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ABSTRACT

METIS: DISABILITY, RHETORIC AND AVAILABLE MEANS

by Jay Dolmage

In this dissertation I argue for a critical re-investigation of several connected rhetorical traditions, and then for the re-articulation of theories of composition pedagogy in order to more fully recognize the importance of embodied differences. *Metis* is the rhetorical art of cunning, the use of embodied strategies—what Certeau calls everyday arts—to transform rhetorical situations. In a world of chance and change, *metis* is what allows us to craft available means for persuasion. Building on the work of Detienne and Vernant, and Certeau, I argue that *metis* is a way to recognize that all rhetoric is embodied. I show that embodiment is a feeling for difference, and always references norms of gender, race, sexuality, class, citizenship. Developing the concept of *metis* I show how embodiment forms and transforms in reference to norms of ability, the constraints and enablements of our bodied knowing.

I exercise my own *metis* as I re-tell the mythical stories of Hephaestus and Metis, and re-examine the dialogues of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Quintillian. I weave through the images of embodiment trafficked in phenomenological philosophy, and I apply my own models to the teaching of writing as an embodied practice, forging new tools for learning. I strategically interrogate the ways that academic spaces circumscribe roles for bodies/minds, and critique the discipline of composition's investment in the erection of boundaries. I propose new ways to conceptualize rhetorical history, embodiment, composition's geographies, pedagogies, and engagements.

METIS: DISABILITY, RHETORIC AND AVAILABLE MEANS

A Dissertation

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By

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DEDICATION

This dissertation began with the loss of my uncle Robert Sidey. Born with a disability, he was given up at birth, institutionalized, and he died of neglect at age 8. I hope this work helps us to remember his life and lives like his, and to avoid repeating this loss.

This dissertation is also dedicated to the memory of my big brother Matt Dolmage who passed away in 2004. This writing is built only out of what I learned from him; it is full of him. I hope that this work extends his fight—for the right to education, for access—and the change he initiated as he rolled down the street and through the world.

Matt taught me how language should work when he held my hands against his to sign a sentence, or when he pressed my fingers down on the keyboard of his portable computer. Words form where we touch. They can't exist apart from our bodies. Matt showed me that, in order to really communicate, we need the patience to learn a new language through one another, we need to want to transform towards one another, fitting our limits together to create new possibilities.

In 29 full years, Matt accomplished so much, quietly welcoming changes that others saw as 'tragic,' accepting himself completely and others unequivocally. Many tried to write him off or persuade the world against him. He found, created, and seized opportunities to prove them wrong.

Matt—more than a memory of him—was close to me as I wrote this dissertation. The pain of loss often quieted me, but the joy of his memory is also responsible for whatever music was made. Aside from this dedication, I don't write about Matt explicitly in this work. I don't yet have the means available to do so. But I hope you can read his spirit in what I've created, and I hope for the courage to speak and move with Matt even more in the future.

INTRODUCTION

METIS: **DISABILITY, RHETORIC AND AVAILABLE MEANS**

In this dissertation I will argue for a critical re-investigation of several connected rhetorical traditions, focusing on the embodiment of rhetoric. In particular, I look for new stories about the bodies and minds that have been relegated to the margins: women, the ambiguously gendered, people with disabilities. I want to re-script the rhetorical negotiation of norms. I want to re-cast the rhetorical roles of people (and mythical characters) with disabilities. I will argue that rhetoric has ignored the body. Also, that this ignorance is reinforced by a fear of imperfection, a fear about the boundaries around our own bodies, and a fear of the strange bodies of Others. The rhetorical history we've chosen often conforms to modern schemes of ability and disability, but this history and the epistemology it reifies can both be challenged. Re-examining rhetorical bodies, and re-situating the disabled body in particular, I will suggest that we might claim new models of rhetorical artistry.

The engine and the theme of this work is *metis*, cunning and adaptive intelligence. I suggest that *metis* demands a focus on embodied rhetoric and, specifically, demands a view of the body and its thinking as being double and divergent. *Metis* is the rhetorical art of cunning, the use of embodied strategies, what Certeau calls everyday arts, to transform rhetorical situations. In a world of chance and change, *metis* is what allows us to craft available means for persuasion. Building on the work of Detienne and Vernant, and Certeau, I argue that *metis* is a way to recognize that all rhetoric is embodied. I show how it is not enough to re-body theory—doing so simply incorporates untroubled bodily norms in an unchallenged realm of abstraction. Our embodiment is a feeling for difference, and always references norms of gender, race, sexuality, class, citizenship. Developing the concept of *metis* I show how embodiment forms and transforms in reference to norms of ability, the constraints and enablements of our bodied knowing.

I use disability studies theory throughout this work, exposing the tropes and stereotypes about disability that shape the stories our culture holds on to. I also use disability studies to critique held views about the phenomenology of embodiment, and I propose new models and metaphors that more fully theorize the body's attachments and reliances, its vulnerabilities and adaptations. Filtering rhetorical theory through disability studies, I hope to focus on the meaningful-ness of bodily difference. In this new light, more inclusive theories of rhetorical ability can grow. I will argue, then, that composition and rhetorical pedagogy must respond to this critical expansion.

I will exercise my own *metis* as I re-tell the mythical stories of Hephaestus and Metis, and re-examine the dialogues of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Quintillian. I will weave through the images of embodiment trafficked in phenomenological philosophy, and I will apply my own models to the teaching of writing as an embodied practice, forging new tools for learning. I will strategically interrogate the ways that academic spaces circumscribe roles for bodies/minds, and critique the discipline of composition's investment in the erection of boundaries. I will propose new ways to conceptualize rhetorical history, embodiment, composition's geographies, pedagogies, and academic engagements.

In chapters one and two I will locate a crucial tension around norms of ability in Greek antiquity, arguing that disability was an important yet unsteady representational system used to define rhetoric and to shape pedagogy. I will question how and why the rhetorical concept of *metis* has been devalued. Telling the stories of Hephaestus, the Greek God of metallurgy who embodied *metis*, I will recombine versions of his story to show, and to critique, how his disability has been variously represented. I will argue that the art of *metis* locates rhetorical facility in the divergence of the body and mind from the norm, in our double-ness and our ability to draw on cunning strategies, in fostering responsiveness to chance and change, and capitalizes on our ability to connect with and to become that which is other. The stories of the goddess Metis, eaten by her husband Zeus because her cunning intelligence threatens his authority, will hopefully allow me to illustrate how and why *metis* has been suppressed—and why it must be recovered and utilized as a still-powerful challenge to normative rhetoric.

In the third chapter, I will put forward models and metaphors of embodiment that begin by valorizing disability. I will argue that a consideration of diverse and divergent embodiments should change our conceptions of phenomenology, philosophy, rhetoric and therefore composition pedagogy. Working through foundational works of phenomenology by Husserl, Merleau-Ponty, Certeau and Bourdieu, I will show how we have theorized *from* the concept of the normal body, posing our mobility and perception as naturally perfectable. I will argue instead that we are both constrained and enabled in our embodiment, and that we are both reliant upon and responsible to others, we are intercorporeal. The work of Hayles, Butler, Grosz and others, then, will offer a frame for more inclusive, critically aware theorization of embodiment. And these new models and metaphors for embodiment will connect to the disabled body of Hephaestus, as they connect to the cunning, embodied art we all have access to, through *metis*.

The fourth chapter places these re-conceptualized values within the institutional framework of the modern academy, where they clash with the normative mappings of our institutional and disciplinary geographies. Analyzing traditional and current perspectives on disability and deficit within composition studies, I argue for a cunning re-design of academic spaces, utilizing the principles of usability and universal design as architectural as well as pedagogical programs. The work of Shaughnessy, Bartholomae, Harris and others made a start at analyzing how normativity operates in composition. I build on this work, and on the current work of Horner and Lu, Matsuda, Dunn and others to argue that composition has always been, and continues to be, defined by changing institutional spaces and the call for changing interpretations of the embodied abilities of those within these spaces. I argue that we often simply accommodate difference, treating diversity as a supplementary concern and retro-fitting curriculum and pedagogy. But instead, we must recognize the right of each student to shape their learning, and to help us shape our discipline.

In the fifth chapter I explain my own uses of *metis* to work for institutional, administrative and classroom change. While other scholars such as Johnson, Kopelson and Ballif have written about pedagogical uses of *metis*, I focus specifically on how *metis* can be used to valorize students' diverse ways of knowing. I explain the results of a small research project examining the use of universal design in three undergraduate courses at Miami, and how the students in these courses provided important feedback on the value of student input—pushing us to develop a more 'usable' curriculum, and proving that students must be critics and co-designers of education. I also write about my distress in confronting some pervasive attitudes about so-called 'basic writing,' 'LD' and 'ESL' students, and the ways my own institution has traditionally made such students disappear. I report on my development of a first-year writing class focusing on student's different literacies, and the move to remediate teachers instead of students by creating a learning community between a first year seminar and a graduate course (made up of graduate assistants). I argue that the best class is one in which diversity is accentuated, in which difference *teaches*, and in which 'disabilities' (often variously and contingently diagnosed and attributed) aren't simply accommodated, but rather change the culture. My hope is that this curricular design project illustrates my belief in the interdependent, intercorporeal, dialogic nature of learning, as does my development of specific pedagogical practices, such as the use of a WIKI for revision. In the final section of this chapter, I show how

'feedback loops' can be created in writing environments (like the WIKI) in order to lay bare the connections and relationships between learners, across media, bodies, genres and ideas.

CHAPTER ONE: DISABILITY STUDIES OF RHETORICAL HISTORY

DISABILITY IN ANTIQUITY

In this opening chapter, I want to begin by suggesting that, as historian Martha Rose writes, "ideas about disability in the ancient world are part of our [contemporary] common consciousness" (2). I would further suggest that these ideas about disability are always prefaced by, always circumscribe, and always interact with our contemporary ideas of the norm. Our sense of what is normal conditions our dispositions towards rhetorical history and towards rhetoric.

Homer, the mythical seer Tiresias, Oedipus, the great orator Demosthenes, Paris's killer Philoctetes, Croesus's deaf son and others form our view of disability in antiquity. These men overcome their disabilities, or compensate for them with poetic genius, or bear them as punishment; therefore, they both adhere to, and perhaps provide archetypes for, some of the most prevalent modern myths about disability. Further, Aristotle's Generation of Animals, the Hippocratic Corpus and even the plays of Aristophanes act as catalogues of disability, functioning much as the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual does today, delineating a range of abnormal bodies.

Robert Garland, the author of The Eye of the Beholder, one of only three book-length studies of disability in the classical period (see also Stiker, Martha Rose), suggests that "disability would have been familiar to many" in ancient Greece—either through the birth of a 'defective infant' or through aging (11, 21). Bad plumbing, malnutrition, young mothers, war and even violent sports would have been factors that led to injury or disease and then to disability. In Garland's view, the roles available to the disabled, rhetorically and otherwise, were severely limited. That his book is entitled The Eye of the Beholder is ironic, but also symbolic. *He* is the 'beholder' and his biases are readily apparent. Garland's eye looks for the "compensation" the disabled make (42), or for the "natural kinship" between people with disabilities (63), or for the "rich empathy" that they inspire in others (preface). He gives his chapters titles like "Survival of the Weakest," "Half-Lives" and "Deriding the Disabled." His history canonizes the view that, as disability theorist Harlan Hahn writes (and as he disproves), disability has always symbolized "loss, repugnance and personal tragedy" (31). Yet Garland's research also suggests that in the ancient world, the question of 'normality' was central. Garland notices that, even in ancient Greece, the exclusion and isolation of different bodies was a way to "re-affirm the unity" of the hegemonic group (82). An arena for this re-affirmation was rhetoric.

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In addition to the classic examples I included above, scholars have noted that there is at least one example of an oration written specifically for a speaker with a disability. The speech is recorded in Lysias 24. This speech concerns whether or not the speaker is eligible to receive a pension. Martha Rose, in interpreting the speech, cautions that we neither assume that Greeks had a form of welfare specifically for people with disabilities, nor that the speaker in Lysias is made to 'prove' that he is disabled. She stresses that the court simply ruled on a person's ability to make a living, and gave those who could not some monetary support (98). We might be led to read this speech as an argument about what 'counts' as disability, and the ways in which a society must respond with charity. In this way, the speaker would also be performing his body. Yet Rose cautions against this reading. Rose also, through such examples, argues that there are many more stories about disability to be found in our study of antiquity; and importantly, she argues that the stories we already have should be re-interpreted in order to avoid re-inscribing ableism.

Expanding on Garland's history, rhetoricians James Fredal and Brenda-Jo Brueggeman focus specifically upon the ways that rhetoric recognized, and shaped, disability in the period—but they seem frustrated by what they discover. There is a tone of resignation when they write:

> Rhetoric [was] the cultivation and perfection of performative, expressive control over oneself and others. Deformity at once prevented any rhetorical achievement, while at the same time it symbolized the problem with rhetoric as a deceptive and sensuous art (131).

This tone of resignation seems to stem from the sense that there could and should be other stories about disability in rhetorical history.

We've been asked to accept that disability was the opposite of rhetorical facility. The truth is that, as Leslie Fiedler suggests, it is all too easy to believe that "the strangely formed body has represented absolute Otherness in all times and places since human history began" (xiii). We can be easily persuaded that, wherever abnormality was, it was stigmatized. The tradition we've accepted also demands that we accept these assumptions, that we enforce them. Over time, the tradition of *using* constructions of disability to mark excess has silenced disabled bodies as it has stifled the female body (and the ambiguously gendered body, as we will see later

in the stories of Demosthenes). Naturally, with a definition of rhetoric as, simply, oratory and the use of the 'controllable' body for persuasion, people with disabilities could be easily ignored. The rhetorical teacher could argue that any performance that seems disabled is effectively not rhetorical, is a rhetorical deviance. I think we need to question our choices about what counts as rhetoric and who counts as a rhetorician. A close examination of rhetoric in antiquity allows us to recover many overlooked examples of people with and without disabilities weaving a disability rhetoric. All of rhetoric is connected to the negotiation—the enforcement, the transgression, the resignification—of bodily and intellectual norms; of embodied meanings.

I would suggest that we must begin to critique this acceptance and to look for new stories. Brenda Brueggeman has herself argued that it is difficult to separate rhetoric from *speech*—but that we should consider rhetoric's relation to the body ("Coming Out"). James Fredal argues, similarly, that were we to shift to a 'new map' of body rhetoric and away from this emphasis on speech, "what we [would] gain most is a broader perspective on the possibilities for human expression and meaningful interaction, and so a broader understanding of how, at the beginning of Western thought, human self-fashioning and refashioning took place on rhetorical terms" (Rhetorical Action 32). Though Fredal seems to delimit them (in the dissertation, as in the co-authored quote above), I would argue that these possibilities for expression can be seen to extend even to those bodies that are "soft or lame" and thus exempt in his formulation (Rhetorical Action 244). Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson both echoes Fredal and challenges his exclusions when she suggests that rhetoricians must look at the expression of those who cannot verbally 'speak,' yet communicate through other avenues ("Re-Thinking"). Just as Fredal successfully challenges the omission of the body, rhetoricians must further challenge the continued omission of disabled bodies—representing rhetorical possibilities that seem too easily left behind.

My suggestion in this chapter is not that our rhetorical predecessors were necessarily discriminatory, but instead that we can expand our ideas about who our rhetorical forebears might be, and what types of intelligence they might valorize, as well as what forms this intelligence might take in body and mind (always together) in action. To begin this expansion, I

will first try and explain some connections, and some confusions, between the 'norm,' the 'mean,' and the 'ideal' forms of these bodies/minds and these actions.[1]

NORM. MEAN, IDEAL

As Rosemarie Garland-Thomson writes, "seeing disability as a representational system engages several premises of current critical theory: that representation structures reality, that the margins constitute the center, that human identity is multiple and unstable, and that all analysis and evaluation has political implications" ("The New Disability Studies" 19). Garland-Thomson explains that to read disability through this system is to recognize the hegemony of the norm. We might recognize the normal position, when we think about it, to be able-bodied, rational-minded, autonomous, polite and proprietary, and so on. In North America, the normal position is also middle to upper class, white, male, Western-European, preferably American, not fat but not skinny, and so on. These norms change, but the presence of a desired, central and privileged position persists. Below, I will more closely examine how modern norms have come to be understood and utilized—but a simple definition of the norm is that it acts as a noun designating culture's desire for homogeneity, and it also acts like a verb, in that this agenda is enforced. In this way, no person is immune from the power of norms.

Disability studies scholars use the term normate to designate the unexamined and privileged subject position of the supposedly (or temporarily) able-bodied individual, and the culture valorizes that position. As with the concepts of whiteness or of hetero-normativity, the normate occupies a supposedly pre-ordained, unproblematic and unexamined central position.[2] The term normate has been developed in the field of disability studies to connote the ways normalcy is used to control bodies—normalcy, as a social construct, *acts* upon people with disabilities. Rosemarie Garland Thomson defines normate as "the constructed identity of those who, by way of the bodily configurations and cultural capital they assume, can step into a position of authority and wield the power it grants them" (8). A normate culture, then, continuously re-inscribes the centrality, naturality, neutrality and unquestionability of this normate position. Such cultures demand normalcy and enforce norms, marking out and

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[1] I won't place the words 'norm,' 'mean,' or 'ideal' in scare quotes in the rest of this work, nor will I mark out the other forms of these terms, except when quoting. Instead, I will ask you to scarify the terms yourself as you read. In fact, allowing the terms to sit in the text unmarked gives them a disarming neutrality that I hope can be noted and worried about.

[2] In the third chapter, I will more extensively describe the ways that normativity—as explained here, as a function of ableism—interacts with and reinforces whiteness and hetero-normativity.

marginalizing those bodies and minds that do not conform. Norms circulate, have cultural ubiquity and ensure their own systemic enforcement. Disability studies challenges normalcy by challenging those constructions, centers, identities and politics that would mark disability as deviance. Disability studies therefore also challenges those who would use disability to attribute deviance to a society's others—those discourses that suggest that inequities based on race, class, gender, national and other divisions are attributable to biology. Importantly, in challenging the idea that social imbalance can be explained by biology, disability studies challenges both the attribution of deviance and the construction of deviance.

