arguments you want to make and that acknowledges the opposing arguments and tries to deal with. And then to write a stirring conclusion to the editorial.

Hap Cawood also acknowledges a difference between thinking about what a writer wants to write and writing, but finds occasionally that the discovery does come during the writing, but only in what he calls “soft editorials.”

Cawood: Well, they are separate functions, but sometimes when you are researching that’s when you find the point of view and the
feeling, and you’ve got to have both of those in order for you to succeed. Sometimes I’ll start writing something but I won’t know what the point is until I’ve gotten halfway through it.

With my Memorial Day editorial, ... I started out not knowing where I was going to end up, but it’s only a four inch editorial.

So two or three paragraphs down into a four or five paragraph thing, I finally got a point of view. That that was when Memorial Day was, back then, (and I don’t know if this will survive [the comments of his colleagues],) but then I saw this shadow of death and the sun going over it and the sun moving, and it wipes out the shadow. I thought about holiday sun, and that’s the way I ended it.

So I guess my point is, sometimes I start writing and I won’t have a point of view. But those are the hardest to do, unless it’s something soft like that. You know you’re not going to solve an economic or the landfill problem by thinking like that or jumping into it. In some, I get my point of view as I’m researching. But you’ve got to have a feeling, a mood to it, otherwise there will be no color in your language and you won’t turn on your word association.

At The Miami Herald one category of such “soft editorials” is the “tone poem,” described by writer Ramon Mestre as “lyrical musings or reflections. They’re editorials, but they’re not pitched to anyone. They may be musings on Woodstock or on a cultural trend” or even a sunset. However, such soft editorials are written far less frequently than those which are written to persuade. And even these more expressive pieces will be developed differently by different writers—most relying on their usual modus operandi.

Based on what I learned from the editorial writers I visited, I would argue that all single draft writers are not “obviously in danger of cutting themselves off from further exploration, from a richer field of discovery than is possible during the time in which they generate options” as Harris suggests. The writers I studied either take far longer to generate their options
than did Harris's subjects, or they have—either innately or through experience—developed a strong sense of what a piece of writing should say before they begin. While discovery-through-writing may be one mode of writing, and while the writing and thinking of most students will, of course, benefit from revision, we should acknowledge that these are not prerequisites to all good writing. We should understand, too, that the "draft" in the composition class may not connote the same meaning as does "draft" in professional writing contexts. We should recognize that the differences between one- and multi-draft writers may have more to do with talent and experience on the one hand or the exigencies of the writing task on the other, than it does with questions of introversion and extroversion, a preference for closure versus a resistance to closure.\textsuperscript{18}

Just as individual writing behaviors and processes are not effaced by the collaborative construction of position and argument, neither is individual voice stilled by the corporate voice which the writer ventriloquizes.

\textsuperscript{18} It is, of course, possible that writers who need closure go into the kind of work editorial writers do—lots of writing, short deadlines, completion as the goal—while writers who resist closure choose other field. Thus, the groups would be self-selecting.
Voice

*Voice* is the word English teachers use to describe the illusion of a writer speaking directly to a reader. “When I read your story,” a friend said to me, “I could almost hear your voice speaking the words.” I took it as a compliment.

—Roy Peter Clark (203)

The student’s right to his or her own voice has been an issue of considerable concern long before the NCTE resolution which affirmed that right. The apparent conflict between the academic voice required by students in school and the personal voice which re-affirms their membership in community has yet to be resolved. It is generally assumed that the personal voice is displaced by the corporate or organizational voice in business and technical contexts. Recognizing that editorials, which represent the newspaper as an institution, are written in an institutional voice might also suggest that the personal voice has no place on the editorial page. Writers with whom I spoke agree that their personal voice is different from their institutional voice. And while an individual writer’s personal voice may be more evident in a column that bears his or her name, even their institutional voices are their own, not a manifestation of what they perceive to be a *Herald* voice or a *News* voice.

Susan Albright, editorial page editor of *The Arizona Star* explained to me how she tried to personalize the institutional voice in her writers.

Albright: I think that what happens to people sometimes, when they take on the mantle of the *Star* or the *Times* that they become a little stilted and they think “Oh I have to be profound, or I have to be very respectful, and I have to get all the facts straight.” There is a different role, I guess, when you’re speaking for an institution, and I think there’s something
about that that puts people in this responsible mode
sometimes restricts your writing.

You have to fight that, and you have to say to yourself, "now
wait a minute, we do want to have interesting writing. We do
want this institution to have a persona that is (whatever you
decide it is)." In my case I want it to be both caring and feisty—
which is a hard combination—but you want the newspaper—
*The Star* in my case—to have a personality, to be a force. And
to be one, it has to have some energy of a person's personality,
or a group of people's personality. In my case, there are three
other writers. And so we consciously push to write in a way is
more like a columnist, which I think essentially means to
have more of a sense of personal caring, personal outrage,
personal passion.

Whatever infuses that particular editorial has to come from
the person who's writing it. The editorials that I think have
been the least successful have been ones in which the person
doesn't have a real stake. They're just sort of carrying out the
wishes of the board or the publisher or whomever. Those
tend to be pretty boring.

For Joe Stroud, his understanding of audience prompts the difference
in voice.

Stroud:  I wanted to establish a conversational tone in my column,
establish it as a place where I just talked to readers. That's the
difference between a column and an editorial—a different
audience. I concentrate a lot in the column on mixing the
pitches, having something one time that's pure old fashioned
journalism in that deals with affairs of state or a world issue or
a community issue and mixing that with things that start with
the individual and move to the universal.

Sometimes, I'll start with an anecdote or a personal
illustration and then gradually broaden it. So you have a little
more flexibility in the column than you do in an editorial
although I try to encourage myself and other people to vary
the format in the editorials. But I think we tend to be a little
more sterile and I haven't quite figured out how to overcome
that.
Robert Pittman also acknowledges the difference between his editorialist’s and columnist’s voices but doesn’t know specifically how they differ. They are “absolutely” different, he told me. I really don’t know how. I just consider it a different art form. When I write editorials, I speak in the institutional voice. When I write a column, I speak in a personal voice. Ann Daly Goodwin told me “In our editorials we each write in our own voices. Our tone is not edited out.” Paul Greenberg spoke of the necessity to inject the personal voice into the editorial.

Greenberg: I’m writing essentially for me. I’m communicating myself and trying to clarify my thoughts. I am trying for conversational tone. I try to write in the way that I would speak to someone. I like the epistolary medium.

And I often tell my students when we talk about editorial writing, “You’re just going to have to sit down and pretend that you’re writing a letter to your maiden aunt or your favorite uncle. Or you’re going to have to get a personal touch in here.

That doesn’t mean you need to visualize your audience and conduct a poll and bracket the 18-34 year old group. (I abhor all that kind of mechanization). But I do like the idea of closing your eyes, thinking about family members at the dinner table, and how you would tell them what’s really troubling you and what’s wrong with the world, and how you’re going to straighten it out.

A different vantage on voice was shared by Ramon Mestre, a Cuban-American bilingual writer for The Miami Herald. Mr. Mestre writes in both English and Spanish and occasionally writes in English and then translates his own work into Spanish.

Mestre: I am fully bilingual, and I feel that I write with equal proficiency in either language. The difference being that I think of English more as an instrument of thought as a harder more concrete instrument. As if I were playing in an orchestra
day after day. Whereas Spanish for me is more the language of the soloist, the language of intimacy, the language of hurt. And quite frankly, I feel that that voice expresses me, expresses who I am, much more faithfully than English does.

I think of English as a diplomat may think of English, as a foreign language which he must master. It doesn't create any impediment. I don't feel at all restricted when I'm writing an editorial in English or in a column. But I do find—what happens when you are in body and character Spanish—that it's almost as if you're leaving yourself. And I feel there is an alien presence when I write my column in English. Editorials or letters are no problem, nor more impersonal forms of communication.