Disability studies is a coherent but interdisciplinary, multi-disciplinary field of study, holding that disability is a political and cultural identity, not simply a medical condition. Disability studies challenges the idea that disability is a deficit or defect that should be cured or remedied, disrupts the idea that an individual with disabilities can be defined solely through her disabilities, critiques representations of disability as pitiable, in need of charity, to be compensated for, made invisible or overcome. While there are many different disabilities and many different communities of people with disabilities, and while perspectives on disability vary and are constantly contested, disability studies does provide a somewhat unified stance on disability—cognitive, physical, learning, mental, psychological and so on—because of common ground in the experience of stigma, oppression, the fight for more positive representations, and the struggle for physical and intellectual access. I will further define disability studies as I use the term throughout this dissertation.

There are many different disabilities represented under the rubric of disability studies. There are tensions created by this grouping. However, disability studies scholars often show how disability is represented as a catch-all—people with physical disabilities are assumed to be cognitively disabled, representations of physical disability often rely on reinforcement from suggestions of mental or physical deficit. These 'groups' are also united by the experience of stigma and oppression. For these reasons, and only contingently and carefully, I am going to bundle learning disabilities and physical 'impairments' together, for instance. What is of interest is the rhetorical *use* of disability to Other, to reinforce normativity, and so on. Also of interest is the rhetorical action of re-representing. While the attribution of disability is also used to shore up other stigmatization—the work of Robyn Wiegman, Siobhan Somerville and others shows how race and homosexuality rely on the attribution of biological inferiority—it is important to

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respond by critiquing the constructions of disability, rather than disavowing this attribution while allowing cultural meanings of disability to go unchallenged, and therefore actually reifying them. So I choose, here, to at once affirm disability as a shared and positive identity, while challenging the use of disability as a wide brush for the application of derogation.

In comparison to today, in Greek antiquity the norm was embodied in different, but connected ways. Disability can still be seen as a representational system in this ancient context. Indeed, the study of rhetorical history does well to focus on the work of normativity. Examining antiquity, we're asked to locate our own normative filters at the same time as we address the charged interchanges of the period, encounters which powerfully, seductively and formatively invoke debate about what was normal, as I'll show.

The debate about the normal body and mind in antiquity (and, as I'll later show, since antiquity) wraps around ideals for discourse—and this link is more than metaphorical. (Plato wrote and) Socrates said, in the Phaedrus, that "any discourse ought to be constructed like a living creature, with its own body, as it were; it must not lack either head or feet; it must have a middle and extremities so composed as to suit each other and the whole work" (Phaedrus 128). This idea of proportionally-bodied discourse connects with Aristotle's concept of the mean:

> By the absolute mean, or mean relative to the thing itself, I understand that which is equidistant from both extremes, and this is one and the same for all. By the mean relative to us I understand that which is neither too much nor too little for us; and this is not one and the same for all… And so we may say generally that a master in any art avoids what is too much and what is too little, and seeks for the mean and chooses it—not the absolute but the relative mean (Nicomachean Ethics II 6-7).

The mean body, then, is the same for corporeality as it is for discursivity.

The bodily ideal is the foundational metaphor for proper speech/writing. The rhetor is able to find the available means of persuasion and, relatively, these means are conditioned by proportionality, by the mean, a kind of norm. The available means are conditioned by the bodily mean. The right rhetorical body is neither excessive nor deficient. This manifestation of normalcy then connects with Quintilian's good man speaking well. Quintilian's concept of the good man speaking well directly addresses Aristotle's definition of rhetoric as finding the available means of persuasion. That is, a good man must be the one to find these means,

Quintilian qualifies, or else rhetoric can be misused. 'Goodness' and the mean absolutely connect—the virtuous man selects the virtuous means. "The habit or trained faculty that makes a man good and makes him perform his function well" is conditioned by the mean (<u>Nicomachean</u> 6-7).

This concept then connects to Protagoras's man-measure doctrine. Though this doctrine has been variously interpreted, Protagoras's concept has been popularly read, through an Aristotelian frame, to mean that the proportional measure of man was the basis for a Universal mean.[3] Gilbert Austin refers to this very explicitly in his <u>Chironomia</u>, a treatise on the proper postures and movements for elocution which borrows heavily from antiquity.

Image 1.1: Austin, Gilbert. <u>Chironomia</u>. Plate 2.[4]

In the chosen tradition, those without the ability to speak and those without the ability to 'control' their bodies have been omitted from considerations of rhetorical capacity. Witness Austin's mapping of the proper range of motions and the correct posture of his ideal male orator, borrowed from the Greco-Roman tradition (Image 1.1). Even in this accompanying illustration of the range of female delivery, we get a sense of the rhetorical hierarchy of bodies—some are seen as capable of expressing more than others (Image 1.2). The geometrical range of acceptable, expressive bodily positions shrinks, as does the expectation for the rhetorical possibility of the female body: this is a body capable, mainly, of expressing supplication.

Image 1.2: Austin, Gilbert. <u>Chironomia</u>. Plates 10 and 11.

Image 1.1 illustrates the concept that Protagoras introduces: that, through rhetoric, man measures out the units of virtue through his body, and the measures of a mean concurrently constrain this man to a limited rhetorical range. Austin says that "the golden mediocry [of

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[3] A modern pragmatist or neo-sophistic reading of this doctrine looks vastly different. Instead of seeing proportional man as the measure of all things, as a kind of 'ruler,' we currently argue that Protagoras meant that what man perceives, is—much like William James's statement that "reality is what I choose to attend to" (322). 'Man' is the 'measure,' in that we construct our own reality. That there is such a discrepancy between this relativistic reading and the normative reading is informative—contestations over the hegemony of normalcy bubble within this gulf. Do we measure our world by the rule of a (fixed) normal man, thus negating our differences, or do we believe that each person determines or constructs their own reality (even partially), thus granting power to our differences of perception, and locating power in cultural and social negotiations?

[4] All images requiring copyright have been omitted from this version of the dissertation.

gesture] is best and most worthy" while "to use no action at all in speaking, or a heavy and slow motion of the hand, is the property of one stupid and sluggish" (227). Excessive motion is similarly condemned. In this way, the performance of rhetoric—as written text or as oratory—can be thought of as the performance of the mean. Reading rhetoric, as such, is "observing the operation of [virtues]…as they are matched and conjoined to outward gestures which by a kind of tacit character give out the manners of their complexion"; reading rhetoric is "arguing syllogistically from the natural habit to the genuine or contracted" (Austin 63). To read rhetoric is to mark the parallels and the divergences of the corporeal and the discursive. When body and 'text' diverge, there is a problem. As Bolter and Gramala, Spoel and McCorkle have argued, technologies of discourse—be they print, handwriting or gesture—have been tightly prescribed in order to make their mediation invisible. The common logic is very Platonic—technologies of discourse should not 'interfere' with the pure communication of the soul, or secondarily with the canonicity of a written 'original.' As David Wills argues, "language—like the body, like time—is one of the technologies with which humans are most familiar. It is familiar enough not even to be experienced as technology" with the attendant enablements and constraints ("Technology" 257). Therefore we fail to foreground their "essential fault and *faute d-essence,*" the useful mutability and imperfection of body, language, bodied discourse ("Technology" 260). Philippa Spoel, commenting on Austin's <u>Chironomia</u>, writes that the gestures he prescribes "have a normalizing effect in the sense that they define and code standards of polite bodily action against which improper standards can be identified" (27).[5] The body, as a 'technology' of discourse, is also ordered (organized and commanded) to be transparent. In this way, Images 1.1 and 1.2 can be used as excellent examples of what disability studies scholars term the normate. Austin's choreography of rhetorical delivery is designed to help us to recognize excess and deviance. The normate is a veiled 'natural' positioning against which deviancy can be read. Austin's <u>Chironomia</u> functions to mark out abnormalcy. And all technologies of discourse function normatively—to a greater or lesser extent demanding that the body, the act of translation, the messiness of a composition remain transparent or be marked as excessive.

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[5] Austin's <u>Chironomia</u>, first printed in 1806, is a reiteration of the methods of Bulwer's <u>Chironomia and Chirologia</u>, printed in 1644.

There is a shared function of the norm and the mean, in that the mean becomes codified as a normate position—natural, or perhaps supernatural, as it is connected to the virtuous soul. Recognizing aberrancy from the mean allows one to diagnose the flaws of the individual's very essence. Lennard Davis writes that, although the word normal only appeared in English in the mid nineteenth century, "before the rise of the concept of normalcy…there appears not to have been a concept of the normal, but instead the regnant paradigm was one revolving around the word "ideal"…in the culture of the ideal, physical imperfections are not seen as absolute but as part of a descending continuum from top to bottom. No one, for example, *can* have an ideal body, and therefore no one has to have an ideal body" (Enforcing 105). The ideal, as Davis sees it, places perfection out of reach—and he suggests that therefore ideality was not made compulsory, was not enforced. What the individual was supposed to control was his/her relationship to the mean. It is true that, although Plato and Aristotle put forward a concept of ideality, in their definitions of pure virtue and the forms, they also had a qualified sense, a relative sense of the mean, what is called the relative mean. Aristotle, in particular, went to great effort to qualify and relativize the mean, as I've shown in my lengthy quote from the Nicomachean Ethics.

Davis's norm arrives with the development of statistics, and he suggests that "rather than being assigned to a less-than-ideal body in the earlier paradigm [of the ideal], people…have now been encouraged to strive to be normal" (105). Though this resonates with Aristotle's concept of the relative mean, Davis clarifies that the norm "is a kind of fiction, a created character" (109). The norm, reliant as it at first was upon statistics gathered across a broad population, is similar to what Aristotle calls the absolute mean—a way of measuring humans against one another. Davis argues that the norm is justified as a concept that would increase democracy and equality, because it purports to locate 'every man' on a standard grid. The relative mean, on the other hand, is about one's personal behavior, bearing, presentation—one's composition. We have the innate potential to conform to our own relative mean.

In contemporary North American society, we use the norm not as a relative term, but as a demand we place upon all bodies, a demand to conform. As McCorkle and others have noted, when Jonathan Barber began teaching from Austin's Chironomia at Harvard, he had students stand in uniform wooden hoops so as to train them into the proper range of movements (26). Looking through Barber's book-length recapitulation of the Chironomia, which he titled the

Practical Treatise on Gesture, one is also struck by the appendix, which lays out the correct movements for the delivery of canonical poems and short speeches.[6] Like Barber, we apply an absolute mean or a norm, and we do so through our habits and everyday practices. Even at the level of discourse, we have inculcated a normativity; we have put our embodied selves into hoops. Norms have been conflated with absolute means and with ideals. But, more than this, the norm primarily allows us to see and schematize that which is abnormal. This perhaps contributes to the opacity of the norm—as "a kind of fiction, a created character" (Davis, Enforcing 109). To maintain the ghostly status of the norm, to allow it to be a social haunting impossible to flesh out, we work hard to show what it is not. To norm is to employ a logic of negation.

I should clarify that my purpose here is not to provide a detailed history of rhetorical norms, but rather to locate a definition of rhetorical normalcy through the consideration of a few isolated examples that illustrate the conflation of the ideal, the mean and the norm. I hope this allows me to use a more complex, conflicted, perhaps even ironic image of the 'good man speaking well' as a central character in a more concentrated and specific investigation of rhetorical histories. The image of the man in the hoops as 'good man speaking well' gathers shared ideas about virtue (one must possess, it must be pure), comportment (one must not be excessive), not to mention gender (man!) and communicative avenues (speaking!) that adhere amongst our ancients, and that are inflected by our own normative interpretations. I will argue that rhetorical history—in this strange mixture of voices from antiquity and filters from modernity—does enforce bodily, embodied norms. These norms reach into the body and mind through discourse about who can learn, what rhetoric is and is not, and via rules of oratory and prescriptions for delivery, like Gilbert Austin's. The 'good man speaking well,' his body and its movements, his speech and discourse, I will argue, are forced into alignment like those of Austin's geometrically imprisoned man.

Importantly, the norm also functions by arraying Other bodies around itself—this is how it gains shape. The following diagram suggests how this logic works.

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[6] As mentioned in a previous note, Austin borrowed heavily from Bulwer, and Barber re-printed Austin. It is very interesting to note that Bulwer's original work was titled Chironomia and Chirologia, explicitly linking *nomos* and *logos*, the law or custom linked with form or reason in regulating gesture. This suggests that we see the body as 'made' both by the common and by the divine, or by both society and biology, if we are willing to extrapolate a bit. That both Austin and Barber choose the title Chironomia and drop the title's shared allegiance to logos, to reason, perhaps signals a shift towards a belief in the practiced formation of the body, its shaping through custom rather than its 'natural' order. Such a shift would seem consistent with the use of the book for pedagogical purposes—for the shaping of men.

Image 1.3: "Normative Body." Jay Dolmage. 2005.

The 'norm' is the white space suggested through the creation of outliers, the arrangement of abnormal bodies around a supposed centre. I will further explain the entailments of this image in the third chapter. But I want this image to re-cast the way we think about rhetorical norms like Austin's—standards for discourse also function mainly by negation; we know much more about the man speaking poorly than we do about rhetorical facility. And it is the specter of disability that has always been used as an attribution of rhetorical Otherness or of arhetoricity.

DIFFERENCE AND RHETORICAL HISTORIES

I want to argue that there is a theoretically tenuous yet insistently material link between our conceptions of the ancient world and our sense of rhetorical history. That is, though I would never suggest rhetoric was born in Greece, our rhetorical history has been. I ask you to accept, critically, my own anachronistic, geographically limited revisions, as I challenge the canonicity of this very emphasis on our Greco-Roman lineage. My suggestion is not that this is *the* history, but that it has conditioned our experience of rhetoric, just as we have projected our visions, feelings and experiences of rhetoric into this narrow, nearly fictional world. In order to trouble this history, I too will look for new stories from Athens and elsewhere. I want to examine the idealistic, and normative, idea of the emergence of the 'good man speaking well,' and I want to show some of the ways that our chosen versions of rhetorical history efface bodies and erase bodily difference, as well as the ways that the imposition of a bodily ideal results in a constraint

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of rhetorical facility and a tension that underlies all rhetorical discourse and all discourse about rhetoric.

Building on the work of historians such as Martha Rose, Jacques Stiker, James Fredal, Brenda Brueggeman and others, this project is about *enabling* rhetorical history. I want to use this rhetorical space in order to counter a vision of rhetorical history that envisions a 'good man speaking well' as an able, properly proportionate man, enunciating clearly, gesturing powerfully. That is, I want to argue that we can tell *different* stories about what enunciation, gesture, and proportion are. I rely upon disability studies for the language and critical concepts, the metaphors and images that allow us to critique the rhetorical tradition, allowing us to see that we have canonized it as a normate, normalizing force. In this way, rhetoric *has* been used to mark out and stigmatize disability, thus providing us with limited means of interpreting and understanding the role of people with disabilities in rhetoric and in society. Yet as Harlan Hahn has written, "humans have always exercised the right to make choices about the anatomical features that they consider desirable or interesting, and, at times, these options have included rather than excluded women and men with disabilities" (30). Likewise, we have exercised choices about which embodied rhetorics are sufficiently normal to matter—but this does not mean that only those who can perform this constrained embodiment 'speak.' It also does not mean that those who don't fit in the hoops of normative rhetoric communicate only their abjection.

The dominant message that we have about oratory is that it was a sphere for only the most able-bodied—we link this with ideas about delivery that connect only with very narrow interpretations of the rhetorical body. Cicero wrote that the best oration has a "middle quality"; its "form" and "complexion" has "fullness" but is "free from tumor" (251). The voice is plain but not without nerve and vigor. A good speech/speaker has the "complexion of beauty…diffused throughout the system of the blood" (251). Within the field of composition, our very bodily ideas about 'flow,' 'cohesion' and 'voice' carry similar bodily metaphors, and also construct a normal and normate embodiment for rhetoric. These narrow views must be challenged. As Merleau-Ponty suggests, words have a physiognomy—we behave *towards* them (Phenomenology 235). We also behave *within* the constraints they create.

It is important for me to specify that I do not see rhetoric itself as necessarily a normative, ableist force; in fact, quite the opposite. Instead I argue, from a disability studies perspective, that certain stories have been neglected, but that we can now read such stories as a challenge to a

view of rhetorical history that re-inscribes normative ideas about rhetorical facility and about which bodies matter. I want to analyze the function of such norms, and to disrupt our acceptance of an ableist view of rhetorical history. I argue that exclusion has been imported into the classical world, and we have been left with a narrow view of the role disability may have played in the period. I also suggest that an emphasis on rhetorical embodiment, when coupled with this disability studies perspective, offers ways to interrogate how our ideas about bodily norms have conditioned our experience of rhetoric, and offers ways to analyze how and why, and to what effect, we have projected our visions, feelings and experiences of rhetoric into this narrow, nearly fictional world, invested in a particular kind of body, imprisoned in the geometry of the norm. We may never fully escape this normative conditioning, but we can engage in the ongoing work of critical realignment.

EMBODIED RHETORICS

Extending the idea that words have a physiognomy, James Wilson and Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson suggest that we might see language as an "address interpellating the body" (2). Just as the body is constructed by discourse, discourse has an ideal body. It is from the material of this suggestion that I want to forge a definition of embodied rhetoric. Wilson and Lewiecki-Wilson argue that certain bodies are made subservient by rhetoric itself (6). In this section, I want to gather some of the arguments that support this statement, and then I want to tell some stories to characterize embodiment in rhetorical history, stories that communicate from and between different bodies.

This subservience of the body to rhetoric, suitably, is mostly about silence. It is also about subtext, maybe it is about denial, certainly it is about misdirection. We might begin with James Fredal's assertion that western, particularly post-Platonic and post-Aristotelian rhetorical theory has "altered the medium [of rhetoric] from the body to the word" (Rhetorical Action 127). In his calculation, "writing redefined speech in its own image," and denies, or struggles to make transparent, the body: disappearing delivery; ignoring practice, action, performance (Rhetorical Action 134). Walter Ong also suggests that "oral memory differs significantly from textual memory in that oral memory has a high somatic component" (67). The oral word, he argues, "never exists in a simply verbal context, as a written word does. Spoken words are always modifications of a total, existential situation, which always engages the body" (68). Words are

"alone in a text," they "lack their full phonetic qualities" and their "extratextual content"; they are disembodied (101). Only speech is alive.

I would worry about erecting such a binary, such a strict point of bifurcation. As Derrida writes in his critique of Husserl, there is a pronounced bias that "the word is a body that means something only if an actual intention animates it and makes it pass from the state of inert sonority (*korper*) to that of an animated body (*leib*)" ("Speech and Phenomena," 81). In this way, phenomenology has actually (according to Derrida) made speech bodily and writing a non-body and therefore a non-presence. Curiously, his critique of phenomenology is very similar to his critique of Plato, which I will discuss later. In both cases, he argues against the idea that speech is presence and writing is a non-body. My argument is that neither written nor spoken word is disembodied.[7]

Elizabeth Grosz suggests that philosophy can't admit it has a body. In reading Plato and Aristotle, I will show that they did indeed denounce rhetoric as bodily, and therefore inferior to philosophy, which they connected to the soul. Yet I want to suggest that rhetoric (as well as composition) won't admit it has a body—our rhetorical history re-inscribes the denunciation of the body. We should pay attention to delivery, as Fredal does, and we should pay attention to the fusion of physical and rhetorical training, as Debra Hawhee does, but not in order to suggest that these are the only venues where the body is engaged, comes alive. Even in the image, act and performance of writing (perhaps as much so as in any other somatic 'medium') the body is present. As Lewiecki-Wilson writes, "we have an impoverished language for conveying the rhetoricity inherent in embodied life" ("Rethinking"157). In many ways, we fail to direct critical attention to either the rhetoricity of the body or the body of rhetoricity. I would echo N. Katherine Hayles, who wrote that (despite its denials) philosophy does have a body, that it is normative, and that it is always clashing with our ('actual') embodiment (How We Became 85). Likewise, rhetoric, even when it ignores delivery, has a body. Rhetoric always extends into and issues from our experiences of embodiment. Rhetoric, as a tool and an art and a way-to-move, mediates and is mediated by the body.

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[7] Later, I will also discuss the ways that Havelock and Ong frame the speech/writing binary in their historical work, the manner in which Peter Elbow summed up this debate as it played out in composition theory in the 1980s, and the ways that this debate is currently being re-framed, through the work of Kirstie Fleckenstein and Jennifer Edbauer, among others.

The body is invested rhetorically. Sharon Crowley writes that, rhetorically, "no body is disinterested" (363). Embodiment, in this sense, is always a mode of persuasion. The body in its many and shifting forms is always an aspect of our available means of persuasion. In the same breath, the body is also always invested with cultural meanings. This cultural investment is perhaps most thoroughly theorized by Bourdieu, who wrote of the *habitus*, dispositions organized and structured by a dynamic normativity: the ways bodies reproduce the regularities of past practice while adjusting to the demands of present contexts.[8] Bodies practice culture. As Certeau says, "there is no law that is not inscribed on bodies" (165).

Rhetoric is bodily, as it is embodied. Burke suggested that no symbol system can "transcend the body" (Language 343)—the body can be subject to subterfuge, but it is never *not there* in language. The omission of the body would be an "idealistic lie, in conformity with merely superficial tests of parlor propriety" (343). Kristie Fleckenstein writes that "any use of language implicates a use of corporeality" (46).

The body is rhetorical—it communicates and thinks. Expanding Crowley's point about bodily investment, we could look to Giulia Sissa who wrote that "the body stands in front of you not as an insignificant instrument of the enunciation but as its meaningful context" (161). Burke argued that we do *body thinking*. The body is always a sort of screen through which thought and communication pass back and forth, and is thereafter altered. While Sissa and Burke might be read to reinforce what James Fredal asserts when he writes that "words could never exhaust the expressive power of the speaking moment produced and felt not by mouths or minds, but by whole bodies" (Rhetorical Action 4), I'd rather construct the concept of rhetorical embodiment as always including words, mouths, minds, bodies, technologies, in dynamic interaction—whether one is speaking or writing, always as we compose our thoughts, as we think *through* this composition.

Rhetoric enforces bodily norms. As Lennard Davis argues, "language usage, which is as much a physical function as any other somatic activity, has become subject to an enforcement of normalcy" ("Bodies of Difference" 100). Donna Haraway reminds us of the connection between body imagery and our sense of self: "our bodies, ourselves; bodies are maps of power and identity" ("Cyborg Manifesto" 180). This body imagery is "fundamental to world-view, and so to political language"; therefore we must also pay attention to the body that we give to rhetoric

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[8] I will expand on this definition in later chapters.

("Cyborg Manifesto" 173). As Lewiecki-Wilson argues, by delimiting rhetorical bodies, "we may also be revealing our general anxiety [and thus our desire] to hold back the undifferentiated physical and social flow of language" ("Re-Thinking" 160). Bodily norms are rhetorical norms, and can reveal an "unwillingness to enter into caring and committed intersubjective dependency with others and with the material world" ("Re-Thinking" 160).

Judith Butler also investigates the materiality we ascribe to bodies, and suggests that all bodies are read through a gendered matrix. I hope to show how this gendered matrix is also a normative matrix, relying upon and reinforcing constructions of disability as material otherness. Echoing this contention, feminist philosopher Iris Marion Young complicates Hayles's and Grosz' contention that philosophy does have a body by arguing that this 'body' of philosophy or of rhetoric always both constrains and enables, and it is always involved in the production of normalcy. In her words, "experiences of moving, perceiving, interacting with others, manipulating tools, thinking through problems and expressing oneself are always conditioned and constituted by social structures of constraint and enablement, as well as by forms of representation of persons, as both 'normal' and 'deviant.' The subject of disability herself is constituted as varying and culturally constituted lived body" (xiii). It is this definition of embodiment, and of rhetoric's role in producing bodies, and the fact of rhetoric's production *by* bodies, and by bodies always in reference to norms, that is at the heart of my exploration of disability and rhetoric. This is not an effort to simply mark the negative impact of norms. To paraphrase Young, the body of rhetoric always *both* constrains and enables. As Wilson and Lewiecki-Wilson write, embodied difference can actually be read as the very possibility of meaning: "every deployment of language combines the interaction of same and different" (18). Further, rhetoric and the body work in dynamic interaction, always extending into technologies, including technologies of writing; always implicating, constructing and collaborating with other bodies.

PROSTHETIC RHETORICS

To affirm the disabled body is to affirm embodied rhetoric. Conversely, to deny disability is to misrepresent and misrecognize embodiment; it is to use embodiment theory as a method of exclusion. Susan Wendell promises that "if disabled people were truly heard [without sentimentalizing], an explosion of knowledge of the human body and psyche would take place"

(274). She warns of the consequences of silence: "the oppression of disabled people is the oppression of everyone's real body" (274).

Embodied rhetoric is always prosthetic. Rhetoric, language and bodies can all be seen as disabled, and they change when we view them through disability. In following chapters, I will discuss the argument that 'we are all disabled' in more critical detail, and I do want to note here that such arguments are terribly problematic. Yet I want to make the argument that language 'voices' the body, but that this 'voicing' or 'writing' of the body is never a perfect, or even a nearly-perfect communication: to embrace the writing of the body is to embrace difference, in the Derridean sense—it is to continually fail to signify; when failing to signify is our only means of 'making' meaning. Disability studies gives us a way to value this imperfection of meaning as we value our imperfect bodies, as we come to see the disabled body as meaningful. It is through the theory of prosthesis that this connection between rhetoric, embodiment and disability can be most persuasively illustrated. David Wills defines prosthesis as that which "makes explicit the very break that constitutes the human body" (Prosthesis 246). As he has shown, the word prosthesis was first used in 1553 to refer to the addition of a syllable to the beginning of a word. Only in 1704 was it used to refer to the replacement of a missing part on the body. This history reveals the ways that prosthesis fuses linguistic and corporeal supplementarity in our embodiment, as beings with a grammar and biology, an idiom and anatomy, overlapping both in something material and much that is ineffable—in, as Smith and Morra word it, "*the delicate dialectical situation in which we find ourselves*" (11, their italics). Prosthesis reveals our "relation to and dependence upon the inanimate, the artificial" (Wills, Prosthesis 246). The prosthetic body, "infirm or lacking, in need of the other," is "not the exception but the paradigm for the body itself" (Prosthesis 137). Therefore "every rhetorical form that comes into effect is a prosthetic transfer" (Prosthesis 14). The fragmentation and incompleteness of discourse mirrors the body, the shifting of signification echoes the malleability of the body, and yet this makes communication possible.

Wills writes that "every rhetorical move is a "running hither and thither," and communication is always "dealing with the sideways as well as the forward momentum" (Prosthesis 25). Importantly, this movement is "perhaps not structurally different from a natural gait," "an explicit infraction upon or departure from the straits of linearity" (Prosthesis 25). In this way, our bodily imperfections are ineluctably tied to our embodied communication, our

embodied knowledges. Even when we strive for the norm—of language or body—the meaning we convey is conveyed only prosthetically. Wills suggests that the very essential and natural disarticulation between the fragmentation and partiality of our body and our cognition, and our idealization of an objective view and an objectively knowable world constantly interact as we stumble for meaning. Wills also emphasizes the obliqueness of thought, and suggests that the 'disabled' body, everyone's 'real' body, is the engine for the creation of meaning. All attempts to impose logic, to create a linear grammar, will necessarily fail. David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder, applying Wills's theory, suggest that "disability's representational fate is not so much dependent on a tradition of negative portrayals as it is tethered to the act of meaning-making itself" (Narrative Prosthesis 6). Indeed, the repeated motif of Wills's book is the presence of disability at the site of creation: He writes of Derrida on crutches, composing and decomposing Postcard; he repeatedly mentions his own father's prosthesis; he mentions Freud's cancerous jaw and his later works; as well as Roussel's drug use and his exaggeration of literary forms. In each case, the 'disability' both drives meaning and changes its shape. In this way every text is about disability, in the sense that it issues forth from the unsteady rhetorical stance of prosthesis, which always "*fails* to return the incomplete body to the *invisible* status of a normative essence" (Mitchell and Snyder 8, italics mine).   Mitchell and Snyder write that "literary [or linguistic] forms, like disabled ones, are discordant in their unwillingness to replicate a more normative appearance" (Narrative Prosthesis 9). Margrit Shildrick suggests that the leakiness of bodies, as discursive constructions, also equates with the "inherent leakiness of meaning in the *logos*" (Embodying the Monster 84). Wills himself wrote that "writing is prosthesis par excellence" (Narrative Prosthesis 27). The prosthetic body, "infirm or lacking, in need of the other," is "not the exception but the paradigm for the body itself." The body and word relate, not in direct reference but in a series of prosthetic poses, "constantly shifting relations" (249). The 'fact' that discourse needs prosthesis, needs supplementation, reveals an imperfection that might be valued as a reflection of our partial, leaky, abnormal bodies.

Am I saying that rhetoric is disabled?

The theorization of prosthesis, Vivian Sobchack argues, "has become fetishized and 'unfleshed-out,'" prosthesis becoming a "catchword that functions vaguely as the ungrounded and "floating signifier" for a broad and variegated critical discourse," emerging from the desire to disrupt the "traditional notion that the body is whole" while at the same time it "is predicated

on a naturalized sense of the body's previous and privileged wholeness" (209-210). Sobchack's objections align with a disability studies perspective—as I said earlier, not just challenging the attribution of disability to marginalized groups, but challenging the construction of disability itself; challenging not just social norms, but the function of normativity. I hope to show that these shifting prosthetic relations with respect to meaning, the body, and disability are the paradigm for rhetoric itself, the power of discourse always-already generated from disability—not always directed towards a return to some innate biological state of purity and ability. Rhetoric 'as disability' is useful so long as it disrupts this return, this tendency. To rephrase Sobchack and answer her objection, I am advocating for a 'sense of the body's privilege-able partiality and incompleteness.' This is not to say that we are all disabled, or that rhetoric is disabled, but to embrace a non-normative discourse/materiality, modestly proposing that such 'signifiers' be tabled not as the natural inverse of 'previous and privileged wholeness' in a normative matrix, but rather as a valorization of alternative 'fleshing-out' and potential re-signification, a shift of meaning and value that might also mitigate the oppression of bodies with disabilities.

I do believe that, in understanding rhetoric through these dispositions, we all might more fully understand the ways normativity constrains our feeling for rhetorical history as well as our available means of persuasion. We are asked to ignore our embodied selves and constrain our expressions of subjectivity. But in the discordant space between embodiment and normativity, we find ourselves and our power to reinterpret rhetoric—as enabled by its prostheses, by the incoherence of its histories and the awkwardness of its postures—and we are empowered to disruptively and subversively enflesh ourselves.

I hope that such expansion of ideas about rhetoric is operative as I travel back into the world of Plato and Aristotle, as I look at Quintilian and Cicero, their descendents in Rome, and as I try to make an argument about the lingering impact of their theories of rhetorical normalcy, and at the ways we might amplify the tension that rocks their rigid formulations of rhetorical facility. Picture, once again, Austin's mapping of the rhetorical body. The work here is to search for other bodies and other rhetorics in the oblique angles of Austin's schema, in the curves and recursivities that are not easily seen in the sphere of rhetoric that he so geometrically creates.

EDUCABLE BODIES

In Plato's <u>Gorgias</u>, when Socrates says to Gorgias "you say you can make a rhetorician of any man who wishes to learn from you?" we know that this is both the beginning of a debate, and, according to the Socratic method, the beginning of the end (241). One just expects Socrates to set up his interlocutors and knock them down. Indeed, Socrates is trying to get Gorgias to admit that he can make a man a rhetor so that he can trap him, so that he can then suggest that, if this were the case, if just any man could be a rhetorician, there would be "no need to know the truth about things," and "the ignorant [would be] more convincing among the ignorant than the expert" (242). But there is a drama played out in this dialogue between Socrates and Gorgias that goes beyond the lockstep of the Socratic method, that calls the bodies of these two men to the fore as they verbally spar. This is a debate about what the rhetorical body looks like, and it is a debate charged by notions of normalcy that these men cannot help but dramatically embody as they argue.[9]

At its root, this is a debate that calls up the binaries of nature/culture and body/soul. Socrates argues that rhetoric, if it can be taught to everyone, is not an art but a routine. Rhetoric then can only please the body, can only be learned in the body through this routine, but it is disconnected from the soul. The body is identified with 'common' man, and a class stigma is at work—only the rich can choose to ignore the bodily. Callicles jumps into the conversation and invokes a pedagogical myth that should be familiar to all teachers when he says that "we mold the best and strongest among ourselves, catching them like lion cubs, and by spells and incantations we make slaves of them, saying they must be content with equality…but if a man arises endowed with a nature sufficiently strong, he will shake off all these controls, burst his fetters, and break loose. And trampling upon our scraps of paper…he rises up and reveals himself our master…and there shines forth nature's true justice" (267). The suggestion is that good men are not made, but born. Rhetorical teaching is cast as an unnatural routine which actually suppresses a man's potential and, through the myth of equality, fetters the soul by disciplining the body.

The conversants are certainly alluding to the connections between rhetorical teaching and athletic training when they talk about this 'routine.' As Debra Hawhee and others have pointed out, in the gymnasia, men were taught both to wrestle and to speak, and the training methods in

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[9] For my purposes, it does not necessarily matter if these men ever met. Even if the conversation never took place, our reception of it calls up these bodies and our own. It does matter how we see Gorgias and Socrates embodied, and it does matter which versions of bodily/rhetorical pedagogy they invoke, even if their matter never met.

this site were fluid, the repetition of a hold not just metaphorically blending into the recitation of an argument. In this way, it is possible to see Socrates and Callicles challenging not just Gorgias as a teacher, but Gorgias's teachings, oriented as they are to both body and soul, interchangeably. The image one gets from their characterization is that this form of rhetorical training would create a kind of man-machine, capable of rote recitation, but never capable of understanding or communicating the truth. The *true* rhetorician is born, not trained. Further, it seems as though they are also alluding to the power of desire, always linked to the weaknesses of the body—rhetoric is a routine which "produces gratification and pleasure" (245). Socrates denounces rhetoric, and its physicality and common-ness, as the lesser of philosophy, a matter of the soul and therefore the dominion of Truth. In this quote the allusion to routine, one could say, also invokes the gymnasia and those bodies within it, as this was undoubtedly a site of both bodily training and (perhaps sexual) pleasure. Therefore Socrates and Callicles are doing more than simply trapping Gorgias, and Plato is doing more than simply setting him up as the next straw-man for the Socratic method. They are also putting forward the idea that rhetoric is bodily, and that this body of rhetoric is unruly. It desires, and it desires the body instead of Truth, and therefore it is a faulty, undisciplined body. At the same time, the great man speaking well would have a 'naturally' 'endowed' body, not a physically produced body. Rhetoric would only disable him. Socrates depicts himself as the only man, or at least "one of very few Athenians" who can truly understand and nurture this body (302). He suggests that he is a doctor, while others are cooks—that he understands how to doctor to the soul while others can only "feast you with plenty of sweetmeats of every kind," giving bodily pleasure not health (302). This story constructs a teacher-student relationship that we can all recognize, while it works to produce an impression of rhetoric that has been very difficult to shake: rhetoric is inferior to dialectic and to philosophy, is disconnected from the Truth when it is concerned with the body, because then rhetorical teaching connects to the physical, to desire. And rhetoric is unnatural when, as Callicles says, our teaching is 'content with [the] equality' of these bodies, when it suggests that all can learn.

> Far best is he who knows all things himself;
> Good, he that hearkens when men counsel right;
> But he who neither knows, nor lays to heart
> Another's wisdom, is a useless wight

(Aristotle, <u>Nicomachean Ethics</u> 5).