I don't view English as alien at all. It's quite natural. Think of it as a music score. You may be a German who is forced to play Latin American music for example. And you enjoy it, and you know how to play it, and you play it day after day for night club audiences. But what you really want to play is Mozart, and it's what you really know how to play and interpret and that you feel at home interpreting.

Which does not mean that my vocabulary in Spanish is greater or that I have a command of the language. I don't. I'm still learning Spanish. I just think there's a sense to which an inner "I" a core being, an essence, expresses itself in writing; and in my case that being expresses itself more and more faithfully in Spanish than it does in English. The music that I'm playing in this concert is who I think I am. I don't think of English as something that is alien. I think the person who is writing it especially in my column as someone who is impersonating me. And it's difficult, but it's not a great difficulty.

I think of someone like Nabokov who is perfectly bilingual, or Samuel Beckett. They are people who have to work to dislodge an extraterritoriality. As George Steiner said. You're living between two homes. You're clearly maladopted anywhere you are. You are condemned to these two cultures one way or the other.

If it has an effect on my editorial writing, it's that I am much more cautious. I take fewer chances with syntax, or construction, with metaphor. I have to listen to what I write,
always. And I don’t hear it well. It doesn’t sound right. Even though I know that it’s grammatically correct. That happens to me with both languages. In a way, you might say I’m functionally illiterate in both languages.

Paul Greenberg is also inherently conscious of two voices within himself even as he acknowledges a desire to be more personal in his writing.

Greenberg: As I get older it’s not that I worry about living up to my reputation—which isn’t worth living up to because it’s so fragile, sort of the bubble of popularity as Thomas Hart Benton said—but I am a little concerned about losing the inward me. I’m starting to think of myself as Paul Greenberg instead of me.

Did you read Borges’ wonderful little essay (it’s about one page long)? He says, this man Borges, he came from nowhere. He slowly began to steal my ideas and write them on paper. I can’t eat a meal in peace without him describing it, selling 10,000 copies of it. Now I find myself beginning to do things so he can write about them. What’s happening to me? I’m being eaten alive by this person. There’s nothing left of me.

And I think all these people who have this Paul Greenberg that appears in 50 papers or whatever, and you begin to lose something of yourself, and you worry about preserving that.

I think Paul Greenberg’s quite a kick. I mean he’s lots of fun. And I find myself acting him. I don’t think I’m destroying my interior personality. I’m going to be eating away at it. And I think he serves a certain wholesome function. And I find myself saying things I don’t mean because he’s the one that’s saying them. But I don’t think its malicious in any way. It’s like having a good time at a party.

But I don’t want him to come in on me. My Hebrew name is Pesach, and I was always called Pesach as a child. Pesach is still in here; and it’s Pesach that’s the real person. And Pesach gets a little annoyed at having to be Paul Greenberg.

All of these professional writers want and expect to preserve their own voices in their writing. It should be encouraging to compositionists that writing in an institutional voice is not always inimical to writing in one’s
own voice. Some might even see it as a manifestation of a Bakhtinian heteroglossia, located in an individual rather than in a novel. Furthermore, these professional writers can and do modulate their voices with particular pieces of writing. That Mr. Mestre and Mr. Greenberg are intensely aware of their institutional selves and their personal selves permits an objective view of their own subjectivity. Seeing how these men mediate between their external and internal selves may help composition teachers for whose students academic English—their institutional language—conflicts with the language of home and community.

Conclusion

You can learn to write. Assertiveness is developed. You just have to be willing to challenge authority and tuck your ego in your pocket. You're doing it for the reader.

— Martha Musgrove, September 27, 1991

The goal for this chapter has been to describe the activities, behaviors, and processes of the writers I visited and talked to in order to answer the questions raised in the first chapter of this dissertation:

• How are these writers and their writings similar to and different from other writers described in the literature?

• What are the contexts in which the editorial writers under study write?

• How does technology affect their writing?

• What kinds of collaboration that are characteristic of editorial writing

• What observable processes, activities, and behaviors do these editorial writers exhibit?
To what extent are these processes, activities, and behaviors described by any existing model proposed in composition studies?

and

How do the processes, activities, and behaviors of editorial writers differ—both from the models and from one another?

Drawing on the writings and experiences of professional editorial writers, this chapter has offered evidence that allows us to answer these questions. By citing the variations even within this one small sample of the editorial writing population, we can say that there is no single "way that real writers write." Some sit down at their keyboards and instantly generate witty, trenchant prose; others spend agonizing hours generating the 400 words that another might write in 45 minutes. Most editorial writers know what they are going to say before they begin writing, but not always how; some editorial writers, for some purposes, gain their points of view as they write. Yet amongst the diversity, there are commonalities. Editorial writers read a lot and talk a lot before they begin writing. While their writing is the visible product of their efforts—and perhaps the stacks of newspapers, books and magazines that crowd their offices provide evidence of their reading—it is through oral discourse that information is gathered, positions articulated, consensus achieved. The writing processes of the writers I studied include reading, writing, and speaking as much as they do inventing, drafting, and revising. And while post-production peer response for students and peer review for their faculty are the norm in academic English, for editorial writers, considerable oral response/discussion among peers precedes the generation of text. Because these writers are together for far longer than a
school term or a single corporate project, because they are known to each other rather than hidden, and perhaps because of the great numbers of editorials that each must write, they can build a higher level of trust and collegiality. This level of trust and collegiality may well account for the absence of gender conflict among the groups I studied. Women’s voices are as strong, and as heard, as men’s.

The need to have a position established and arguments articulated before a writer begins writing suggests that editorial writing has more in common with the writing of other disciplines than it does with the writing-as-discovery mode of much literary or expressivist writing. Even writers like Thomas Hylton, the one-person editorial page staff of the Pottstown Mercury, determine what they are going to say before their fingers hit the keyboard. This is, of course, not to say that there is no role for expressivist writing in the classroom, but rather to acknowledge that there are many essayists—as well as scientists, lawyers, and business executives—whose meanings are made before their fingers touch a keyboard.

I have demonstrated that the foci of the composition classroom—exercises in thinking, writing, and collaboration—are not isolated pedagogical practices but have counterparts among professional writers who must function with some of the same restraints as our students: short deadlines, writing for the expectations of others, constrained audiences, textual limits. Editorial writers have learned to adapt to technology, seeing the computer as a necessary tool of their craft. Editorial writers collaborate, respond to one another orally and in writing, negotiate text and point of view. They are cognizant of their institutional voices which speak in editorials and their personal voices which speak in columns and occasionally
in editorials, just as the student learns an academic voice that compliments his or her personal voice. Furthermore, the editorial writers I studied are testimony that the institutional voice need not efface the personal.

As the previous chapter showed that classical rhetoric is not an ancient less-traveled road but still bears considerable traffic on the editorial page, so this chapter has demonstrated that the path of contemporary composition also wends through the workplace.

In the following chapter, in summarizing my conclusions, I will attempt to draw a map showing how these two roads connect the classroom and the workplace—two realms which are frequently thought of as worlds apart.
CHAPTER V
SOME THOUGHTS ON THE PAST AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

In this year of Columbian quincentenary and interplanetary space probes, the academic explorer is particularly reminded how difficult it is, from the cocoon of our own environment, to imagine life in worlds not our own; and yet how easy it is, when viewing them at great distance, to imagine that all worlds are the same. To understand our own solar system, we must understand the differences and similarities among the nine planets in solar orbit. To understand even the small portion of the writing cosmos that I had chosen necessitated my exploring the different spheres of composition and workplace writing. Characterizing contexts as worlds is one of the most widely circulated metaphors in English studies, and also one of the most problematic. In one ideological orbit, it would seem, is the “real world” where workers are pragmatic and skills-driven and do non-academic writing; in another wholly disparate ideological orbit is the “academic world” where scholars are humanistic and intellectual and do academic writing. And according to Chris Anson, “each ideology rejects the other so strongly that together they have made it even more difficult to reach functional consensus about the goals of writing instruction” (2).