When Aristotle remixes a quote from Hesiod, turning it into the (translated) catchy rhyme above, he presents it as an argument against educating young men who are, by nature, incapable of fine things, and incapable of grasping principles or knowledge of Truths. He is also suggesting that such young men must work harder to learn. But the essence of the argument, in which he implicitly samples Plato's argument in the <u>Gorgias</u>, is that we must begin from some shared principles about what is good, and not everyone has access to these precepts. Later, in his <u>Rhetoric</u>, he will argue that those who do not intrinsically understand these things are not qualified to speak, they cannot responsibly persuade. Hesiod's 'original' quote might have gone a little bit more like this:

> "That man is altogether best who considers all things himself and marks what will
> be better afterwards and at the end; and he, again, is good who listens to a good
> adviser; but whoever neither thinks for himself nor keeps in mind what another
> tells him, he is an unprofitable man" (<u>Works and Days</u> ll. 293-296).

In this version, the best man is an observer, capable of being-reflectively-in-the-world, able to learn from experience. But clearly, Aristotle has placed emphasis not on experience, or on learning, but on the 'natural' ability to know right from wrong.

In Cicero, this debate about who can learn is reprised and, again, remixed. Analyzing the (retold) back-and-forth between Cicero, Crassus, Antonius and Catalus in <u>De Oratore</u> is a way of re-examining the question of who can learn and, importantly, focusing on the tension surrounding rhetorical norms. Is nature the "chief author" of the orator? (187). If so, how does one teach or learn? In Book One of <u>De Oratore</u>, we recognize a clear delineation of the bodily norms of oratory. Crassus argues that "there are some persons so hesitant in their speech, so inharmonious in their tone of voice, or so unwieldy in the air and movements of their bodies, that, whatever power they possess from either genius or art, they can never be reckoned in the number of accomplished speakers" (34). These are the men and women who inhabit the obtuse angles, or perhaps the uncharted dimensions of Austin's diagram. Yet this is quickly rebutted with the suggestion that timidity and confusion can equal "wonderful modesty" (37). This is then just as quickly rejected, and Crassus concludes that "he who, in short, wants a graceful manner, should be sent off[...]to that for which he has a capacity" (38). It is impossible not to read into this from a modern perspective: this is a statement that sorts classes based on bodily norms, and

it sounds strangely familiar. But Antonius steps into the debate and brings up the case of Demosthenes, reminding his audience that "his voice was so inarticulate that he was unable to pronounce the very first letter of the very art [of oratory]" (80). He argues that Demosthenes overcame "the impediments of nature" (both a speech impediment and the perception that he was effeminate) and "accomplished so much by practice that no one is thought to have spoken more distinctly," cataloguing the ways Demosthenes disciplined himself in order to train his impairments away (80). Martha Rose reminds us that this narrative of overcoming has more than likely been imported into the past, a projection of our desire to see 'heroes' overcome disability, rather than to see disability heroically (2). Certainly, we latch onto the story of overcoming, while we are less likely to accept the argument, and repeat the argument, and emphasize the argument, that timidity, confusion, or modesty are persuasive, or that anyone but a manly man could speak well.

In Bodily Arts, Debra Hawhee's tells the story of Demosthenes twice, and uses the story to argue that bodily impropriety *can* be overcome (and therefore implying that disability *should* be overcome, and that if it isn't, the rhetorical body is invalidated). Hawhee, like Antonius, focuses on the ways that Demosthenes *labors* to overcome his impediments. Hawhee unfolds an image of athletic and rhetorical training as together overlapping in the many rhythms of the gymnasium. In her story, in this space, students were not drilled insomuch as their bodies were "excited to movement" (139). Regulation, in such education, was combined with seduction. Response was conditioned, but via "repeated encounters with difference" (148). Bodies in motion, then, were more than a metaphor for the mobility of rhetoric. Rhetoric and bodies in motion formed one another. Hawhee suggests that we cannot fully understand rhetorical pedagogy unless we strive to better understand its ineluctable connection to the movements of the body. She writes that the student develops a clear idea of what bodies matter through a "habit of 'body reading,' of perceiving desirable qualities and their concomitant values" which we aspire to via "transformation by association" (161).

This desire is indeed what Crassus invokes. Earlier in De Oratore, this reflexive ideality is stated simply: "the proper concern of the orator…is language and power and elegance accommodated to the feelings and understanding of mankind" (20). If 'mankind' (sic) recognizes "any deficiency in the orator [in speech *or* body] it is thought to proceed from want of sense; and want of sense admits no excuse[…]if any fault is found in a speaker, there prevails forever, or at

least for a long time, a notion of his stupidity" (37). 'Body reading,' on one side of the argument in Cicero's <u>De Oratore</u>, and in much of Hawhee's book, is about accommodating one's body to the norm via labor; it is not only about the oneness of mind and body, but it is also about one body. In <u>De Oratore</u>, after Antonius has told the story of Demosthenes, Crassus asks if he isn't simply making the weak side stronger: "you make our orator a mere mechanic" (81).[10] Hawhee suggests that 'mechanics' are inseparable from rhetorical learning, or perhaps that rhetorical learning is not simply 'mechanical' when it is embodied. Yet in both <u>De Oratore</u> and in <u>Bodily Arts</u>, 'mankind' is to have been trained to recognize aberrance from the norm and punish it, while men are to aspire to this norm themselves—and this bodily norm is not a relative mean; these students are striving for absolute bodily excellence. Teachers of rhetoric are to reject those who 'by association' might contaminate the ideal. The good man is educated towards speaking well, which demands embodied perfection.

Though Hawhee subtly alludes to the fact that no single body is ideal, instead insisting that strength is based upon "responsiveness within particular contexts," there is a sense that fitness is closely aligned with ideal bodies (160). While Hawhee cites Judith Butler and Elizabeth Grosz on two separate occasions, she does not engage with their theories of embodiment. She never troubles the idea that rhetorical/athletic training is the performance and production of a specifically gendered and able body. In fact, in twice re-telling the stories of Demosthenes, Hawhee re-inscribes the idea that bodily difference must be overcome. She writes that Demosthenes's overcoming of a stutter and a lame, effeminate body was a lesson to students about the way in which "self-observed, diligent rehearsal, through repetition, refines the rhythm and develops one's capacity to respond in a particular manner—in this case without a stutter, and in a confident 'manly' way" (158). Here, Hawhee's three R's (repetition, rhythm and response) are used in service of powerful normate assumptions about the body—Hawhee's reading strengthens the assumption that only a certain body can effectively communicate. This further tangles rhetorical and bodily ableism.

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[10] In Book Two, Catalus sarcastically re-states this same argument. He suggests that "if it were my intention that a person totally illiterate should be instructed in the art of speaking, I would willingly send him to those perpetual workers at the same employment, who hammer day and night on the same anvil, and who would put his literary food in his mouth, in the smallest pieces, minced as fine as possible, as nurses put theirs into the mouths of children" (128). The suggestion here is that there are *some* teachers who would waste their own time, and the time of their students, trying to make palatable something that certain men simply aren't born with a taste for, aren't born with the capacity to stomach. There is a dig here at other schools and other teachers at the time, also reinforcing a stigma against both the perception of inability or inherent flaws and against those who might accommodate them.

The possibility that Demosthenes's difference could have queered his bodily/rhetorical performance in a generative sense is not addressed—indeed, any such transgressive possibility is ignored. James Fredal, similarly, calls Demosthenes the "Orator Imperfectus" and suggests that, as illustrated by his flaws, "one crack in a well-constructed persona could be titanic" (Rhetorical Action 220). While Fredal richly describes the layers of practice, action and performance that go into 'crafting' this embodied persona, and which Demosthenes employed to 'overcome' his fears, he concludes by writing that "because speech was also always action (delivery), no one with a speech defect, or who was 'soft' or lame could, by definition, be a good speaker" (Rhetorical Action 244). Finally, despite the warnings of other classical historians, we are to read Demosthenes's 'lame' body as something to overcome, never as something rhetorical, and never as something we might all identify with—these tensions are to be erased with labor. Thus, the norms are not challenged but reinforced as they are incorporated. The only way to signify is via the dominant bodily language, by disciplining excess out of the performance via habitual effort. For Hawhee and Fredal, this story fits into the overall emphasis on bodily transformation and strict bodily comportment in their arguments. Indeed, within rhetorical history writ large, we recognize a valorization of the desire to change the body to fit an ideal type. Hawhee sees an acceptance of mental and physical pain as "an enabler of sorts" in this transformation—"no pain, no change" (102). While the ability to 'act' able seems to be accessible to all in Fredal's script, it seems this normate performance is the only way to access "one's cultural capital, one political persuasiveness, even to one's very right to speak" (Rhetorical Action 234). While Hawhee explicitly echoes Elizabeth Grosz's suggestion that seeing the body is a way of recognizing repressed knowledges, she doesn't follow through with Grosz's assertion that "alternative accounts of the body may create upheavals" in our understanding of these knowledges (Volatile 19). There is a sense of the power of the body, yet it is always a sense of the power of the athletic body *over* the weak body—as Hawhee writes, "Demosthenes's training thus emerged out of agonism with others—including [his lame self] as Other" (158). In Fredal's work, while he admits that "gender was not a mutually exclusive binary system…but a matter of degrees" which the rhetor plays within, there is no such spectrum of ability (Rhetorical Action 248). Other bodies must be overcome, and rhetoric (even embodied rhetoric) facilitates this transformation. These authors urge us to accept that disability is simply too natural, too static to afford reinterpretation; that what is 'lame' cannot be positively re-claimed.

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I will suggest that such interpretations cannot hold, because there is inherent and never truly resolved tension around norms of ability. Educators have always worried about bodies, and this worry always centers around and never resolves the desire to exclude difference and thus to create categories of disability. While Hawhee and Fredal write about a rhetorical training and discipline that molds a normative body, much of rhetorical history has ignored even this possibility. Instead, we have a vision of natural rhetorical/bodily 'readymades,' and this selective genetics informs our rhetorical practice to this day. Yet even in antiquity, the norms were negotiable,

When, in Quintilian, Cicero's debate about who can learn is reprised, Quintilian wrestles with the argument within his own mind, in his own words, and upon his own body and those of his students. In the preface to the <u>Institutio Oratoria</u>, he writes that,

> It is to be stated, however, in the first place, that precepts and treatises on art are
> of no avail without the assistance of nature; and these instructions, therefore, are
> not written for him to whom talent is wanting, any more than treatises on
> agriculture, for barren ground (9).

This reads like a further remix of Aristotle and Hesiod, an implied hierarchy of students—and the metaphor of agriculture reinforces the sense that rhetorical talent is natural, not learned, that the rhetorical body sprouts from the earth, it is not formed. He suggest that "a modest amount can be improved by practice…but [these qualities] are often so far wanting that their deficiency renders abortive the benefits of understanding and study" (9). Yet then, in Book One, he writes that "we think men are dull and ignorant…on the contrary, you'll find the greater number of men both ready in conceiving and quick in learning" (11). "Such quickness is natural in man," he argues (10). Qualifying this a bit he writes that "there is no one who has not gained something by study," suggesting that though not everyone can achieve mastery, all can learn (11). And Quintilian squarely locates this debate in the larger argument about ability and disability, the normal and the deviant: "dull and unteachable persons," he writes, "are no more produced in the course of nature than are persons marked by monstrosity and deformities; such are certainly but few" (11). This suggestion echoes Aristotle's treatise <u>On the Generation of Animals</u>, invoking a sense of the natural order of men and beasts and a picture of genetic selection (which Aristotle could be said to have introduced, contrasting with the relative lawlessness of men, gods and 'monsters' in myth). But Quintilian's genetics seem a lot less ableist, and he places the impetus

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for learning upon the teacher, rather than arguing for the expulsion of 'monstrous' students. He writes that "it is generally, and not without reason, regarded as an excellent quality in a master to observe accurately the differences in those whom he has undertaken to instruct, and to ascertain in what direction the nature of each particularly inclines him—for there is talent in an incredible variety, nor are the forms of the mind fewer than those of the body" (116). Quintilian presents a pedagogical imperative to teach to each student's 'natural' good qualities, of which there are an infinite variety, and to 'second-nature' these qualities with culture. Following these statements, then, it is a bit shocking to read, a few pages later, this counter-argument: "this opinion seems to me only partly true," he writes, and concludes simply, unreflectively (and I would suggest unpersuasively) that the great rhetor must have no weaknesses (117). He re-invokes a 'natural' genetic hierarchy, again through an agricultural metaphor, when he says that "we must so far accommodate ourselves to feeble intellects, that they may be trained only to that which nature invites them…but if richer material fall into our hands, from which we justly conceive hopes of a true orator, no rhetorical excellence must be left unstudied" (118). The idea is that the good man speaking well will sprout from the ground or fall from the trees.

DESIRABLE BODIES?

In De Oratore, Cicero revisits the debate about education as he and his brother dreamily recount their own school days. Amd when Quintilian talks about the fatherly role of the teacher, he also may be remembering his two sons, who died at ages ten and five, and for whom he had great expectations (see Watson's Critical Notes). My point is that these were not disembodied texts—texts never are. These somewhat vague and insubstantial biographical details may merely suggest a greater material context. But our reading of these works within the modern culture of No Child Left Behind and, of course, our own beliefs, sensibilities, our sense of boundaries and possibilities as educators and students, also casts vague shadows of lived experience upon the page, moving as our bodies move through these arguments, affecting the light in which we read. In Plato's Phaedrus, I see the debate about rhetorical norms revisited. Here the drama between the bodies of the conversants takes on an even greater importance, and our own fears and desires are open within these texts.

Phaedrus and Socrates act out the tensions of sexual desire in their intercourse, therefore highlighting the ineluctable connection between rhetoric and the body, even as the men fight to disavow this connection, and the fact that they might *want* it. When Phaedrus gives his first

speech on love, Socrates begs for him to reveal the scroll that he hides beneath his cloak. When

he does so, more than a text is unsheathed. As the men take turns reciting speeches about love,

such double-entendre repeatedly brings bodily desire to the surface, pulls aside the cloak to

reveal the true (sub)text. The scroll is at once a phallus, a prosthesis, and both—that is, this

flirting reveals connections between the body and the discourse that cannot be ignored.[11]

When Socrates concludes the dialogue, he brings up several of the themes from the

<u>Gorgias</u>, but with a difference. He now admits that the rhetorician can be like a doctor, so long as

he looks "scientifically" at the soul (515). He also slightly wavers from the insistence that the

good man speaking well is *born*, saying that "if you have an innate capacity for rhetoric, you will

become a famous rhetorician provided you also acquire knowledge and practice, but if you lack

any of these three you will be correspondingly unfinished" (515). Yet what is most remarkable

about this interaction is the lengthy story that Socrates tells in his 'encomium of the lover,' in

which he constructs an elaborate physical metaphor within an image of the soul.

As he is speaking seductively to Phaedrus, Socrates describes two horses in the soul: one

beautiful and virtuous horse, one ugly.[12]

Image 1.4: "Two Horses in the Soul, Within the Body." Jay Dolmage. 2005.

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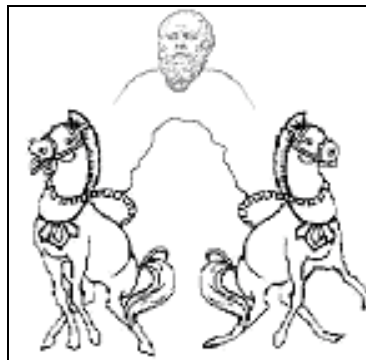
[11] This back-and-forth is played out also in the re-interpretation of Plato, specifically in the work of Eric Havelock, Walter Ong and Jacques Derrida. It is worth noting that Ong, specifically, wrestles with himself on this issue—he notes that while Plato disparaged writing, he also did so as he *wrote*. Further, while the written word might be 'dead,' in that it is not 'animated' by the soul (as Plato would say), it also allows for an 'eternal' life in that it preserves the word and allows it to be re-animated by endless readers.

[12] It is worth noting that the horse is not some arbitrary metaphor: classical historian John Henderson notes that in art, "riding a horse always, anyhow residually, models the control of a violent and dangerous nature by the wit and effort of man" (28). The horse is then an intrinsic part of the symbolic language that inscribes into discourse the struggle between the mind and the body.

Plato states that only when the bad horse has been beaten down (because it can't control itself and goes after the beloved wantonly), "at long last the soul of the lover follows after the beloved with reverence and awe" (500). Importantly, the ugly horse is described as being snub-nosed, as Socrates himself is. Invoking a snub-nosed and ugly horse seems to be a kind of self-deprecation, but it is also an act of identification. This snub-nosed and 'disabled' horse is "crooked of frame, a massive jumble of a creature" and deaf (Phaedrus 499-500). Part of Socrates's seductive strategy, I believe, is to identify with the horse that has no self-control, who follows his passions. The playful strategy of suggestion here, however, also places the rambling horse in the moment: he seems to be saying *he* wants to pursue Phaedrus wantonly, *he* desires the scroll beneath Phaedrus's cloak, even as he condemns this. Through his own rhetoric, Socrates is playfully accomplishing several things: he is insinuating his desire for Phaedrus, a desire that comes from the 'disabled' part of his soul, a part of the soul that he identifies with his own body; he is invoking the argument that the true rhetorician is capable of beating this horse down, even as he himself resists this; he is connecting the soul with the body through his metaphors, creating a sort of syncretic symbolic world in which the unruly body is within the soul, within the body, as in this image:

Image 1.5: "Two Horses in the Soul, Within the Body, Within the Body." Jay Dolmage. 2005.
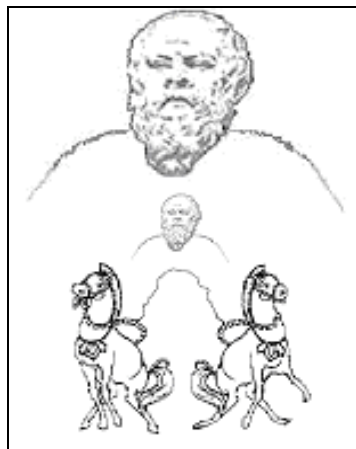
Finally, he casts doubt on his own final thesis, that one must look 'scientifically' at the soul, by allowing his own cloak to slip, so to speak, by identifying with the horse that is crooked of frame, neither disciplined nor naturally beautiful, and therefore he highlights the problematic tension at the root of our accepted Western version of rhetorical history, that story that I earlier suggested it is so difficult to escape. That is, do we really believe that rhetoric has no body?

Secondly, do we truly believe that rhetorical education, even if it is embodied, must be about 'beating down' desire, erasing the body, beating down either the 'disabled' horse, the 'effeminate' Demosthenes, or the lion cub of Callicles story? I would actually suggest that we do not believe this and we have not acted consciously on such a belief. Yet until we more closely examine rhetoric's body, and then make an effort to put forward different rhetorical bodies that might re- invest in the body rhetorically, then we miss out on the possibility of expanding rhetoric so that it might embody our inherent differences, so that we might recognize our imperfections as meaningful and desirable. My argument is that we cannot recognize Socrates, nor could he recognize himself, nor can we recognize the tradition in which he is central, without harnessing *both* horses.

CONSTRUCTING (IN)CONTINENCE

In order to more fully characterize a body of rhetoric, I will return to the metaphor of the body within the soul, yet this time narrated by Aristotle. Following these final scenes, these final discursive positionings of rhetoric's body, I want to again return to the tension that underlies every effort to propose a normative rhetorical body by examining Aristotle's own awareness of the social construction of disability.

In the <u>Nicomachean Ethics</u>, Aristotle discusses the idea of incontinence at great length. He suggests that a soul can be disabled or incontinent: "exactly as paralyzed limbs when we intend to move them to the left turn on the contrary to the right, so it is with the soul; the impulses of incontinent people move in contrary directions" (951). An incontinent person cannot have virtues as he is not "adapted to receive them" (951). There is a parallel between this shadowy idea of the 'incontinent' soul and Plato's image of the chariot within the soul. In both schemes, the body must be overcome by the rational mind. Notably, it is the disabled body that must be harnessed, corrected, or beaten down—whether it is the deaf, snubbed-nose horse or the paralyzed limb. Plato and Aristotle very clearly define another body, the inverse image of this disabled body, and this is the image upon which rhetoric must be transposed. This is the body in perfect moderation, the 'absolute mean' body. According to Aristotle, the rhetorician must both understand that the "excellence of the body is health," must recognize and speak to the proprietary body in the audience in order to be a good rhetorician, and must *also* strive for the proper arrangement of the various parts of his delivery, just as he must have the proper arrangement of the various parts of that body from which he delivers. In the <u>Critias</u>, Plato states

his case with respect to the body of rhetoric quite clearly: "when it is the human form that the artist undertakes to depict, daily familiar observation makes us quick to detect shortcomings and we show ourselves severe critics of one who does not show us the full and perfect resemblance. Well, we should recognize that the same is true of discourses" (1214). Simply, in striving for a discourse that is the perfect resemblance of Truth, this discourse, its delivery, and its speaker are also subject to intense scrutiny, like a sculptural bust on display in the agora.[13]

When Plato refers to the gaze of the public, and the role of daily familiar observation he seems to allude to a kind of body-reading process by which a society establishes norms. He acknowledges that men continually *judge* the bodies of other men. Though Aristotle himself is the master schematizer, the judge and the creator of intricate hierarchies, he also makes an argument that estimations of continence are always a social construction. "Owing to a similarity in the state of feeling people apply the name incontinence, adding in each case what it is in respect of," he suggests, and then he asks "who is incontinent in the unqualified sense?" (1044). In this question, we see Aristotle hinting at the fact that incontinence as a 'disability' was as much a matter of attribution as of biology—as much a rhetoric as a science. He allows that disability, and all judgments of difference, are a naming, an attribution with a particular rhetorical effect. Of course, he goes on, in almost all of Book XII of the <u>Nicomachean Ethics</u>, to define the types of incontinence, to run through all of the possible qualifications about the incontinent character. He attempts to stabilize the rhetorical effect of labeling by laying out precisely who is incontinent in the unqualified sense. Aristotle's ableism works, rhetorically, to designate what knowledge qualifies, even as the philosopher initially allows that such acts of qualification are slippery. What remains, however, and what should stand out in my re-telling of this story, is the equation of rhetoric with discrimination, and with the stratification of bodies. As Sharon Crowley suggests, rhetoric's work is to "point up the interestedness of boundary-drawing and distinction-making" (363), and this is what our re-reading of Aristotle's discussion of continence should do.

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[13] See Lennard Davis's <u>Enforcing Normalcy</u> for a discussion of how the classical bust itself, and our ways of seeing it, reinforce, though tenuously, our desire for completeness and coherence. Such sculptures, of ideal bodies, were also without arms and legs: that we can 'complete' this gestalt from our own sense-memory of the ideal reveals the ways that such bodily ideals function—they rely on our input, on our body-reading as body-writing. That we possess the phantom limb needed to complete the image, and also that we address the body without it, says quite a bit about the inherent incompleteness of the act of artistic signification, and the ways norms function perhaps unconsciously, but can be challenged (as Davis does) when we more reflectively interrogate the 'whole' fragmented picture.

Rhetorical history denies the body and disavows bodily difference. This tradition that has been used in the service of normative ideas that construct disability. Yet we can choose to tell different stories and look for different histories. We can acknowledge the tensions that underlie all of rhetoric—the ways that the body, that our scrolls, our prostheses and our desires, our snub noses and our jangling limbs both *play* into discourse and *are* discourse. We can admit that rhetoric has drawn boundaries, even while we reject these boundaries: the ones that separate mind from body, that separate body from body, the ones that devalue some bodies, and would make other bodies arhetorical.

The task that I face, then, is to try and put forward a vision of rhetoric that doesn't re-inscribe the idea that only a few can learn, and that only a few can doctor to the soul. I face the difficult task of reminding rhetoric that it has a body. Yes, rhetoric has also been used to 'beat down' certain bodies, but a denunciation of rhetoric has also always hinged upon the idea that physical/rhetorical training suppresses the soul, that the soul and the body are opposed, and that the body is inferior because it desires. Rhetorical bodies, to paraphrase Iris Marion Young, always both constrain *and* enable. Also, while theorizing about embodiment is always reliant upon reference to a body-image, it is important to tease out the implications of an embodied rhetorical history while resisting the suggestion that there can be only *one* rhetorical body, and that this body is ideal.

A disability studies perspective on rhetorical history is the best way to productively highlight this tension between rhetoric and the body, between rhetorical constructions of bodies and embodied rhetorics. For this reason, the versions of the stories that I choose to tell about Plato and Aristotle cannot be seen as authoritative. In fact, I intend to tell the stories in a way that allows other tellings to travel back and forth between my own rows of words. Importantly, I hope that other bodies haunt these stories. In re-visiting the exchange between Phaedrus and Socrates, I hope to have provided a more complex reading of the embodiment of classical rhetorical theory. I think this story shows that, through desire, the body is invested rhetorically. In the scroll, and in what the scroll represents, in Socrates's self-referential image of the disabled horse, rhetoric is bodily, as it is embodied. In (perhaps) advocating that this horse be beaten down, we can see how Plato's rhetoric enforces bodily norms. Yet in the veiled possibility that Socrates identifies with the disabled horse, we see that, to affirm the disabled body is to affirm embodied rhetoric.

THE POLITICS OF WRITING THE BODY

One danger in re-telling stories of disability from antiquity is that I might seem to be replacing the texts I examine, the written words of these intercourses, with a supposedly more 'real' interpretation of the bodies of these discourses. There is a common argument, articulated in phenomenological philosophy but also in studies of embodied rhetoric like those of Hawhee and Fredal, that bodily delivery has the presence that the written text lacks. To study performance or delivery or physical education is to place the body in the rhetoric. This seems to echo Plato's argument, perhaps most clearly expressed in the Phaedrus, that speech is superior to writing—that speech is alive. Such an argument is re-invoked by Walter Ong and Eric Havelock, who suggest that writing leads to abstraction and disembodiment. They use this argument to set up a different conclusion, however, suggesting that because writing 'stores' knowledge and thus allows for the building of knowledge, rather than continued rote recital of lore and laws, speech is deficient and delayed, holding the march of intelligence back in the body of the bard. Essentially, they argue that the body arrests knowledge, and that writing frees the mind. Havelock even makes an evolutionary argument. Receding jaw lines and expanding skulls mark the dawn of literate culture: less talking, more thinking (The Muse 100). It is against such arguments, deeply held in Western philosophy, driven home by Descartes specifically, that Hawhee and Fredal argue. In "Plato's Pharmacy," Derrida also critiques the idea that only in speech is rhetoric real. Plato, he says, argued that "logos committed to writing is without its father" ("Plato's" 77). Writing, for those who have read Plato literally, "substitutes the breathless sign for the living voice" of speech ("Plato's" 91). Writing is therefore death.

I would argue that Plato performs a double effacement—he suggests that writing has no breath, but not in order to locate physicality in speech and thus argue for its superiority. For speech to be True, it also must denounce the body. As Derrida sees it, speech, for Plato, "emanates from the interior, from absolute proximity to meaning" ("Speech" 75). When words have been spoken, the speech itself vanishes (as does the body) and meaning stands alone. We are to believe that for Plato, if writing does belong to the *phusis*, it is to the dead body ("Plato's" 105). Speech belongs to immortality, to the soul.

Derrida's argument, in critiquing the Phaedrus, is that speech is no more present or significant than writing, no *more* embodied. This is not to say that neither speech nor writing suggest the body, are haunted by the body. He does not argue that the written word has a

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permanence that speech lacks—he deconstructs the binary between speech and writing altogether. I would suggest that what Derrida describes is an embodied writing that is *prosthetic*. In deconstructing the binary between speech and writing, I suggest he gives a disabled body to both—while Plato might be said to have given soul to speech and death to writing, therefore body to neither. The key to my argument is that the 'body' Derrida gives to signification is deconstructive to norms of ability *as* it refuses absolute presence. Derrida calls for a body image that is a "graphics of supplementarity…which supplies, for lack of a full unity, another unit that comes to relieve it, being enough the same and enough other so that it can replace by addition" (Of Grammatology 168). Such a body image may seem 'dead' if we want to invest living with transcendence and with ideality, if we choose to believe in the perfection of discourse, the soul of the spoken word. Yet, when we affirm disability, when we recognize rhetoric as prosthetic, as issuing forth from our imperfection, then we also see imperfection as embodied life itself. Derrida writes that writing is "errancy as such, mute vulnerability to all aggression" ("Plato's" 124). Writing "has a blindness to do with it…hasn't a damn sight to do with it" ("Plato's" 135). He argues that "only out of something like writing…the strange difference of inside and outside can spring…one would then have to bend [*plier*] into strange contortions what could no longer even simply be called logic or discourse" ("Plato's" 103). There are traces of stereotypical constructions of disability in this discourse—writing is vulnerable and oblivious. Yet there are also traces of the affirmation of that which *springs* from disability, those meanings which our imperfect bodies unconventionally traffic.

In Jasper Neel's analysis of Plato and Derrida, he urges his reader to "pull down the tapestry and reveal Plato in the game with the rest of us where writing tells him what he thinks he knows, not the other way around" (29). My argument is that when we pull down the tapestry, we also pull back Plato's cloak and we recognize his 'scroll'—the text as prosthesis. The writing of the Phaedrus or of this scroll, Neel contends, tells Plato (and us) more about confusion than it does about logic. The Phaedrus, according to Neel, is "a divided, diseased inscription" (56), not just because it is conflicted, as I have shown, but also because all 'texts' are conflicted, a very contagious disease. He pushes this bio-metaphor when he suggests that "any living creature ought to be constructed like a discourse, with its own language, as it were; it must lack either a pre-existing sign system or group of sign users; it must have an infinite series of differences so that it can come to know itself through differing from itself and thus be whole by being part"

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(30). This statement succinctly sums up the twist I want to give to the normative body-rhetoric of antiquity, the normative body-rhetoric we have canonized. Neel directly reverses Socrates's statement that "any discourse ought to be constructed like a living creature, with its own body, as it were; it must not lack either head or feet; it must have a middle and extremities so composed as to suit each other and the whole work" (Phaedrus, 128), a quote with which I began this chapter. But in this reversal, Neel and Derrida seek not to transfer the demand for ideality, for proportion and presence, for a normative body, from speech to writing, or from discourse to the body, or body to discourse. In reversing the statement, both Neel and Derrida recharge it, demanding the transience and the continual play of difference of embodied signification. As I said earlier, and as Neel and Derrida confirm, the body is invested rhetorically. In speech *and* in writing, rhetoric is bodily, as it is embodied. Derrida would insist that speech cannot have a presence that writing lacks, because writing-in-general comes before speech, "the graphic has always-already begun" (Of Grammatology 165). I would argue that the graphic is always-already traced through the bodily, and therefore affects/effects the prosthetic transfer between our fragmented bodies and our twisting communication. This embodiment does not represent either transcendence or presence, but rather the imperfection of speech, writing and embodiment. Therefore, to affirm the disabled body, to recognize the prostheses of signification, is to affirm embodied rhetoric. I hope to suggest a few of the ways that this reversal, this deconstruction, need not be imposed *upon* rhetorical history, but has always been a part of rhetoric, affirming its partiality.

MYTHOLOGICAL DISABILITY, TRANSFORMATIVE RHETORICS

As I have suggested, and hopefully shown, one way to begin to re-animate disability in antiquity, to revisit rhetoric from the perspective of disability, is to look critically at the stories of disability that we have held onto, and perhaps bent towards our own beliefs, finessed around our own fears, and morphed with distinctly modern morals.

In Homer himself, we are to see a blind man who is a 'gifted' poet and seer, his great memory and his story-weaving capabilities making up for his defect. Dustin Hoffman's depiction of Raymond Babbitt in the movie *Rain Man* provides a modern analogue: Raymond is autistic, but is capable of remarkable mathematical calculations and feats of memory.[14] Homer was blind, but boy could he remember—and then spin—stories. The connection between the disability and

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[14] His gift is then used by his brother Charlie for Charlie's personal gain.

the compensatory ability is intentional, and this perpetuates the idea that a person with a disability will always have some remarkable skill or talent. In the field of disability studies, much work has been done to reveal the ways that such depictions of disability work to manage the fears and projections of the supposedly non-disabled audience. The effect is that the general public doesn't have to focus on the disability, or challenge the stigma that this disability entails, but instead re-focuses attention towards the 'gift.' In Greek myth, Tiresias is also given a gift from the gods to compensate for having been blinded—his gift is omniscience, a talent which he uses to resolve disputes between the sexes and to foretell the future. (Below, I will more specifically address the stories of his blinding.) The stereotype that disability is a punishment interacts with the demand that people with disabilities compensate for or overcome their difference. The message is that people with disabilities deserve to be disabled, and then also deserve to be disadvantaged, unless they can efface their difference, a difference which, if it isn't overcome, reinforces the cultural fear of disability. One way to digest disability is to believe that a lack is erased by something extraordinary. This works as a management of the fears of the temporarily able-bodied (if/when I become disabled, I'll compensate) and it acts as a demand placed upon disabled bodies (you better be very good at something, preferably classical piano or brain-contorting mathematics). The stories we tell ourselves about disability then translate such hopes and imperatives into rhetorical action. But I hope to show that the different versions of the myths of Tiresias also show something about the tension around such cultural stories. These stories do illustrate how our chosen versions of rhetorical history constrain or deflect our attention away from bodily difference, but they also should remind us of the ways that the imposition of a bodily ideal results in a tension that underlies the very idea of rhetoric—a potentially combustible heat generated from the push and pull between discursive or narrative suggestions and embodied realities. These myths are all evidence of prosthesis. They are incomplete, shifting and variously invested significations, each inspired by and driven by disability. I hope to isolate and stir up some of this trouble now.

Susan Jarratt writes that despite the official view that myth was rote and didactic, there is evidence that myths were sites of conflict, conflict "of the kind rhetoric would eventually be formed to negotiate" (35). Mythical discourse, in her view, "is capable of containing the beginnings of…public argument and internal debate" (35). Conversely, Eric Havelock writes that the performance of myth—the oral, repeated iteration of the myth—committed stories to the

"cultural encyclopedia" (Preface 123). I'd like to challenge Havelock's definition by suggesting that there were several editions of this encyclopedia. This is not to suggest that ancient society didn't look for the "shape of the typical" in myth (Preface 159). Indeed, the performance of myth was said to lull the audience into near hypnosis, and according to Jarratt, "the present [was] seamlessly interwoven into the past" (33). Yet even though the myths themselves may not have changed radically from reading to reading, I want to suggest that they did change over time—as any cultural encyclopedia must. This change was more than a complex game of telephone. It was interested, contradictory, atypical; it was rhetorical.

Further, our reception of the myths of the 'blind seer' Tiresias, for instance, reveal as much about our own modern interpretive biases for disability as they do about the attitudes towards such characters at the time of the myth's telling. As Martha Rose writes, such "myths and tales reflect truths *and* anxieties about sight and blindness [as well as other disabilities] from the ancient world" (2). That is, myths were (and are) sometimes used to reflect societal values, but also to exorcise, project, imagine and negotiate. Tiresias's story is one of compensation and of overcoming: after he is blinded, Athena cleans his ears so well that he can understand the notes of birds, and follow the divine symbolism of their songs and their flight (Apollodorus 3.6.7). As Luc Brisson suggests, figures with successive dual sexuality (sex which changes over time, rather than 'hermaphroditism') are often seen as "mediators" (115). Tiresias's power of ornithomancy is allowed because of his transition (126). He also has a special, somewhat magical staff that helps him get around—in one story he also has a slave to lead him along (Antigone 910-11). These aids function to negate the stigma of *his* disability, without negating the stigma of disability more broadly. Here, the prostheses don't figure into a holistic sense of his embodied self—as a human who, like all of us, incorporates various tools, media and machines in order to interact with the world and with others. Instead, the suggestion is that people with disabilities have other *super* abilities (and if they don't they *should*); and that with the aid of technology it can seem as though *they aren't disabled at all.* The rhetorical effect is an erasure of disability—it is not acceptable; one can only be seen positively when disability disappears.