When I began my studies of editorial writing, I was a chauvinistic inhabitant of the “real world,” convinced of the great dissimilarities between the composition of the classroom and the composition of the workplace
(especially the workplace that I was investigating—the editorial page). I anticipated that the answers I would find to the questions my research asked would confirm those dissimilarities. But instead of incongruity, I found congruence. Instead of the two worlds spinning at opposite ends of the galaxy, I found that they were close enough for the "gravitational pull" of each world to affect the other and for the light from each to illuminate the other.

I did find, however, that although the inhabitants of both worlds spoke the same words, those words had different meanings. As I tried to answer the question "In what ways are these writers and their writings similar to and different from other writers described in the literature?" I learned there was a considerable difference even in defining what a "writer" is. For some considerable number of Ohioans, a green bell pepper is called a "mango." A "stall" in aviation refers to airplane wings not engines. A six-year-old would not greet a booster with the same enthusiasm as a football coach. So we can understand that even the word "writer" could have different meanings to different persons or groups.

In fact, the definition of writer and the purposes of writing implicit in those definitions were so differently understood that it was necessary to explain those differences before a context could be established for studying different kinds of writers. Discussing these differences became the focus of my first chapter.

As Woolever and many others recognize, "Because most basic\(^1\) composition is housed in English departments and many literature

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\(^1\) Woolever is speaking of composition in general, not the developmental composition known as "basic writing."
specialists teach writing, an understanding of the differences in discourse standards is crucial” (9). Waldrep’s two-volume Writers on Writing offers a “compilation of insight and wisdom” on why and how more than 50 well-known and highly-regarded composition scholars write. “Writers make. We create. We form,” writes Elizabeth Cowan Neld (17). Lynn Z. Bloom writes that “A writer is always writing. I write when I swim, I write when I cook (favorite daily activities); I write when I dream, asleep or awake ...” (33). Joseph J. Comprone sees “the idea of composition as the center of intellectual life, as the organizing ground for the shaping of experience” (79). Richard Lloyd-Jones describes the real pleasure of writing [as] found ... somewhere in the wild. It’s harder, riskier, sometimes a bit exotic. The words lead you on, and sometimes they fade away, and you are lost in a strange place with only your adrenalin to keep you searching. (153)

But these “writers” are academic scholars in English departments who, in the main, began as college English majors drawing inspiration from poets and writers of fiction. Indeed, the words of Neld, Bloom, Comprone, and Lloyd-Jones reflect the Romantic view of writing as a way of life, as a way of seeing the world around us. Others who write on the job, however, have different histories and different views of writing. Many journalists, for example, began their writing careers as reporters and editors of elementary school newspapers rather than as young Brownings.2 And while Waldrep’s academicians readily describe themselves as writers, the journalists Shirley Biagi interviewed differentiate between their roles as reporters and their

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2 Elizabeth Barrett or Robert. In fact, the research of Michael Ruffner and Michael Burgoon demonstrates a strong link between personality structure and writing style which “by the time a person enters college ... may be fixed in such a way that formal courses will have minimal impact on subsequent behaviors” (34).
roles as writers. Helen Thomas, a highly regarded member of the presidential press corps and the first woman to win the National Press Club’s Fourth Estate Award says, “I don’t think I’m a good writer at all. I always think my raison d’être and my forte is my sense of outrage, my enthusiasm, my energy, and my feeling that people ought to know about things ...” (189). Pulitzer Prize winner Marilyn Blais says “The Pulitzer Committee considers me a good writer. I don’t know if I do.” (102). The Wall Street Journal’s Linda Williams describes herself as “a pretty good reporter, but I wish I were a better writer.” She says “I don’t like to write. I really love reporting” (174). When Ann Daly Goodwin talks about being an editorial writer, she says: “It was a wonderful and splendid opportunity to do something that mattered, to put the power and beauty of language [to work] to make a difference in the world. If that’s not a privilege, I don’t know one when it hits me in the nose.”

Seeing “writer” as personhood and “writing” as discovery rather than “writer” as job title and “writing” as a function of a job further distances the compositionist from “non-literary” others who either write for a living or write as part of their living. Understanding this essential difference facilitates understanding both why many composition scholars expect that their studies should have more global relevance, but also why they don’t. It also explains why some scholars who venture outside the academic world appear to be surprised by what they find, and conversely, why writing professionals who return to academics (Barabas, Woolever, and others) are so surprised by what they find.3 Inevitably, paired binaries suggest hierarchy.

3 Witness Christine Barabas’s trenchant comment:

That we, as presumably bright, educated people, could put so much credence—not to
So when Christine Barabas calls the work world, the "real world," the clear implication is that the alternative is the academic, "unreal" world. Carolyn Matalene calls her collection of essays on "teaching and learning in discourse communities of work," *Worlds of Writing*. She calls attention to the difference between academic writing and writing on the job:

> As writing teachers, some of our motives for teaching outside the academy are personal. Although we understand and sympathize with the problems freshmen encounter in writing research papers, we burn out offering the same solutions again and again. The problems of writers on the job, however, present us with fascinating complexity—new and complicated rhetorical exigencies. And they are real. [emphasis mine] (vii)

In contrast, the differentiation between "academic" and "nonacademic" writing, establishes an intangible but very real boundary between these worlds. And here, regardless of intention, the "non" renders "nonacademic writing" as the lesser of the pair.

Reality, however, like beauty, lies in the beholder's eyes. The academic world, whether that of the student or her teacher, is a very real world. Its problems and practices, considerations and constraints are no less real than the worlds of industry or business. What goes on in the classroom is certainly as important (and some would say more so) as what goes on in the workplace. But the academic world and the worlds of business and industry are different worlds. The *terra firma* of one world is the *terra incognita* of the other. This sense of unknown worlds explains the anthropological mention time and energy—into researching the writing efforts of students who are in our classes because they lack the very skills we are supposed to be teaching them is an anomaly I have yet to understand. What other skill-related disciplines, I wonder, have developed theories of proficiency by studying the aberrant behavior of students? (46)
approach of contemporary researchers who seek to understand cultures foreign to the culture of the university English department. Furthermore, it accounts for the difficulties researchers in either world confront when they expect the "givens" in their own world to be operable in the other. And it recognizes that hostility is an unfortunate human concomitant of incognizance.

Thus, in concluding the first chapter, I suggested that the study of writing would be better served by a recognition that the world of the classroom and the worlds of work are different places, both real, but both different. Furthermore, workplace writing should be considered in two categories: one describing the writing done to support an individual’s work—letters, memoranda, reports, presentations, scholarly articles—the other describing writing that is an individual’s principal work—the work of the novelist, corporate communicator, journalist, technical writer, or speech writer. When we understand that people write in very different circumstances, we do not risk trying to compare the skilled student writer with the skilled professional writer, or the skilled technical writer with the skilled novelist. Their processes of writing are governed by the contexts and genres in which they write as well as by their levels of expertise. Editorial writers write for widely read publications. They write persuasive essays which articulate the official position of the newspapers they work for, that are unsigned; they occasionally write columns expressing their own opinions, which are signed. In their contexts they are expected to be highly

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4 Of course, to the studied, it is the studiers who are the foreigners. As the Indians retort to Columbus in Stan Freberg's satirical look at the discovery of America, "What do you mean, you discovered us. We discovered you, on the beach, here."
skilled, highly professional thinkers and writers.