Robert Garland comes at disability another way: He suggests that the stories of compensation and overcoming hide not the possible positive value inherent in disability, but simply mask the unequivocal negativity of having a disability. In doing so, he strips disability of all possible positive social value. Striving for an improbable halting of signification, Garland

writes that those who told the myth of Tiresias as 'seer' wouldn't have suggested that the blind were actually employed in "poetry, music and seercraft" in ancient society (34). He argues that people with disabilities "more likely relied on charity as their disability disqualified them from work" (34). Of course, this statement directly clashes with Rose's point—in her reading of Lysias—that charity was not 'rewarded' by the courts based upon physical ability or disability as 'impairment.' One would not have to perform one's body before the courts to qualify for charity, as the 'cripple' in Lysias's speech is said to have done, defending his right to receive a small pension in front of the courts. Instead, one was judged based on one's ability to work, with a disability or without, and certainly the Lysias speech reveals this. Victoria Wohl troubles this reading, and shows how interesting, rhetorically, it is to read Lysias's "For the Cripple" as a script for the cunning bodily performance of disability. Yet Wohl's analysis suggests that Lysias wrote the speech, and the disabled man performed it, to "make the crippled body speak for itself" ("Impossible Metonymy" n.p). The problem, of course, is the idea that this body can only say certain things: that, like the script created by Jerry Lewis for the children on his telethon, the language of disability relies on a semiotics of pity which demands to be answered with charity, that a disabled body should be scrutinized for diagnosis, and the rhetorical listening that we do *to* disability is like a medical examination. The axis of persuasion here balances not just perceptions of *who* is disabled, but also assumptions about what society should *do* with *them*.

In Garland's version of the Tiresias myth, he is arguing against the story's implicit representation of the character's power, based on the assumption that no person with a disability could hold a socially valued role. Of course, in countering such representations, rhetoric can swing the emphasis back the other way. For example, Martha Rose wrote that "the Greeks did not perceive of a category of physical disability in which people were a priori banned from carrying out certain roles and compartmentalized into others" (2). The ableist reading of this history holds that it was impossible to have seen disability as positive, and this historiography also writes a script for the disabled body to perform—as in Wohl's reading, these scripts often conform to stereotypes and therefore might be revised.

Rather than choosing any one interpretation from the above readings of the myths of Tiresias, together they generate possibility from their tension. That is, I'd argue that just as the meaning of Tiresias is currently contested, it was contested in Greece. In fact, his constant metamorphoses—from man to woman and back to man again, from sighted to blind to super-

hearing—is a metaphor for the push and pull of symbolic forces upon the cultural *idea* of disability, of the body and its tenuous boundaries, and the myths were the site for this contestation.

In this final section of my first chapter, I will try to provide an example of how we might read rhetorical traditions through a normative matrix, akin to the gendered matrix that Judith Butler refers to. Western notions of materiality are framed and screened by long-held viewpoints about sex and sexuality, specifically through binaries that privilege male over female, and which operate through phallogocentrism. As Ann Fausto-Sterling writes, paraphrasing Butler, "the matter of bodies cannot form a neutral, pre-existing ground from which to understand the origins of sexual difference…to talk about human sexuality requires a notion of the material. Yet the idea of the material comes to us already tainted, containing within it pre-existing ideas about sexual difference" (Sexing 22). I hope to suggest that, alongside and always in concert with this screening of 'matter' through a gendered matrix is a framing of the cultural and corporeal being through a normative matrix. Norms might be seen to act as terministic screens, to paraphrase Burke--reflections, selections and deflections of 'reality' (Language 45). Mythologies and biologies materialize only ever through the matrix of pre-existing though rhetorically shifting and negotiable ideas about disability and ability. Importantly, I'll suggest that disability functions as the ground against which normative imperatives and performances come to shout and march. While this might be seen to reverse Butler's suggestion that privileged positions become the ground against which all else is read, I'd suggest that the normative is still held as ideal, yet evades material analysis while ascribing a negative surplus of materiality to disabled bodies and minds. I'll argue that these demands for normativity focus inordinate attention upon aberrancy while the (only ever) masquerading performances (never fully) satisfying these directions go under-examined. Looking, in particular, at 'origin' stories of dual sexuality, I'll suggest that constructions of human purity demand monsters, but that the supposedly abject specters of trans-sexuality and disability might be rhetorically re-read through gendered and normative screens.

In Hermaphrodite, Marie Delcourt writes that the "most striking case" of transexuality "is that of the soothsayer Tiresias, born a boy (and later becoming a woman), who was to become a man, fabulously old" (Hermaphrodite 33). Tiresias represents a "kind of *successive androgyny*" through the "psychological aura" of which "we can approach the ideas which the Greeks

associated with bisexuality" (34 italics hers). In Graves's summary of the stories in Apollodorus, Ovid and Pindar, he juggles the varying versions of the myths of Tiresias, revealing the many stories of his metamorphoses. In one take, the originally male Tiresias's sex is changed because he sees two serpents in the act of coupling and, when the female attacks him, he kills it—"immediately he was turned into a woman, and became a celebrated harlot" (II, 2). Not only is the male Tiresias's punished for stumbling across a sexual scene, but zhe[15] is made a harlot—the transition between sexes is sexualized. In this take, "seven years later he happened to see the same sight again at the same spot, and this time regained his manhood by killing the male serpent" (II, 11). In another version of the story, Aphrodite turns Tiresias into an old woman because he doesn't judge her the winner in a beauty contest (II, 11). As for Tiresias's blindness, the stories become even more tangled and, importantly, the myths remain sexually *charged*. Firstly, the stories are about sexual roles and norms—from questions of pleasure to questions of life and death. Secondly, they are charged insofar as sexual 'polarity' runs along an alternating current. In one story, a young male Tiresias is blinded by modest Athene, because he sees her naked—when "one day he accidentally surprised her in a bath [and] she laid her hands over his eyes and blinded him, but gave him inward sight by way of compensation" (Graves I, 98; also in Plutarch, Alcibiades 15). In another story, Zeus and Hera argue over who receives more pleasure from love-making, men or women. Tiresias decrees that "If the parts of love-pleasure are to be counted as ten; Thrice three go to women, only one to men" (Ovid 320). Hera is so enraged that she blinds him, and Zeus, to compensate, grants him the power of prophecy. He later uses this gift to predict that Narcissus will "live to a ripe old age, provided he never knows himself" (I, 286); also to reveal to Queen Iocaste that her husband Oedipus has killed his own father and married her, his mother (II, 11); also to give Odysseus advice about sacrifices and to prophesy his fate—he will not die peacefully of old age (Homer, Odyssey Murray trans., xi). One thing remains static in all of the tellings of Tiresias's story, regardless of the order of his sex changes,

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[15] I use the personal pronoun 'zhe' to represent Tiresias's 'dual' sexuality at this stage in the myth. I could also use the term 'they' to refer to Tiresias, drawing attention to hir doubleness, or I could use she/he. I choose zhe and hir because they suggest a new language, reducing or avoiding the binary logic and the masculine privilege sedimented in the King's English. To use him/her would be to reinsribe the binary's division into two definitie categories. To use 'they,' though this is the title of choice for many transgender people, also suggests a kind of excessiveness as it also confuses (perhaps positively) the reader. Interestingly, in the Greek myths, Tiresias is always essentialized as masculine, regardless of hir 'form.' As Thomas Browne suggests, "the Psyche, or soul, of Tiresias [was] of the masculine gender" (83). Browne's use of the word 'gender,' here is one of the first recorded in English, and was used to be able to mark Tiresias as 'male' by reading the soul rather than the organs. Browne quotes the original Greek, from Homer, suggesting that such division is classic.

regardless of the sequence of his loss and gain of 'sight.' This is his long life. He lives on even longer when we begin to re-consider this mythology as a contestation that has bearing on our modern conceptions of gender, ability and (thus) rhetoric itself. These stories are a site for the rhetorical contestation of norms.

Delcourt suggests that "in the folklore of all nations there is a danger in the sight of snakes copulating" (Hermaphrodite 37). On the other hand, "in the classical world and elsewhere, serpents confer the gift of prophecy" (Hermaphrodite 38). In some versions of the story of Athena's granting Tiresias gift of super-hearing, serpents clean his ears. Delcourt's intention, in shuffling the order of cause and effect in her interpretation is to suggest that the changes Tiresias's undergoes were *both* punishment and reward. That is, "if the explanations which the Ancients found for the prophetic gift on the one hand, for the change of sex on the other, are interchangeable…[we should] relate both to another and wider explanation in which each can find a place" (Hermaphrodite 39). Her explanation is that "the legend of Tiresias seems to be a Greek interpretation of the artificial androgyny of the shamans" (Hermaphrodite 42).[16] "Are we rash in thinking that bisexuality," she asks, "had a positive value, bound up with human aspirations to perpetual life" and to shamanic knowledge? (Hermaphrodite 42). Once this question has been asked, of course, once we stumble upon it, we are all given the gift of a different kind of sight.

Image 1.6: "Sleeping Hermaphrodite." Copy. c. 3rd-2nd cent.

The myths of Hermaphrodite and Hermaphroditos[17], similar to the myths of Tiresias, offer the possibility of a positive value for bisexuality, and specifically for transsexuality.[18] We

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[16] This link, in some ways, diminishes the symbolism of blindness; it turns blindness into a metaphor instead of revealing it as a common condition that Tiresias simply responds and adapts to. Martha Rose suggests that blindness would have been so common in the ancient period (imagine our world without glasses), that it wouldn't have much significance—"some blind people were venerated; some were castigated; most went about their business" (80). It follows that more extreme stories of blinding have survived: "stories about ordinary people with vision fading from cataracts are not the stuff of legend" (80). For this reason, we might proceed with seeing 'blindness' as a symbol, albeit a symbol of ability, while we keep in mind the interaction between myth and reality—indeed, the connection between myth and body, a rhetorical connection, is essential to this discussion.

[17] Hermaphrodite and Hermaphroditos are two names for a very similar mythical figure. The names are not used interchangeably, but rather different story-tellers use different names. It might be suggested that Hermaphrodite more specifically refers to the union of Hermes and Aphrodite, while the myths of Hermaphroditos don't refer to this union, yet this rule doesn't hold across all of the stories.

[18] I will clarify here that "what the ancients termed androgyny is apparent hermaphroditism, or hypospadias, where only the external organs are abnormal" (Delcourt, 44). But when the ancients "refer to a change of sex, they are

might see Hermaphrodite as the symbol of transsexuality, a union and confusion of sex and gender, the figure of the *concept* itself—Hermaphroditos might be seen as the character enacting the tension around this symbol, a mythical character used by Plato and Ovid, for instance, in narratives which ascribe intentions and effects to stories of sexual ambiguity and transition. For all intents and purposes here, I would suggest that we see Hermaphrodite and Hermaphroditos as one and the same. As I will explain below, there was a cult devoted to this mythical figure, and this celebration troubles the idea that transgendered or transsexual individuals were seen as deformed and disabled, as monsters. As soon as Delcourt has mentioned the possibly positive recognition of bisexuality, she cautions that the majority of evidence suggests that "an abnormal formation of the generative organs [did] seem to the ancients the *extreme* of monstrosity" (Hermaphrodite 43 italics mine). Yet one must attempt to move laterally around 'the majority of evidence' to truly understand the hope Delcourt alludes to—the hope that there are means to transgender the mythical and thus the rhetorical tradition.

Marcel Detienne and Giulia Sissa, in The Daily Life of Greek Gods, in tracing the etymology of Hermaphrodite as an embodied symbol, explore the meanings behind hir lineage. As a symbolic compound, Hermaphrodite is seen as the child of Hermes and Aphrodite. Both of hir parents were Gods who represented sexuality and virility. Aphrodite, for her part, was the god of marriage and making love (*aphrodisiadzein*), and in her path creatures were "impelled to intermingle their limbs and bodies" (Detienne and Sissa 230). Aphrodite embodies erotic power (Detienne and Sissa 37). Her body is formed from an actual sperm and her son is Priapus, he of the "great tool" (Detienne and Sissa 237). The authors suggest that Aphrodite is also highly ambiguous, even before she 'merges' with Hermes. She is sometimes represented as a black goddess with a poppy in one hand, an apple in the other, representing death and life at once (Detienne and Sissa 163). There are also sculptures of a bearded Aphrodite, which can be read as confusing, except that her role as god of making love links her forever to the phallus (and the beard is the outward sign of this cloaked part)—love-making governed at the time by an intense phallocentrism. As Detienne and Sissa point out, the phallus "was at once a fabricated object and

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simply describing the moment when the real sex, undisclosed at birth, is revealed…the two phenomena, sexual ambiguity and evolution from one form to another, are thus one and the same thing and appear equally maleficent" (44). What we call bisexuality is more wrapped up with the idea of sexual preference. What we consider to be transsexuality is more closely related to the Greek ideas of sexual ambiguity, and changes of sex. For my purposes, I will not distinguish between 'natural' changes of sex and 'chosen' sex change or sex/gender performance. Instead, I'll blur these political and semantic distinctions along a continuum of transgender/transsexuality.

a body-object that operated on an eminently day-to-day basis and was very much the center of a packed configuration of divine powers" (231). Thus, when women 'chopped' the phalli off of statues of Hermes in a famous uprising during the Adonia festival in ancient Athens, they were also intensely re-signifying (see Fredal, "Herm-Choppers"). For these same reasons, there is eminent symbolism in the merging of Hermes and Aphrodite. Delcourt suggests that, as the herm-chopping undermined phallic rule, "the cult of the god Hermaphrodite perhaps helped to undermine gradually the old terror of maleficent androgyny" (Hermaphrodite 45). Where the Adonia uprising scarified the mantle of phallogocentrism—the unquestioned, automatic alliance between the penis and the Word—Hermaphrodite challenges the gonadal basis/bias of subjectivity by meaning something else. That said, the figure of Hermaphrodite tip-toed along the wafer-thin edge between myth and reality. Delcourt writes that "androgyny is at the two poles of sacred things. Pure concept, pure vision of the spirit, it appears adorned with the highest qualities. But once made real in a being of flesh and blood, it is a monstrosity" (Hermaphrodite 45). The other conflict, of course, is that Hermaphrodite both blurs and reinforces the distinctions between male and female. Hir cult members celebrated a feast on the fourth day of every month at which men and women exchanged clothes (Delcourt, Hermaphrodite 47). Yet we are also led to believe that zhe symbolized sexual union between men and women, thus reinforcing their polarity, and that the exchange of clothes at the festival was a celebration of 'male' virility transposed onto a 'female' body, or at best a carnivalesque catharsis and immediate re-integration into the old masculine economy.

The myths of Hermaphroditos also pose different possibilities for the origin of this character, moving away from the representation of a merger between Hermes and Aphrodite, and suggesting an altogether different origin and transition. The myth is taken up famously in Plato's Symposium, and the story is used by Aristophanes to pose an original and essential, perfect fusion between men and women, two equal halves, symmetrical, a reduction to sameness. Aristophanes doesn't refer directly to Hermes or Aphrodite, but instead suggests that, "human nature was originally one and we were a whole, and the desire and pursuit of the whole is called love. There was a time, I say, when we were one, but now because of the wickedness of mankind God has dispersed us" (Symposium 473). He suggests that, without much mention of the fate of women (except to say that women who took too much womanliness away in the division tended to be too much with other women), men tended in two directions away from the state of original

unity. If they took away too much that was androgynous from the union, they would never be satisfied, these individuals would be aimless and overly desirous. But if they took away enough man from the union, they might seek and find something akin to the pure union that they had fallen from. In the words of Aristophanes, these manly men, "being slices of the original man…hang about men and embrace them, and they are themselves the best of boys and youths, because they have the most manly nature" (Symposium 475). These manly men become statesmen, uninfected by femininity.

Socrates then repeats a speech taught to him by Diotima. The speech is read commonly as an origin myth which removes the maternal role of woman, renouncing the body. Socrates' assumption of Diotima's voice, and the message that this speech conveys, reinforce the elision of the feminine. The performance then stands in contrast to Aristophanes's posing of the perfect union, yet the speech seems to be in agreement with his conclusions—that masculinity impels virtue and even procreation, that femininity is too bodily and desirous (Weil, 28). Two stories, one removing procreative power from the feminine, one renouncing the feminine influence within the ambiguously gendered body, seem confluent in their rhetorical purposes. Yet the conclusions are disorienting—it is difficult to be sold on the efficacy of measuring manliness, especially as the rejection/abjection of femininity seems like a case of 'protesting too much.' The effect is that the transsexual figure represents purity, while zhe also represents what Victoria Weil labels a "confusion at the origin of desire" (19). In the Symposium, the figure of Hermaphroditos impels a debate about love, virtue, and sexuality. Freud and Lacan, for instance, read the Hermaphroditos of the Symposium as a marker of a world before love, love being the fall from the primal wholeness of hir fusion into division, male and female. Supposing these roots for love, of course, tables heterosexuality as the only mathematics of desire…at the same time as we become more aware of the ways that a remaindered ambiguity signifies.

Ovid's use of the myth of Hermaphroditos similarly functions to discipline sexuality. Ovid suggests that Hermaphroditos's state is the result of "the negative consequences of desire" (Weil 18). That is, the negative consequences of the wrong kind of desire. In his story, the feminine nymph Salmacis advances on Hermaphroditos, as *he* is swimming in a lake. Salmacis is to symbolize aggressive female desire, preying on Hermaphroditos, who is to represent male passivity, thereby completing a binary of non-normative sexuality. Salmacis plays a butch role, Hermaphroditus is fey. When Salmacis latches onto him, they become one, as a "copulative

compound" (Weil 71). Their union is evidence that failure of any man to assume an active sexual role, and the failure of any woman to cede to passivity, would result in sanctions.

Of course, we can't jump too quickly to the conclusion that these stories of intersexuality function only as grotesque threats of disfigurement aimed at the sexually improper, or as tales of compulsory heterosexuality. The final speaker of the <u>Symposium</u> asks us to come to a different conclusion. Alcibiades parades into the conversation wearing a violet garland and ivy crown, drunken and shouting. He tells a story about his love for Socrates which leaves Socrates speechless—as Weil argues, Alcibiades "flaunts the asymmetry of unrepressed sexuality and the irresolvable difference within—being *in* difference" (30). He flaunts his own feminine scent, and celebrates the "holes, protrusions and paroxysms of the body" (30). He refuses to allow the Hermaphroditos myth to cover over sexual difference, or to represent a lack of desire, instead performing a sexual ambiguity that leads to speechlessness, perhaps because the phallocentric, heterosexual symbolic economy has been disrupted. These three speeches, then, present some evidence of the rhetorical wrangling over the significance of the body, as well as powerful use of the body rhetorically.

Delcourt, for her part, traces a history in which the "growing strength of a myth of bisexuality was able, by the fourth and third century B.C.E. to overcome a repugnance probably never completely uprooted" (<u>Hermaphrodite</u> 48). She also suggests that the story of Hermaphrodite being the child of Hermes and Aphrodite could have simply been an invention used to explain hir name, that in fact Hermaphrodite was simply a God of bisexuality, later dressed up to signify male and female sexual union at the same time, as a kind of embodied portmanteau (46). Finally, in artistic representations of Hermaphrodite, Delcourt suggests that in, for instance, an image of the deity pulling up hir skirt to 'unveil' hirself, a "homosexual dream expresses itself without a doubt" while concurrently Hermaphrodite is pure symbol: "the double being a symbol of abundance, richness, a promise of eternity" (<u>Hermaphrodite</u> 65). The sculpture of "Sleeping Hermaphrodite," above (Image 1.6), performs a similar double-signification. Approached from one side, we encounter a sleeping woman, classically vulnerable, a sexual object (this pose repeated throughout history for similar effect—think, for instance, of Gauguin's "Spirit of the Dead Watching"). Once we move, physically, around to the other side of the sculpture, we are moved, symbolically, into another sphere; we see something

else. One (desired) effect might be that the assumed fixity of our bodily attractions is challenged.

Yet the significations of this sculpture, and of the (rhetorical) bodies in these stories seem too numerous to sort. These myriad conflicts open up huge dilemmas, not because we cannot understand these messages, but because they may *close down* the possibility of generating new and multiple transgressive significations. What is needed in response to this is a *more* transnormative logic than the one that may confuse us in these stories. That is, we need to queer *our* side of the rhetorical relationship, resisting the need to close such stories down symbolically.

Michelle Ballif, in an article on the possibility of "Listening with a Transgendered Ear," suggests that the rhetorical audience must re-gender itself as both Hermes and Aphrodite in order to transgender the symbolic and subvert the tradition in which rhetoric focuses on the fulfillment of the speaker's desires. In the tradition she delineates, there is a sexualized relationship between speaker and audience, but one in which the listener must "receive the seed" while the speaker is the "phallic plant[er] of thoughts" ("Listening" 53). Her agenda is to "make 'men' and 'women'—as concepts—illegible" ("Listening" 60). Thus she looks to Hermaphrodite, a "gender outlaw" who, hopefully, doesn't reproduce and reify gender laws. Ballif suggests that, following upon the dilemmas mentioned above concerning the stories of Hermaphroditos, zhe can be seen as representing a duel/dual form of difference instead of either/or. That is, we need to resist, in our reading of Hermaphroditos and in our rhetorical listening, the "insistence on clarity [which] demands that we be transparent to one another (and therefore easily commodified)" ("Listening" 64). Hermaphroditos, as symbolic of discourse, breaks down Plato's idea that speech must be divided, composed, proportional, and thus clearly and easily read.

What Ballif succeeds in doing in "Listening," and in her larger intellectual project, is to suggest spaces in which we can find the possibility of re-signifying. While Hermaphroditos's and Tiresias's transformations are read in conflicting ways, thus threatening to make the figures sites of symbolic agonism, such push and pull is also generative. There is danger that their corporeality becomes purely a matter of speculation, that their bodies are transcended by their signification, thus making transsexual and/or disabled bodies sites of symbolic contestation rather than 'real' bodies. Yet, as I mentioned before, Tiresias and Hermaphroditos walk a fine line—it is important to be able to re-signify bodies, even while it is so dangerous to 'sign' them over. Re-reading these myths through gender and normative matrices reveals much. And my

position is that, at least mythologically, re-telling the stories is a way of *avoiding* a 'phallic' implantation of meaning and is instead a way to, as Judith Butler would say, tell the story with "a significant difference, reflexively and prescriptively" (<u>Bodies</u> 118). My suggestion is that Tiresias and Hermaphroditos can be seen—ambivalently—as challenging heteronormativty and ableism.

Elizabeth Grosz, examinging the cultural uses of the hermaphrodite at the "corporeal limits of subjectivity," writes that there "seems to be something intolerable[…]about sexual *indeterminacy*" that "imperil[s] the very constitution of subjectivity according to sexual categories" ("Intolerable Ambiguity" 55, 61, italics hers). Others argue that these categories must be kept in peril, that this indeterminacy is generative. David Halperin has advocated for a queer politics of "non-identity, positionality, discursive reversibility, and collective invention" (122). Robert McRuer and Abby Wilkerson, in "Cripping the Queer Nation," suggest that there is a possibility for such sexual dissent to work concurrently against compulsory able-bodiedness and heteronormativity. That is, refusing to symbolically close down the stories of Tiresias and Hermaphroditos is a way to counteract gender and ability norms, particularly as they function rhetorically. This again calls up Judith Butler, who wrote that "'sex' is, from the start, normative" (<u>Bodies</u> 1). It "not only functions as a norm, but is part of a regulatory practice having a kind of productive power, the power to produce—demarcate, circulate, differentiate—the bodies it controls" (<u>Bodies</u> 1). McRuer and Wilkerson add that in this way gender and ability are indivisible; one cannot have an 'intelligible' gender in this economy without also having an 'intelligible' body—i.e nondisabled. I would add that, as the stories of Tiresias and Hermaphroditos show us, the ambiguously gendered body, which is 'unintelligible' in the normative matrix Butler outlines, is thus (verb) *disabled*. I hope that this connects with Butler's argument that it is equally important to examine "how and to what end bodies are not constructed" (<u>Bodies</u> 16). My work here has been to follow the 'sedimented' as well as the radically transitive constructions of the transgendered as well as the disabled body, *as* they connect with the very rhetoric which would reject and abject them. To do so is to recognize not just the subversive potential for re-mythologizing, but also to generate discursive, rhetorical and physical bodies that resist signification, bodies that will not be fully sexed or normed by discourse, and will thus be enabled.

The figure of Hermaphroditos inspires an intra- and inter-mythical debate. Likewise, Garland allows that "Tiresias's (mutilated) physiological and (enhanced) cognitive condition…hint at the highly ambivalent attitude towards the blind and the inter-sexual" (101). While it is by "no means clear that this is the case," Garland continues, it is "tempting to conclude that the cult which was established in Hermaphrodite's honor would have fostered a somewhat sympathetic attitude towards intersexuals, whose welfare this minor deity was presumably meant to safeguard" (101-102).[19] If we chart the sexual metamorphoses of these two figures, then, the changes in their bodies serve a tripartite purpose. First, they survey the changing and ambivalent attitude of Greek society towards gender and ability norms. Second, these shifts reveal rhetorical complexity by grounding mythology within a rhetorical framework and placing body/gender norms at the center of (what we see to be the origins of) rhetorical contestation.[20] Third, there is meaning negotiated between these 'texts' and their readers: re-telling these stories allows for the performance of a newly contextualized trans-gender and trans-normative rhetoric. In telling these myths—even writing/reading these myths at this moment—the myths reach into and extend from 'real' bodies. It then follows that there can be no static signification of these bodies, or these stories. The name Tiresias means "[zhe] who delights in signs" according to Robert Graves (II 409). Indeed, this name symbolizes both Tiresias's role as seer, but also hir role as shifting signifier. My assertion is that all bodies delight in signs, shift through signification, and that this signification can never be halted by the hegemony of normalcy. Therefore, rhetoric must concern itself with embodiment. And disabled, uneasily gendered bodies might be *the* most typical bodies of rhetoric.

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[19] Garland uses the term intersexual here as a 'nice word,' a more politically correct term, for hermaphrodite. Intersexual is preferred to hermaphrodite, perhaps because of some of the baggage of mythology. But, also, the term hermaphrodite carries stigma from its use as a medical definition: to label a person biologically 'intermediate' between male and female, as though such intermediacy has a balance, as though such a thing could be determined by measuring 'gonadal tissue.' Hermaphrodite also has an (underused) meaning as, simply, something that is a combination of diverse elements—this is actually closer to many mythological stories of the diety as the union between Hermes and Aphrodite who were masculine and feminine, yes, but also were opposing elements—land and sea, for instance. I use transgender here to connote the generative, 'queering' possibility of this identity—addressing the incredulous freezing of gender polarities between which 'intersexual' and 'hermaphrodite' (in its medical use) are to stand. The term transsexual also confronts the medical definition of the intersexual as the 'undersexed'—zhe who cannot be 'sexed' and therefore is seen as under-symbolic in this phallocentric sense. The term transsexual restores sexuality and impels transgressive significations. On the other hand, it also reinvokes the idea that there are two static and polarized sexes. So, I choose to alternate between the terms transsexual and transgendered, in order to call attention to the overlap between sex, sexuality, and gender; and sex, sexuality, and gender norms.
[20] In chapter two, following Susan Jarratt, I'll elaborate on this thesis about mythology as a point of origin for rhetorical contestation in Greece.

CHAPTER TWO: *METIS* AND CUNNING HISTORIOGRAPHY

METIS AND DISABILITY RHETORICS

I've just re-counted and re-negotiated several stories from antiquity that reveal tensions around bodily normativity, and that suggest possible transgressions of the rhetorical norms inscribed in our chosen traditions. But I've been searching in the shadows, and I've been challenging accepted histories. In truth, the essential problem rhetorical history poses to disability studies is absence. First of all, one must face the dismissive conclusions of other rhetorical historians: the idea that disability precludes rhetoricity. The historical record seems to re-inscribe this dismissal—and we have few stories of orators or rhetors with disabilities. In my first chapter, I tried to provide an inventory of representations of disability in canonical rhetorical history while also bending our readings into the apocrypha. In the subtext and the margins of the record, there was much to learn about the 'center'—seeing the effects of the persistent presence of norms, as well as recognizing the subtle, ghost-like presence of a desire for and an acknowledgment of the rhetorical role of disability. I found tension in bodies and—I mean this in a compassionate, generous sense—I hope that I introduced some tension into yours. My first chapter was a brief guided tour through rhetorical history, a moving through and with the bodies of this history. I suggested that we can read embodied rhetoric and bodied rhetorical history as powered by tension around normativity. My argument was that disability has myriad meanings, many of them positive and generative. *Metis*, I hope to show, is the craft of forging something 'practical' out of these possibilities, practicing an embodied rhetoric, changing the world as we move through it.

As I put forward—and as I look backwards for—my own version of an embodied rhetoric, a more inclusive, expansive embodied rhetoric, I want to modify our sense of ourselves and our production of knowledge. This means that I embrace the dissolution of distinctions between body and mind, between body and discourse, and also between the canonical textual history and those actions and stories that might challenge it. I think that the resultant unsteady environment in which I move, and which I condition through my movement, is like the world of *tuche* that the ancients conceptualized: a world of swirling winds, chance and change. In such a world, one must be cunning—one must use *metis*, and this is the embodied knowledge I will both explore and utilize.

In this chapter I hope to more fully illustrate a rhetoric of disability—validating and valuing the possibilities of the non-normative body and thus creating a more expansive

machinery for understanding rhetorical embodiment. I will tell the stories of Hephaestus, a Greek God with a disability—a Greek God who embodied *metis,* the cunning intelligence needed to adapt to and intervene in a world of change and chance. Hephaestus was the famed inventor, the trickster, the trap-builder and machine-creator of Greek myth. His body, despite being 'crippled,' was celebrated, as I will show.[21] I will suggest that Hephaestus's story has been neglected, but that we can now read it as a challenge to stories of rhetorical history that re-inscribe normative ideas about rhetorical facility and about which bodies/minds matter. I will again use theory from the field of disability studies in order to analyze the function of such norms, and to disrupt our acceptance of an ableist view of rhetorical history. Building on growing interest in embodiment within rhetorical studies, this chapter places embodied difference in the driver's seat. I argue that exclusion has been imported into the classical world from our own. As a result, we have been left with a narrow view of the role disability may have played in the period. Thus, telling the stories of Hephaestus allows me to recover a different view of rhetorical embodiment. This is true both in the sense that he provides an image of disability as valued by ancient society, but also because *metis* is a distinctly embodied intelligence. I want to elaborate upon this embodiment as I trouble mythological and rhetorical history. I will illustrate why we need to tell new stories, while I also show that we need to recognize *metis* as a rhetoric, thus recognizing the body as rhetorical, and valorizing our own and our students embodied differences as meaningful and meaning-making.

In cataloguing and revising the stories of Hermaphrodite/Hermaphroditos and Tiresias, and in refiguring the dialogues of Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Quintillian, I hope that I introduced a theme: I pay attention to the rhetorical negotiation of bodies*,* and in particular I care about the negotiation of bodily difference. In this chapter, I will continue this theme, while also putting forward a theory of bodily *rhetoricity*, looking for means of expressing the meaningfulness and the meaning-making ability of the disabled body, of all of our differently-oriented bodies.

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[21] I recognize the problem posed by the use of the term 'celebrate.' As Morris Young has pointed out, one of the dominant tropes for the recognition of marginalized groups by the majority is celebration. For instance, North Americans celebrate the novelty of Chinese New Year, or hold 'Taste of Thailand' fairs to celebrate cuisine, but these actions don't address other cultural exclusions, nor do they offer multi-faceted cultural roles—the celebration is often a celebration of stereotypes, or of the Americanization of a foreign custom or food. But I will refer specifically to a particular celebration later in this paper, and so I choose to use the word throughout.

Let me begin here with a brief inventory of classic perspectives on the generative potential of imperfection, to be read against the grain of our idealized view of the good man speaking well.

When the Homeric hero Odysseus is at his most cunning, it is when he begins a speech badly, when he appears as a 'witless man,' an *aphrona* (Detienne and Vernant 22). We commonly read this as an example of a performance, a perhaps ironic, 'winking' portrayal of what Odysseus is not. Yet it could be argued that he achieves here the 'wonderful modesty' of imperfection that Cicero refers to. Why can we not imagine that he is rhetorically successful because he has captured his audience, he has become consubstantial with the Greek polis in which, as Martha Rose, Fareed Haj and Jacques Stiker remind us, disability was very common? I am willing to perform this re-telling with some modesty, understanding that many will reject the possibility that a rhetor's 'mistakes' are just as generatively rhetorical as his triumphs. Certainly, in Homer, violence against characters with bodily 'flaws' was significant. Yet, as I will show in my second chapter, the rhetorical plasticity of myth was also significant in its performed context. While *aphrona* was likely pejorative, other terms for disability in the period are more flexible—suggesting not downward comparison but dynamic lateral association.

As mentioned earlier, Demosthenes, the most quoted orator in Hermogenes's <u>Art of Rhetoric</u>, widely esteemed as the greatest rhetorician of the period, if not of all time, was also 'disabled' according to a narrow reading of the idea of ability. As Martha Rose suggests, it is quite likely that Demosthenes's stutter was never a weakness. As Rose points out, we have latched onto Demosthenes's story as one of overcoming: We believe that through great labor he overcame his impediment, training it out of his speech by walking up mountains declaiming with pebbles in his mouth. In her unraveling of the stories of this orator, she points out that "the physical condition that barred people from oratory in Greece was that of being female, not necessarily that of having a speech impairment…all men had the potential to speak well" (63).[22] "That Demosthenes would be known to the modern world for his rhetorical skills would no doubt have pleased him," Rose writes, "that he would be known for stuttering would have

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[22] Of course, when we look closer at rhetorical history, we see that this is not altogether true either. Thanks to histories such as Joy Ritchie and Kate Ronald's <u>Available Means</u>, we see that women such as Diotima may well have spoken—if they couldn't speak in public, they could speak very persuasively in private, and to Athens' political and intellectual leaders. Other women, such as Aspasia, were instrumental in the composition of some of the period's most famous speeches (see "Pericles's Funeral Oration", <u>Menexenus</u>). These women played a key role in the instruction of the period's best orators, including Socrates himself (<u>Available Means</u> 1-15).

surprised him" (65). In this example, we gain much from understanding the rhetorical constructions of disability, the stock and stereotypical stories that disability studies scholars have revealed and critiqued for their role in managing the fears of the (supposedly) able-bodied. We are asked to doubt the veracity of this story, or at least to understand its negative effect: the labored triumph over, and thus the final devaluation of disability. Yet we can look for ramps over this negative narrative.

The word *pseilos*, most commonly used to describe Demosthenes's 'impediment' and which we translate as 'faltering speech,' can also denote bad manners or, simply, the meaning behind written words. In the latter instance, the idea of a 'stutter' suggests the deconstruction of rhetorical norms based on narrow customs (Rose 57). Derrida would certainly agree that to communicate is to stutter—as would David Wills, suggesting that the stutter and the limp are analogous. In this way *pseilos* is not unlike the word *apate*, which Susan Jarratt suggests was also a term for the mysterious transfer of meaning from thought to expression, for the play of signification. *Apate*, in her definition, is an exploration of how probable arguments can cast doubt on conventional truths (Re-Reading 55). Both *apate*, deception, and *ate*, human blindness, have non-pejorative meanings and roles in the making of meaning. *Apate* means "the emotional experience between reality and language" (Re-Reading 55). *Ate*, then, is the human condition that locates us within that space. Blindness or stuttering, in these conceptions, serve to remind us of the partiality of rhetorical expression. Recall Derrida's statement that writing "has a blindness to do with it…hasn't a damn sight to do with it" ("Plato's" 135). In this way, then, we move away from an idea of disability as deficit. Instead, disability is the very possibility (and concurrently the uncertainty) of human knowledge. It follows that in this world, people with disabilities can be more than just rhetorical symbols; they can be the most able rhetors of all. What I hope to accomplish is an expanded sense, a more inclusive framework through which we might view the rhetorical *habitus*. In introducing terms like *apate* and *pseilos*, I am not trying to establish a new lexicon, but rather I am working to show that we could choose to view a rhetorical history in which disability and rhetoricity were consubstantial, in which this connection was fully theorized, when we screen our stories again. In this chapter, I will expand on these enabling approaches to embodiment and rhetoric through the stories of *metis*.