However, my own preparatory research showed that we know very little about professional writers, other than demographics or biographical vignettes. I suggested that because editorial writers are professionally employed to write relatively short persuasive essays, they might provide a better model for the writing of college composition students than literary writers or other students, and thus that they would be worth studying.

But going into the workplace to study writing and writers, when most of composition’s studies have been of academic writing and writers, required developing appropriate research methods. As Cooper and Odell had asked in 1978, I again asked “What new procedures seem especially suited to our new questions?” When I began, I thought I was conducting case studies. But as I talked with, interviewed, and watched the writers in my study, I realized that understanding editorial writers must go beyond looking at the parts and elements of what and how they produce. The editorials looked at alone, despite individual variations, may seem stylistically and rhetorically similar. The writers and editors who produce them may appear to have similar kinds of backgrounds. The newspapers at which they work operate similarly. Understanding the ways these elements interact tells the story. Learning why and how an editorial was written is as important as what the editorial said. What has emerged from this study is the recognition that studying how editorial writers produce their texts cannot be a study solely of elements but rather a study of wholes, a study of patterns.

Recognizing that most composition research over the past two decades had looked at parts rather than wholes—a given genre, an individual writer, discrete variables, sentences, paragraphs, a specific period of literary history, a
class of writers; the stages of the writing process: invention, planning, revision, editing—I looked for methodological guidance from those disciplines which look at wholes—at societies and cultures. Thus for my research, I changed Cooper and Odell’s question from “How can we draw upon other disciplines such as developmental psychology to help us refine and pursue the questions we are beginning to ask?” to “How can we draw upon other disciplines such as sociology to help us refine and pursue the questions we are beginning to ask?

My second chapter examined methods that had been used to study writers and suggested that the less obtrusive “naturalistic” approach of sociology was appropriate for studying professional writers. As Norman Denzin, one of its principal advocates, explains, the “naturalistic method” encourages both inductive and deductive processes. Rather than beginning with a hypothesis which must be proved or disproved, the hypotheses emerge from the study. In recognizing that we may learn from a single observation, Denzin’s naturalistic approach enables the student of workplace writing to accommodate the preferences of her subjects. Thus, research is not limited, as it would be in pure ethnography, to settings in which the researcher could remain for long periods of time. And because I wanted to apply what I had learned to improve the teaching of writing, not just to describe the culture of the editorial writer, I was careful not to confuse my work with ethnography. As Lévi-Strauss explains, the real task of ethnography “should be the study of native communities and the examination, from the social, economic and political points of view, of problems posed by the relations among individuals and groups within a given community” (9).
When I began my research, I had planned to study writing processes: what happened when the writer began to write; how his or her thoughts were translated into an editorial. But in allowing the themes to emerge from the study, as Denzin suggests, by letting my "subjects" tell me what it was I wanted to learn, I discovered that editorial writers do not sit down at their keyboards and whip out 500 well-constructed words. When I looked to see "How do editorial writers generate their texts?" I found their work firmly rooted in rhetoric.

In trying to advance a theory which could embrace a wide variety of discourse, Nancy R. Comley says that "Such theory, in embracing the extraliterary as well as the literary, ... moves writers and readers into a realm quite different from 'pure' English studies, a realm of textuality where the literary text is but one part of the spectrum of textuality. The spectrum is also called rhetoric ..." (46). On the basis of my studies, I would suggest that rhetoric is the overarching process of editorial writing. (Though, as I also learned, rhetoric is only mentioned perjoratively in editorial writing textbooks.) Editorial writers begin with purpose, with a goal of persuading an audience. But in their suasory processes and purposes, to my surprise, I found considerable resonance with the canons and practices of classical rhetoric. However, they were not merely crafting editorials which included the three Aristotelian pisteis as textual arguments—although those arguments were all present. They were not only attending to matters of style and arrangement—although style and arrangement are valued. What I saw in many of the writers I studied was a contemporary incarnation of the vir bonum, the good man (and now woman) speaking (and now writing) well. Editorial writers were ethical, yes, and they were credible, yes, but their
writing emanated from a deeply felt need to better community, state, nation, or world. They were, as Ann Daly Goodwin said, putting "the power and beauty of language [to work] to make a difference in the world."

The implications for pedagogy are many. Rather than questioning the ethical propriety of teaching persuasive discourse, our goal should be, in the words of Nan Johnson, "restoring to rhetorical education a focus on the moral obligations of rhetoric and the ethical responsibility of the writer" (Ethos 114). The editorial writers I studied, in demonstrating their commitment to what Halloran would call "the ideals of public discourse" can serve as a model for Johnson's construct.

As well as discovering these unexpected classical resonances in editorial writing, I had intentionally looked for aspects of editorial writing that I thought might have commonalities with contemporary composition practice. Because of technology's increasing impact on the composition classroom, I wanted to ask specifically how technology affected the writing of the editorial writer. The answer was deceptively simple. The electronic or paperless newsroom is a largely reached goal. Computers are used for research, writing, revising, editing, responding, page layout, keeping track of assignments, etc. Computers are as much the necessary tools of editorial writers as hammers and saws are for carpenters. The pedagogical implications, however, are far less obvious.

It would be too simplistic to suggest that the lesson of the workplace is to put more computers in the classroom. Computers are already finding their way onto schoolroom desks as fast as budgets will allow. Yet, the use of computers in the classroom seems to be more ideologically driven than in the workplace. A number of theorists in computers and composition had
hoped word processors would engender in students a sense of play, of freedom in manipulating a fluid text, that would liberate student writers from their intellectual constraints of using pen and paper. Indeed, some compositionists embrace the computerized classroom as decentering authority, because the student’s focus must be removed from the teacher, and the student retains greater control over her writing and may even have more computer knowledge than her instructor.

But just as the editor retains authority over her page, the teacher retains authority over her classroom. Practical exigencies seem ever to displace egalitarian intent. We may be expecting computers to have a greater effect on writing than they are capable of ways as well. Anticipating student play and freedom as they wrote with computers was based on the contrast of the old methods and the new. As increasing numbers of students have come to college—or high school, or even middle school—with computer experience, that sense of play and novelty has worn off. Students understand the difference between games and school work. For most of them, writing at school will always be work. Assignments will be assignments whether produced on a color monitor or printed in ornate type.

The experience of the workplace offers another caution to the classroom as well. As newspapers adopted new computer systems, they warned journalism schools to teach students how to write, not how to write on a given computer system. Newspapers found that there was no point in basing their practices on software or hardware because those products changed so often. Computer enthusiasts in schools and universities have frequently tied their pedagogies to a current brand or version of software only to have that version updated before their syllabus was printed and years
sooner than textbooks could be revised. Although a newspaper’s final product is a printed paper text, newspaper people are comfortable writing and editing electronically. Many composition teachers—in preferring printed drafts as well as final papers—may be revealing the English scholars’ commitment to a printed text. To that extent, the computer is resisted. In the hands of editorialists, computers are simply the tools of the trade.

In the classroom, computer use has been frequently linked with collaboration, because the new technologies have allowed students to work together in ways they could not have before. Furthermore, as scholars are discovering the advantages of collaborative learning and are recognizing that knowledge can be socially constructed, learning more about workplace collaboration can expand that conversation. While I had expected to find that editorial writers collaborated on at least some level, I did not anticipate the collaborative force of the editorial board in establishing the editorial position of a newspaper, nor that the editorial board could be the site of help for an individual writer as he or she sought to develop an argument. Significantly, these collaborative efforts were oral, not written. Observing that editorialists engage in supportive “peer response,” not merely editing or making arbitrary changes, was a surprising discovery.

The collaboration of the editorial board appears highly effective. They learn together as well as write together. Using group discussion to develop a writing topic or to work through arguments, rather than using the group to allocate tasks or respond to drafts after they have been written is suggestive for the composition class. On the other hand, it is important to recognize that classroom groups are different from workplace groups. While students may be peers in age and academic level (though this is increasingly less so),
they may bring to the classroom different levels of writing skill, different understandings of task, different levels of cognitive and epistemological development, and different motivations. The members of editorial boards, regardless of age and gender, share professional goals; similar commitments; similar skill, epistemological, and cognitive levels. Thus we can expect a greater level of success from these writers than from a student group and not be disappointed when members of student groups conflict, but not creatively. Seeing how editorialists work together, studying editorial writers in their own contexts, seeing how they use the tools of their profession, and understanding the purposes for which they write describes the culture of the editorial writer and the role of that culture in their writing. But if, as some theorists maintain, there are underlying writing processes or structures that enable the individual to write, then it remains to look at the writers as individuals to see if their processes are described by the models proposed in composition and rhetoric.

She who would investigate the writing processes of individuals by observing their activities and behaviors must be mindful of ideological objections on the one hand and biological objections on the other. Although I am well aware of the post-structural challenge to authorship, I am nonetheless examining the writing of real persons with real and recoverable intentions. I am also aware that current neurobiological research may render our current methods obsolete. Genes have already been identified which

5 There are, of course, good, average, and not-so-good editorial writers. However, with few exceptions, their writing abilities will be considerably better than the writing abilities of the members of society as a whole and certainly better than those of the typical first year composition class. Editorial writers are both self-selected and professionally selected (hired) for their jobs.
control acquisition of grammar; and the other aspects of language processing have been located within cerebral structures.

Nonetheless, observation can tell us what writers do—if not, at the deepest level, how. Some researchers have described writing as a recursive process and other researchers as a linear process. Butturff and Sommers state:

Experienced writers we have interviewed regard rewriting as a recursive process that consists of a series of cycles. Each cycle requires different levels of attention and different agendas. During the first cycle, experienced writers concern themselves with identifying themes and deciding on a thesis. Next as the focus of the paper begins to emerge, experienced writers attend to developing sub-units—building paragraphs into sections, developing examples, reordering ideas. It is during these cycles that what Peter Elbow calls the essay’s “center of gravity” becomes discernible. Gradually attention begins to shift to what the paper needs for better balance, rhythm and style. It is only in this last cycle that experienced writers concentrate on making changes that involve word order and diction. (103)

Much of composition’s academic world has come, thus, to believe that these are the practices of all experienced and therefore all professional writers. The writing processes of journalist-turned-scholar Donald Murray have become exemplars rather than examples. The linear processes that are typical in a wide range of disciplines and workplaces are seen as “knowledge telling” rather than “knowledge forming” and are accorded a lesser status in a hierarchy of writing processes. In describing that view of the composing process in which authors suggest that “rewriting is what happens after a writer has decided on a line of argument and committed it to paper, readying an already preconceived text for a particular audience,” Butturff and Sommers state,

Such linear descriptions of composing reduce rewriting to af-
terthoughts about what already has been written. What is more, because these linear descriptions separate writing and rewriting from invention they reduce the writing process itself to transcription and rewriting to editing. What a reinvented tradition requires is a theory of composing that shows how and why invention, writing and composing, occur simultaneously throughout the writing process and therefore should not be isolated into discrete mutually exclusive stages. Such a theory of composing would allow us to see writing not as a single act that can be mapped linearly, but as a cycle of acts in which writing leads to discovery and results in rewriting which leads to further discovery which precipitates more writing. (99)

In this orthodoxy, "'writing is discovery' means that authorial purpose is constantly shifting as the writer writes, reads what he or she has written, rewrites, rereads, and rediscovers—a process that in theory, can go on forever" (100). While this epistemology may be a valuable heuristic for the teaching of writing in certain settings, it is foreign to the vast number of writer/workers (as well as those in many other academic fields) whose authorial purposes are explicit and not shifting, who must decide what they need to say before they write what is to be said, and for whom completion—often rapid completion—is a necessary end point. Some have suggested, then, that process is dependent on genre, and others on context. My research suggests that the while processes may vary with context and genre, they are, nonetheless, highly individual. Even among highly skilled writers of similar backgrounds who are working on similar writing tasks, there is considerable variation. We cannot identify one means of writing and say "this is what experienced writers do."

The experience of editorial writers also provides some insight into the interconnection between writing skills and thinking skills. Among the editorial writers I spoke to is the sense that some people might be very good
writers, but they can't write an opinion. They might be good reporters, but unable to craft the argument for an editorial. Almost explicitly, in the terms of Moffet's *Universe of Discourse*, they can report, but they cannot generalize. William G. Perry and others would suggest that problem recognition and solution represents an advanced intellectual level, rarely achieved at the freshman level. Nancy Shapiro and Joanne Kurfiss have each investigated connections between discursive and intellectual maturity, concluding that aspects of intellectual development are related to the quality of student writing. Marilyn Sternglass specifically applied to college writing students the developmental model of Andrew Wilkinson. Her research showed that "college student writers ... should manifest in their writing the most mature developmental levels described in the [Wilkinson] model, but in fact their writing often lies across the full range of developmental levels" (170-171).

Yet many college composition books encourage students to look for dissonance, to find problems they can solve in their writing. But if problem finding-skills are beyond a first year college student's epistemological or cognitive ability, he or she will struggle to go beyond reporting. As long as a current expectation for first year composition is the development of both thinking and writing abilities, it may be helpful within a composition class to formalize the kind of give-and-take of the college experience that Perry had

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6 Wilkinson's model established developmental levels in four directions: cognitive, affective, moral, and stylistic. While his work had been based on the development of children, Sternglass extended his concepts to older student writers.

7 The purpose of the college composition class may be seen quite differently by the compositionist, the professor in another department, and the future employers of the students who take composition courses.
envisioned as facilitating intellectual development.⁸ Using collaboration as a forum for developing ideas and approaches may help students work through issues before they begin writing. Teaching students to develop arguments through discussion with others may be more helpful than expecting them to conjure informed opinions out of their heads. Collaboration allows us to see that thinking and problem-solving can precede the generation of text without denigrating the writing so derived. As I will discuss later, far more research is needed in this area.

This study's examination of the writing of the editorialist offers a number of ways to enhance the teaching of composition by making connections between workplace and classroom practice. And seeing that these connections can be made will provide a convenient starting place for a discussion of why those connections do not inform current disciplinary assumptions and considerations and how they might.

To begin, our fresh insights can combine with established precedents for a new synthesis in the classroom. The most readily applicable implications of my research relate to how we teach composition. Discovering that different writing processes are used by writers of similar backgrounds writing in similar genres and in similar contexts supports those who argue that there is no one process of writing. First, then, writing should not be taught as the enactment of a single process (whatever that

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⁸ In investigating the intellectual development of his subjects from their freshman through their senior years, Perry seems to have assumed that his findings would apply to all college populations, apparently not considering that Harvard males—whose “confrontation with pluralism [a necessary step in intellectual development] [could] occur more powerfully in the dormitory” (23)—might have different natural abilities and opportunities for fostering intellectual development than would not be found in a broader college population.
process might be). This does not mean that a writing teacher should not teach about the different writing processes or even acknowledge a preference of one for another. What this does mean, however, is that the variations should be acknowledged and students should be given the opportunity try all of them: to write linearly and recursively, with one draft and with several, and with drafts that reflect different understandings of revision. Classes that teach different kinds of pre-writing techniques (e.g., clustering, mapping, outlining, tagmemics) have already set a precedent for this approach.

Observing that writers of considerable experience, success, and skill do not rely on their own individual thought processes for the generation of the knowledge that will be expressed in their writing suggests that it is beyond reasonable expectation to assume that college students can generate from within themselves the necessary knowledge for their writing. Thus, a second classroom application of work world practice would have students not only discovering arguments but also discovering, evaluating, and comparing the sites in which arguments can be discovered: the library, the electronic database, the interview with experts. Again, a precedent has been set for this model in the classroom—Ken Macrorie's “I-Search.” Although Macrorie’s concept is generally restricted to a personal quest, such searching is not as restricted in the workplace, nor need it be in the classroom, and has broad use in many disciplines.

A third direct application of workplace practice to the college composition classroom responds to the important role orality plays in the construction of knowledge. Groups of editorialists talk together before they decide on a position to take or a line of argument to follow, and they decide together on that position or line of argument before any writing begins.
Some college composition classes already use collaboration to some degree or other, most frequently in the production of documents or in response to documents that have already been written. In elementary schools, the so-called "whole language approach" to the language arts combines speaking, reading, and writing. The college composition class can adapt the practices of the workplace, the primary classroom, and the collaborative class to invent a classroom where thought is permitted to emerge from various verbal expressions, a point to which I will later return.

A fourth pedagogical application uses the model of the editorial writer to restore to our current understanding of classical rhetoric the concept that the writer must be considered along with the written product. The successful editorial writers with whom I spoke do not divorce themselves from their writing. What are taught in many composition classrooms solely as types of arguments to develop—ethos, logos, and pathos—are inherent qualities in the editorial writer. The writers I studied begin with an ethical and moral purpose in choosing subjects to write about; they respond emotionally to deeply felt human needs; the logic of their reasoning emanates from these purposes and concerns. Instead of students being taught only how to make choices in argument, tone, diction, style, or arrangement to fit the purpose of their discourses, students can learn that purpose is more than an expedient.

Finally, the work of editorial writers and their editors suggests that competent editorial writing and editing is not for the young and inexperienced. A number of editorial writers with whom I spoke believe

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9 While I am not discounting post-structural ideas about subjectivity or "subject positions." In consideration of real human beings with real biologically derived personalities, I am setting aside any theoretical constructs of "the self."
that even bright, competent, college graduates—even those from good journalism or liberal arts programs—cannot, at their "young" ages, have amassed the knowledge, developed the broad understanding of the human condition, and acquired the wisdom, nor the intellectual ability to combine these factors into editorial writing. As these professional writers believe and as the research of Sternglass and others has shown, we must accept the fact that all of our students cannot achieve at a certain discursive, cognitive, or intellectual level just because they're college students. Nor can we assume that a 23-year-old graduate student, serving as a writing instructor, has achieved those levels (by virtue of a bachelor's degree in English) that would allow him or her to foster in undergraduate students intellectual development beyond the teaching of the discursive conventions of academia. The progressive elementary school recognizes that students cannot be classed by age because they learn at different rates and are ready to learn at different rates.

How might these five general applications play out in an actual classroom. An instructor could begin her class by asking her students to develop an agenda of issues they wanted to address during the term of the course, issues that mattered to the students and that responded to widely defined human needs. The students would narrow the list to that number of topics which would allow one issue for each collaborative group of three to five students. The next task would be for the students to learn all they could about the issue they had chosen and then write background reports that would explain what they had learned to anyone interested in the subject. With thorough knowledge of the issue, the students within the group would then craft arguments for each side of the issue—perhaps in the form of
position papers for opposing candidates in an election. Finally, the students would develop a consensual position on the issue, writing that position in a persuasive discourse directed to an audience which could take some action in response to their concern. This discourse might take the form of a letter to the editor of a publication, to an officer of the university, or perhaps to a public official. It might serve as an editorial or opinion column for a newspaper or magazine. It might be a political speech, religious sermon, or a management address to employees. Throughout the process, the students would learn how to write specific discursive forms and how to decide what form of discourse suits what purposes. Not only would the students write together and learn together, but they would also talk together and read together as they learned how their thought processes involved all the forms of language. The various processes of writing, like the styles of writing, and the rules of writing would become parts of the course not its central features. Furthermore, each stage in the development of the final discourse represents a different level of cognitive capability from recording information, to reporting it, to generalizing from that information, differentiating and evaluating the information, and ultimately persuading others on the basis of the information.

To suggest a class which would consider the whole writer as well as the whole discourse necessitates rethinking the meaning currently assumed in the concept "whole discourse." And rethinking one concept, as I will show, leads to rethinking other concepts and ultimately challenges some of our discipline's core assumptions.

One of the important tenets of current composition suggests that students will best learn grammar, spelling, and other conventions and rules
of usage in the context of writing an entire piece of discourse—an essay, say, or a story.\textsuperscript{10} However, while the concept “whole discourse,” as practiced, precludes separating usage from writing, the concept has not precluded separating the writer from the written. Nor has it precluded other kinds of arbitrary divisions, for example separating personal experience from information, or evaluation from persuasion. The world of the editorial writer reminds us that these divisions are not only arbitrary, they are also artificial—in the sense that they have been constructed for a purpose rather than following some natural law. That the editorial writer’s practice does not adhere to these divisions allows the composition teacher to reconsider the purposes for which these currently accepted rubrics have been constructed and to ask if an alternative construct—such as that of the editorial writer—might not better serve the purposes of pedagogy.

Earlier, I have shown that for at least the past hundred years, college composition has focused on the production of printed texts. Thus we can understand how pedagogies that have focused on the production of a printed text—variations in process notwithstanding—have deflected attention from a writer who is more than a text-processor. The process movement has made us more self-conscious of how we teach, with New rhetoricians throwing off what they saw as the shackles of the so-called Current

\textsuperscript{10} Those who subscribe to this tenet will articulate their belief that “learning grammar does not help a student to write better.” I have been surprised not to read the obvious response—that teaching the rules doesn’t make a student a better writer, but it does teach them the rules. And in most contexts, obeying the rules is a measure of “good citizenship.” There are many analogies to this concept: learning to drive and learning to play a sport among them. We don’t put 16-year-olds behind the wheel and expect them to intuit stopping. We demand that they know the rules before they begin to drive. Children may naturally run around on a field having fun kicking a ball, but they’re not playing soccer till they learn the rules. And at collegiate and professional levels, players are not only expected to know the rules but also to learn the team’s “playbook,” the rules and conventions specific to their own team’s play.
Traditional rhetoric. And, as Faigley has observed, the various processes and their exponents are also in competition. Even now, the turf battles are still raging. There are political, social, and economic grounds on which these battles are waged. Whose theory will be accorded the highest status; whose articles will be published in the most prestigious journals; whose papers will be accepted for presentation at which academic meetings, and whose whose will be scheduled most advantageously; and whose textbooks will be adopted by which institutions.

Viewed in a broader context, however, these putatively competing theories are actually only different ways of looking at a [writing] blackbird. Whether in or out of school, individual talent and inspiration must account for some aspect of an individual's writing, even when that individual is writing for the corporate voice. Then too, cognitive processes in writing appear to be part of our neurobiological structures. And, of course, different cultures and environments affect our writing. Despite the seeming di­chotomy between the expressivist and cognitive views or even, as Flower and Hayes would have it, their “represent[ing] two stable, complementary dimensions of the creative process,” (1977) both privilege writing as discovery, both privilege the solitary writer, and neither acknowledges that writing skills and thinking skills are different processes. For the expres­sivists, there is only discovery in the act of writing; to Flower, Hayes, Bereiter, Scardamalia, Haas, etc., “real writing” is writing during which knowledge is transformed; other writing which draws upon external or prior knowledge is denigrated as “transcribing” or simple “knowledge-telling.” Again, “real writing” is the writing of discovery; writing after the problems have been solved is some lesser commodity. And while the expressivist-
cognitive view is weakened by its exclusivity, the social view is weakened by its totalizing inclusivity. While the former negates the writing done by those whose discovery and invention occur before writing begins, the latter offers little explanation for individual writing within a given discourse community that goes beyond cultural context or learning the conventions of that community.

As divisive as have been these conflicts between supposedly competing theories of "writing processes," and the subsequent wars that have opposed practitioners, scholars, researchers, and so forth, in historical context they all stem from the same erroneous assumption—an assumption that conflates the philosophies and practices of pedagogy with a unified theory of writing and rhetorical processes. Instead, the field of composition has characterized as competing theories (whether of pedagogy, process, philosophy, or epistemology) the discipline's reflections of the society, culture, and age. We have substituted local ideology for global theory.

The free expression advocates of the seventies were not merely responding to the rule-bound English-teaching practices of the fifties, but were part of the vast anti-structural social movement of the sixties. The "student's right to his or her own language"—an important issue of the last ten or 15 years—would have been thought laughable 100 years ago when T.W. Hunt stated that the average graduate should be able to "express his ideas in clear, vigorous, and elegant English" (109). Writing in 1980, Charles Yarnoff argues that "if required composition courses have any purpose at all, it is to give students a way to comprehend the interaction of their ideas and social experience" (553). Compare that with the expectation in the 1880s that college composition would teach the "expression of thought in speech and
writing in the best manner" so that "the beauty of our language," "our morality," "our sense of beauty," "our intellect," and "our manhood" could all advance (Atlantic Monthly 687, 690). We can accept that these century-old prescriptions were not statements for all time but were appropriate for the world of that time. We need to understand that a successful pedagogy for teaching a particular group of students at a particular historic moment is in no way an overarching theory which explains the process or processes of writing and rhetoric.

Not only must we resist privileging a particular pedagogy without acknowledging its context; we must also resist privileging a specific definition of writing without acknowledging the context from which that definition is derived. So, for example, the models of writing processes advanced by Linda Flower and John Hayes, models which are derived from talk-aloud protocols, are only operational when writing is regarded as problem-solving. But the researchers who invoke this methodology do not say "our models describe a process of those who think as they write," (a model which may be particularly applicable to solitary academic writers such as many of those in the humanities) but instead they denigrate the writing of those for whom writing expresses problems already solved. If, in fact, this were the model of composing, there would be no way to account for the solving of problems using non-written languages.

Creating oppositions out of styles of writing, like creating oppositions out of contexts, serves an intellectual convenience, but as I mentioned above, these binaries are ultimately hierarchical. It is helpful to see that there are different types of processes—for example, linear or recursive—as it is helpful to see that there are different contexts for writing—such as the classroom or
the workplace. However, these dichotomies do more than merely categorize—as some might maintain. Rather, they polarize, creating intellectual tensions between subdisciplines rather than a recognition of and consequent sharing among them. Peter Drucker describes “knowledge areas in a state of flux,” noting that

the existing faculties, departments, and disciplines will not be appropriate for long. There was no biochemistry a hundred years ago, no genetics, indeed hardly any biology. There was zoology and botany .... Similarly, old dividing lines between physiology and psychology are increasingly meaningless as well as those between economics and government, between sociology and the behavioral sciences ... and so on.

The most probable assumption is that every single one of the old demarcations, disciplines, and faculties is going to become obsolete and a barrier to learning as well as to understanding. The fact that we’re shifting rapidly from a Cartesian view of the universe, in which the accent has been on parts and elements, to a configuration view with the emphasis on wholes and patterns, challenges every single dividing line between areas of study and knowledge. (349-50)

If deconstruction and the entire post-structuralist movement has been characterized by the finding of aporia and the exploitation of discontinuities, then reconstruction must be the goal of the post post-modern. As shown above, the discipline of composition has been particularly adept at creating discontinuities between theory and practice and between theories and practices. So the goal, after identifying these false lines of demarcation, remains to find a framework that both rationalizes pedagogy and encourages less ideologically loaded research agendas.

So I return to classical rhetoric, not for the prescriptions its ancient practitioners offered, but for its illumination of human nature. During each historical place and time, the ancient rhetoricians—among them, Aristotle,
Cicero, and Quintilian—were teaching not prescriptions for all time but the appropriate prescription for their day and age. Yet their extant writings suggest some universals. Oratory was not so easy that it didn’t require instruction. Every man who wanted to be an orator could not be, despite privileged birth and access to the finest rhetorical education—and despite the great prestige that came to the best orators. Some students and orators were better than others. While language could be manipulated for effect, it was expected that moral and ethical purpose should be at root of the orator’s work. And significantly, the creation of powerful persuasive discourse (like the creation of other ancient genres—poetry, drama, and even history) did not require written language. The common sense of the ancient rhetoricians can inform our thinking as well.

Among its methodological lessons, cultural anthropology has taught us that

Human beings tell stories.
They educate their young.
They persuade one another.

Whether these are outward manifestations of our collective unconscious or of human neurobiology, each of these human endeavors is valued from culture to culture—albeit in very different forms. We have learned, too, that while literacy is not universal, thinking is. Thinking and writing are not the same. Story-telling, pedagogy, and rhetoric may incorporate the production of written texts, but they don’t proceed from the production of written texts. As we have sought ethnographies of writing—in workplace or ghetto—and as we have sought revelations of writing processes—through protocols and brain laboratories, we need also to
investigate the biology and sociology of rhetoric.

We have attended to what we have called the writing processes of students, and increasingly to the writing processes of those who write on the job and those for whom writing is the job. Yet our investigations have largely been restricted to a narrow understanding of writing—even as we seek to expand the role of composition to writing and thinking. In rhetoric, we may find the underlying process of a unified theory.

That rhetoric, in fact, can be considered a process may well be heretical to those who have long viewed rhetoric as art or artifice, as well as to those in composition who found the structures of rhetoric convenient instruments of the devil as they preached “process” with the fervor of religious converts. Nonetheless, rhetoric—the discovery of the available means of persuasion, to use Aristotle’s words—is an innate human capacity. We can recognize that acceptable means of persuasion are certainly culturally constructed. But the ability to argue and persuade and the desire to do so appear in children even before they have articulate speech, and the development of those faculties accelerates rapidly as children gain speech.

While the concept of individual authorship and ownership, particularly as it relates to textual production, is not normative, individual greatness—voice—in argument appears to transcend cultural determination. “Great persuaders” are revered or honored in many cultures, their names inscribed in the cultural history: Demosthenes, Rashi, Ashoka, are but a few.

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11 John Hagge has also written on the “process religion” in contrast to the kind of writing he sees in business.

12 Demosthenes’ (385?-322 B.C.E.) reputation was well established during Philip’s reign (359-336 B.C.E.), and he continued as an exemplar in Rome as well as Greece throughout the classical period. Ashoka, king of the Maurya dynasty in the Asian subcontinent from c. 272/268-232 B.C.E. played a crucial role in the spread of Asia. His edicts, carved on rocks,
Regardless of the evidentiary conventions or other "rules of argument" of a given culture, the ability to persuade appropriately is highly valued. Rhetoric books (the "rhetorics" of Aristotle, Wilson, Blair, Corbett, or Booth and Gregory, to name only a few) may teach those conventions; rhetorical theorists (Burke, Perelman, Kinneavey, likewise only a few) interpret and explain them. But rhetoric would exist without textbooks and without theories, and may well account for thinking which cannot be described adequately by other conceptualizations of process.

Our future research must advance on two fronts—both of which require a cessation of disciplinary hostilities. Compositionists cannot exclude rhetoric nor can humanists exclude science. If rhetoric is, as I maintain, a basic human process, we need a much broader understanding of rhetoric than that afforded by what is known as the western tradition. We need to look not only in western classrooms and western workplaces but within the venues of many other cultures to determine what constitutes the valid means of persuasion. We need to know what is considered logical argumentation in other settings and cultures before we assume that our means of persuading are culturally constructed. And as we have learned how writing is regarded in other cultures, we also need to learn how rhetoric is regarded.

Three thousand years of pedagogy have taught us that competent verbal expression—whether written or oral—is not achieved easily. Thus

pillars and cave walls throughout his vast empire, are regarded as the beginning of the history of writing in southeast Asia. The writings of Rashi, the French Talmudic scholar Rabbi Solomon ben Itzhak (1040-1105) are still considered definitive.
we may be greatly underestimating the difficulty in writing well. In fact, our assumption that good readers write well, may in fact be a reflection that those with a predilection for language arts read well because it is easy for them and therefore fun; and as their ability to both tell stories and to construct letters improves, they will also become good writers. Clearly different kinds of people are successful at different kinds of writing—but we can’t assume that only preference or societal forces makes one person a poet and another a journalist, one a novelist and the other a playwright. We must not be ideologically afraid to look within the brain or the human genome to explore why some write better than others, or why some write better as academics and others as editorial writers. And we may need explorations of both brain lab and culture to determine the links between thinking and problem-solving and writing.

In the need to classify, to divide and master—or conquer—we frequently forget to reconcile these differences that we created for better understanding. As Drucker has said, the old demarcations are barriers to learning and understanding. Removing those barriers, then, should allow us to develop new learning and new understanding as the field of composition and rhetoric works to improve human communication.
APPENDIX A

Letter to Editors

Department of English
164 West 17th Avenue
Columbus, OH 43210-1370
Phone 614-292-6065
FAX 614-292-7816

May 1, 1991

Mrs. Joanna D. Wragg
Associate Editor
The Miami Herald
1 Herald Plaza
Miami, FL 33132

Dear Mrs. Wragg:

As a doctoral student in composition and rhetoric in the Department of English at The Ohio State University, I am investigating the writing of editorial writers. Improving the teaching of writing, particularly at the college level, is the motivation for my dissertation.

Because of the acknowledged excellence of your writing and the wealth of your experience, I'm writing to ask for your help. I would like to come to Miami to talk with you—and the members of your Editorial Board—about editorial writing in general and especially, the collaborative nature of your work; as I try to determine whether any of the indefinable elements of talent and experience can be defined for the writing student.

The field of composition studies, from its comparatively recent beginnings in the 1960s, is gradually expanding its area of concern from the writing done in the classroom to that in the workplace. While some work has been done on the writing undertaken by those in business and the professions (such as memos, letters, and proposals), virtually no research has been undertaken on professional writers themselves. I am convinced that the nature of editorial writing is highly congruent with that of most college composition courses. Hence my interest.

Traditionally, the teaching of writing at every educational level has been dominated by a literary model. Writing in non-literary, non-academic modes has been virtually ignored by the "English" establishment. My research suggests that when the goal is teaching students to write persuasively, appropriate models are more likely found in the editorial departments of the nation's newspapers than in literary history.

Yet education's conventions die hard, and the researcher who travels outside established pathways must use a well-honed weapon to cut through the academic underbrush. The evidence gathered from studying highly-regarded award-winning writers carries more weight than that derived from studying anonymous editorialists who work for unknown newspapers.

Lest you be concerned that this request is coming from an inexperienced student with whom your time would be wasted, please let me reassure you. I am a 46-year-old woman who left a professional career to return to graduate school to develop better ways of teaching young people to write. I came from California (having earned an M.A. in the Teaching of Writing) to The Ohio State University particularly because of its highly-regarded reputation in the field of composition studies.

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Other aspects of my research in composition studies have already been presented at national educational conferences, and I expect the results of this study to have even greater impact. One benefit to you for participating in my research would be the knowledge that more students will learn how to write better as a result of your involvement.

If you feel that you need more information about my work, I would be glad to send you the complete prospectus for my dissertation. In addition, my advisors, who are nationally-known scholars, can attest to my capabilities and seriousness of purpose.

My teaching schedule will permit me to visit Miami on September 11, 12, or 13. September is a long way off, but in order to apply for grant funds to cover the costs of my research, arrangements need to be made soon. I will call your office next week to arrange a convenient appointment time should participating in my study be acceptable to you. I look forward to the opportunity of learning from you.

Sincerely yours,

Patricia R. Kelvin
APPENDIX B

Interview Questions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Writer’s Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Job title</th>
</tr>
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When did you first start writing?

Years as a writer

Years doing editorial writing?

How is it different from . . . ?

Origin of assignment? Do you have a particular area of specialty?

Who decides and how do they know when / if your writing is good (does the job)

Aspect of education of most value?

What do you consider part of the writing task?

- When I sit down to write
- Research
- Interviews
- Rewrites
- Revision
- Meetings on subject
What sequence does typical piece of your writing follow before it is published?

Where do you do your writing for your job? (private office, private desk in large workroom, at home)

When do you do your on-the-job writing?

What apparatus (typewriter, word processor, dictate to secretary, handwrite) do you use?

Have you always used?

What did you use before?

Do you draft, edit, revise all on the VDT? Ever use hard copy?

How do your editorial colleagues function together?

What kind of writing do you do off the job?

Do you keep a journal? Free-lance Write the occasional letter Working on a novel?

What kind of education should an editorial writer have?

What kind of experience should someone have who wants a job such as yours?
APPENDIX C

Basic Statement of Principles
(of the National Conference of Editorial Writers,
adopted in Philadelphia, October 10, 1975)

Editorial writing is more than another way of making money. It is a professional devoted to the public welfare and to public service. The chief duty of its practitioners is to provide the information and guidance toward sound judgments that are essential to the healthy functioning of a democracy. Therefore, editorial writers owe it to their integrity and that of their profession to observe the following injunctions:

1. The editorial writer should present facts honestly and fully. It is dishonest to base an editorial on half-truth. The writer should never knowingly mislead the reader, misrepresent a situation, or place any person in a false light. No consequential error should go uncorrected.

2. The editorial writer should draw fair conclusions from the stated facts, basing them upon the weight of evidence and the writer's considered concept of the public good.

3. The editorial writer should never use his or her influence to seek personal favors of any kind. Gifts of value, free travel, and other favors that can compromise integrity, or appear to do so, should not be accepted.

   The writer should be constantly alert to conflicts of interest, real or apparent, including those that may arise from financial holdings, secondary employment, holding public office or involvement in political, civic, or other organizations. Timely public disclosure can minimize suspicion.

   Editors should seek to hold syndicates to these standards.

   The writer, further to enhance editorial page credibility, also should encourage the institution he or she represents to avoid conflicts of interest, real and apparent.

4. The editorial writer should realize that the public will appreciate more the value of the First Amendment if others are afforded an opportunity for expression. Therefore, voice should be given to diverse opinions, edited faithfully to reflect stated views. Targets of criticism—whether in a letter, editorial, cartoon or signed column—especially deserve an opportunity to respond; editors should insist that syndicates adhere to this standard.
5. The editorial writer should regularly review his or her conclusions. The writer should not hesitate to consider new information and to revise conclusions. When changes of viewpoint are substantial, readers should be informed.

6. The editorial writer should have the courage of well-founded convictions and should never write anything that goes against his or her conscience. Many editorial pages are products of more than one mind, and sound collective judgment can be achieved only through sound individual judgments. Thoughtful individual opinions should be respected.

7. The editorial writer should always honor pledges of confidentiality. Such pledges should be made only to serve the public’s need for information.

8. The editorial writer should discourage publication of editorials prepared by an outside writing service and presented as the newspaper’s own. Failure to disclose the source of such editorials is unethical, and particularly reprehensible when the service is in the employ of a special interest.

9. The editorial writer should encourage thoughtful criticism of the press, especially within the profession, and promote adherence to the standards set forth in this statement of principles.


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