DOUBLE OR DIVERGENT ORIENTATION

Hephaestus was the Greek god of fire and metallurgy.[23]   In the image above, Hephaestus appears 'able-bodied,' yet he rides a proto-wheelchair, a chariot with wings. In vase paintings, sculpture, and in written texts, Hephaestus is most often depicted as having a physical disability, his feet twisted around backwards or sideways. In the image above, because he holds his tools and he rides a chariot that he has crafted, his abilities as an artisan are also depicted, and these skills are valued. In this way, the image above says a lot about the ambivalent reception of Hephaestus—he is a disabled God, a 'crippled' craftsman, and we assume that these things are mutually exclusive. One could suggest that he overcame his disability through hard work. Yet both his bodily difference and his craftsmanship are evidence of the particular form of intelligence that Hephaestus was said to symbolize: *metis*. In this way, his disability *is* his ability. *Metis*, or cunning intelligence, is embodied, symbolically, in Hephaestus. Homer repeatedly mentions that he is lame, God of the "dragging foot" (Iliad 18.371). But, his disability also has positive connotations. Having feet which face away from one another doesn't necessarily entail 'impairment'—it means he can move from side to side more quickly. Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, in Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society, write that Hephaestus was symbolized by the crab, and that his side to side movement had symbolic value. He was seen as having a "power…emphasized by his distinctive characteristic of being endowed with a double and divergent orientation" (273). This ability allows him to harness fire and to invent metallurgy. His 'disability' was (and can again be) seen as that which allowed him to "dominate shifting, fluid powers such as fire and wind" (273) in his work in the forge. In their version of the story, Hephaestus had to be "even more mobile and polymorphic than these [elements]" (273). Like a crab, Hephaestus's symbolic movement is not straightforward. Also, like any person who might build himself an extraordinary winged vehicle, like the one pictured

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[23] In this version of my story, I am pulled into ancient Greece. I choose this itinerary mainly to connect with the rhetorical history that is most familiar to me, and perhaps to my audience as well. But I want to make one thing clear: I could and should travel in other directions as well. What I have to say about Hephaestus's role in the development of this particular rhetorical history, my own radical one and 'our' Western one, could be found elsewhere. Hephaestus's name may have come from an Egyptian word for the god Ptah, or Thoth, evidence of, at the very least, a connection to Africa (see Poe). Loki, a giant and enemy to the Norse gods, was also a god of fire and cunning (see Dumezil). Kitsune is a shape-shifting trickster in Japanese mythology (see Radin). Vulcan is the Roman version of Hephaestus, also often seen with a disability. There are other myths of 'tricksters' and craftsmen, evil and beneficent, laughable and heroic, taking challenging shape, in myths from all over the world (see Bierlein). The stories of other characters, like those of Hephaestus, would offer us insight into the ways disability, mythology and rhetoric intersect.

above, he is crafty. Hephaestus, in this light, is endowed with the power of *metis*. *Metis*, in turn, is a powerful rhetoric.

It has been said that *metis* is simply a rhetorical strategy, one among many. Yet Detienne and Vernant suggest that *metis* is unquestionably "a type of intelligence and of thought, a way of knowing" (3). They define *metis* as characterized, and *embodying* a "complex but very coherent body of mental attitudes and intellectual behavior" (3). It manifests itself as flair, forethought, subtlety of mind, deception, resourcefulness, vigilance, opportunism and experience acquired over the years (3). *Metis*, in this array, "becomes the model for any form of human endeavour" (223). In Greek thought, through close alliance with *kairos*, *tuche*, and *techne*, *metis* interacts with and circumscribes the world of chance and opportunity—in effect, providing the very possibility of acting in a world characterized by the swirling winds of luck.

Tuche is defined by Detienne and Vernant as that which "brings the indiscernible future within the realm of possibility" (223). *Tuche* is the wind itself, calling for both navigation and artisanship, as the sailor must know when and how to change direction, as the metalsmith must harness fire in order to bend metal. *Tuche* is both the wind on the water and the play of the tiller— it "stands for the opportunity to succeed" and is said to match the ambivalence of *kairos* (223). The two terms, in fact, were often seen as a pair. Detienne and Vernant argue that *kairos* was introduced after *metis*, and that it means navigating—looking ahead and seeing the "propitious moment" for steering. D. Diane Davis writes that *kairos* "gets played out not only linguistically but also physiologically. The force of *kairos* can dance across the body, can instantaneously possess the subject and explode its boundaries/binaries of identity" (29). Eric Charles White, in his own book-length exploration of *kairos*, nicely summarizes the epistemological force that *kairos* expresses. In his words, *kairos* entails a "conception of time as discontinuous occasions" (14). He writes that in such a universe, "there can never be more than a contingent and provisional management of the present opportunity" (13). *Metis*, then, is the capacity to act in a *kairotic* world; it is the "speculatively mobile form of interpretation" that White insists is necessary to act in the moment (160). *Metis* is the capacity to harness the force of *kairos* as it dances across the body. *Kairos*, the idea of invention only within shifting contexts, only in the world of *tuche*—of the winds of chance—demands *metis*, a way to be even more mobile, polymorphic and cunning than the world itself. The person with *metis* sees the world of *tuche,* harnesses *kairos*, and has the ingenuity required to think of cutting and building

the tiller itself. Janet Atwill writes at length about *techne*, and suggesting that "the significance of *techne* often lies in the power of transformation that *metis* enables" (56). In her history, *techne* are all of the transformative arts that *metis* makes possible. The building of tillers, for instance, would be an example of utilizing *metis* to create a *techne*.[24] Heidegger wrote that "*techne* belongs to bringing forth. . . it reveals whatever does not bring itself forth and does not yet lie here before us, whatever can look and turn out now one way and now another" ("The Question Concerning Technology"). In this scheme, *techne* and *metis* interact as a minded, bodied embrace of possibility, ingenuity and craftiness not in a purely instrumental way, but also as a poetic process.

Certeau writes of *metis* as a means to "obtain the maximum number of effects from a minimum of force" (82). *Metis* is timely, flexible and practical in that it is difficult to 'capture.' *Metis* has the practical advantage (and perhaps theoretical disadvantage) of "disappearing into its own action [so that] it has no image of itself" (82). *Metis* cannot be contextualized or schematized because each time it occurs in a context, it shifts that context, each sequence it is inserted into is distorted (83-84). *Metis* is an embodied, responsive act that is the "instant of art" (86); therefore it always introduces newness or "foreignness" (85). *Metis* as an embodied discursive art, then, re-introduces us to Derrida and Neel's critique of Platonic 'presence' as it reminds us that the 'practicable' is never perfectable, but is instead always prosthetic.

Though *metis* is under-represented in rhetorical histories, Debra Hawhee's book <u>Bodily Arts</u> more fully theorizes *metis* as a bodily intelligence, evidence of a syncretic relationship between flexible bodies and the virtuosity of the mind. James Fredal also examines the performance of *metis*, and the *metis* of the performer's body (<u>Rhetorical Action</u>). Recently, Karen Kopelson and Michelle Ballif have written of *metis* as a pedagogical strategy. In "Rhetoric On the Edge of Cunning," Kopelson suggests that teachers (particularly those marked out as different) should perform the sort of neutrality that students expect of them, as a cunning

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[24] Aristotle theoretically transformed both *techne* and *tuche*. As Mark Hansen argues, by making of *tuche* a "category of chance modeled on human intentionality and natural teleology" (81), Aristotle is able to suggest that both the 'automatic' and luck are subordinate to and "posterior to both mind and nature" (100). The automatic is a category Aristotle identifies with "nature's miscarriage" and the *para physim*, that which is contrary to nature (Physics 161). Yet he undertakes a major re-positioning of what his logical system cannot explain when he attributes chance and the 'unnatural' to causality through what Hansen calls a metalepsis. As I will explain, this tricky effacement establishes unnatural bodies and unpredictable events as both radically exterior and reducibly interior. He tries to suggest that *techne* and *tuche* are disconnected from *metis*. This is a complex consumption of *metis*, because *metis* as I will define it here connects, describes and embodies both the radical body and the radical event.

strategy to encourage students to address issues of identity. This essay perhaps best expresses the ways that *metis* has been re-discovered as a rhetoric and used by scholars to address issues of identity and difference. Though I, too, am looking at *metis* and at these issues, I want to clearly state that Kopelson's use of *metis* has little to do with my own. I see *metis* as a rhetoric of difference, but I think this is a rhetoric that we all already have access to—in fact, our shared difference, and the ability to affirm rather than disavow this difference, and then to communicate with one another in a world predicated on shifting rhetorical situations as well as shifting identities, has always demanded a cunning intelligence. *Metis,* then, would never be something a teacher could use *on* a student. I hope to show that *metis* has always been a way to move through the complex elements of identity that we all face, and are all *able* to understand as such. In my definition, *metis* so stringently resists schematization, would be so clearly constrained by any emphasis on outcomes or on controlled classroom politics, that *metis* cannot be owned by a teacher, only affirmed in the acts of teaching. Kopelson's more recent work addresses this difficult relationship between theory and practice—my suggestion here is that we view *metis* as an important epistemology. *Metis* is not a tool in and of itself. *Metis* could be thought of as multiple knowledges and literacies, and the cunning ability to utilize them; *tuche* as the shifting of rhetorical situations and the multiplication of mediated discursive environments. Hephaestus was said to be a teacher too (one of his famous 'students' was the Cyclops). A teacher with *metis*, it might be assumed, could allow us to find our talents and use them to the best of our ability. Of course Hephaestus found the work that best suited his abilities, incorporating the elements at hand and harnessing the right means at the right moment. A student of Hephaestus would learn "to master his art through all its range, so that everything that he makes is beautiful" (Murray, Odyssey, 6.233).

I will suggest that *metis* is a powerful way for us all (teachers, students, citizens) to move. *Metis* is a way to think and also a way to think about thinking. Importantly, *metis* values bodily difference as generative of meaning, as in the example of Hephaestus.

METIS AS AN EMBODIED INTELLIGENCE

Debra Hawhee's book Bodily Arts: Rhetoric and Athletics in Ancient Greece argues that *metis* is an embodied intelligence. She writes that "thought does not just happen within the body, it happens *as* the body" (Hawhee 58). Hawhee's explanation of "cunning intelligence" offers important clarification about the situational nature of *metis*, an intelligence that emerges as

unpredictable yet responsive action. She succeeds in arguing for the importance of *metis* not just as a term from another time, but as a way to express the "idea of intelligence as immanent movement" (48). In many ways, this elaboration upon the idea of *metis* is the engine for her book, providing a fresh way to think about rhetoric as a bodily art. We should see an examination of *metis* as a means for interrogating the connection between the body and rhetoric, as well as the pedagogical implications of their ineluctable connection. Hawhee's meticulous analysis of *metis* successfully reanimates the reader's conceptions of the 'sophistic,' as well as the concepts of *kairos* and *techne*, terms that cannot be fully understood without reference to *metis*. Further, this discussion of practical intelligence, wily bodies, and the training of young men to respond with cunning to shifting rhetorical contexts highlights the somatic nature of any knowledge. Hawhee suggests that we cannot fully understand rhetorical pedagogy unless we strive to better understand the connection between any 'knowing' and the movements of the body. Yet her emphasis on athletic training, and on the idealized body of the wrestler, leaves her reader to grapple with implications about which bodies matter. Though Hawhee subtly alludes to the fact that no single body is ideal, instead insisting that strength is based upon "responsiveness within particular contexts," there is a sense in her book that fitness is closely aligned with limited norms (160).

I will suggest that the figure of Hephaestus, central to Detienne and Vernant's <u>Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society</u>, helps us to focus on *metis* as an embodied art, and on the ways such embodiment challenges norms of ability. Detienne and Vernant stress that Hephaestus's disabled body, with his feet pointing in opposite directions, was actually *the* body of *metis*, enabled to move doubly and divergently (273). This meshes with Hawhee's emphasis on the classical idea that "thought is that which occurs through the limbs and their multi-directional joints" (58). She also emphasizes the idea that thought occurs "at the juncture of groping limbs" (48). These are powerful images, and I think that they also ask her reader to engage with the book in the spirit of the *agon*—in the wrestling ring and rhetorical arena. As I myself wrestled with Hawhee's arguments I was pulled towards her thesis that rhetorical pedagogy can unite the body and the mind. Yet it is equally important to think about which bodies are read, and what we want them to communicate. For this reason, I want to more fully examine Hephaestus, whose body symbolizes *metis,* the syncretic body/mind intelligence which Hawhee examines, as a means of expanding our perspective on embodied intelligence.

CHOOSING STORIES OF DISABILITY

The field of disability studies emphasizes the idea of the social or cultural construction of disability, while *also* insisting on the materiality of disability. In later chapters, I will examine the tension between these two perspectives on the materiality/sociality of disability. Here, using a disability studies filter to view composition and rhetoric, I recognize the emancipatory potential of new stories in both the material *and* the social sphere. As I mentioned earlier, Harlan Hahn has argued, countering the bleak histories of Fiedler and Garland, that "humans have always exercised the right to make choices about the anatomical features that they consider desirable or interesting, and, at times, these options have included rather than excluded women and men with disabilities" (30). It is through the embodied rhetoric of *metis* that I wish to focus on disability as materially and socially desirable. Disability, moving through *metis*, is bodily and rhetorical—two concepts that are tightly united. Rhetoric can be seen as the function of power within language, and I connect it to the body because the body is what has been traditionally defined and (thus) 'disciplined' by rhetorics of disability, while at the same time our bodies speak back, insisting (prosthetically) upon the impossibility of a normative essence. Creating, as well as uncovering, new stories and alternative traditions—different bodies—is thus a powerful move. As James Berlin has said, "rhetorical histories are important [because] they explore the relationship of discourse and power, a rhetoric…being a set of rules that privilege particular power relations" (Octolog 12). As I have argued, and as I hope to illustrate here, we read rhetorical history as a normative text, and this history (our story of history) has privileged the normal body. It is of utmost importance to stress this point because, as Douglas Baynton has written, "disability has functioned historically to justify inequality for disabled people themselves, but it has also done so for women and minority groups…the *concept* of disability has been used to justify discrimination against other groups by attributing disability to them" (33). As Lennard Davis and other disability studies scholars have pointed out, the categories of normal and abnormal, able and disabled are invented and enforced in service of "a certain kind of society" in service of particular ideologies ("Bell Curve" 9-11). Disability in history, then, always highlights particular power relations, relations that affect everyone. Normalcy in the 'modern world' is a useful fiction which marks out unwanted elements while reinforcing the hegemony of the dominant group. Yet ideas of normalcy have changed over time. Davis suggests that "disability was once regarded very differently than it is now," and he mentions

Greek society as an example ("Bell Curve" 9). In the first chapter, I showed how our modern concept of normalcy affects our reading of the ancient concepts of the 'ideal' or the 'mean,' just as—inversely—ancient arguments about these concepts, and about virtue and incontinence and rhetorical ability, presage and perhaps structure our contemporary ideas of the norm. That said, as Harlan Hahn wrote, there has been a noticeable "failure of prior investigations to discover any positive features of the aesthetics of disability" (27). Thus, I think that it is important, in telling a new story about disability, to examine the roots of disability in western civilization—in order to fully understand the connection between our history and changing ideas about normalcy.

Our current perceptions of human experience, narrated through cultural myths, science, history, social policy, even architecture, can be expanded. Much of this expansion, currently, takes the form of a retro-fitting, to 'accommodate' disability. Yet there is evidence that, from the very beginning of recorded history, human culture has had a more inclusive, more generous perspective on (dis)ability. Over time, exclusion has been imported into the classical world, and we have been left with a narrow view of the role disability may have played in that period. It follows that rhetoric and many, many bodies are the victims of this discrimination. Methodologically, then, I employ a rhetoric that, instead of re-inscribing a normative reading of history, or a normative rhetoric, challenges and expands both. The vehicle for this reading is *metis*, and the protagonist of this story is Hephaestus.

Metis is specifically not identified with the strongest and the best, with the norm, with the unchanging, but rather with an artisan like the 'lame' Hephaestus. *Metis* represents a "revers[al of] the 'natural' outcome of the encounter" (13). Detienne and Vernant state that, in the Greek intellectual world, there was an understanding that "whatever the strength of god or man, there always comes a time when he confronts one stronger than himself" (13). In a world full of such inevitable instances, *metis* is what the 'fittest' employ. I analyze Hephaestus's *metis* in order to suggest that, as Martha Rose also argues, "the distortion inherent in contemporary beliefs about disability is reflected in the portrayal of ancient Greek notions of disability" (3). More simply, I argue that we have exported our own prejudice into the past. It is thus surprising (to many) to see that there was a very positive association between Hephaestus's body and his mind: his outward facing feet, and his lateral thinking, were allied and both became a metaphor for *metis*, the ability to move from side-to-side like a crab, as opposed to the forward march of logic. Pushing this association further, we learn that the word *metis* shared an association, from its very

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first usage, with the idea of a physical curve, with the idea of a body not composed in perfect ratio. The roots 'gu' and 'kamp' were often used in words that described *metis*, and these roots denote "feet [which are] twisted round or are capable of moving both forwards and backwards" and "whatever is curved, pliable or articulated" (Detienne and Vernant 46). This idea of twisting connects with Derrida's idea that "only out of something like writing…the strange difference of inside and outside can spring…one would then have to bend [*plier*] into strange contortions what could no longer even simply be called logic or discourse" ("Plato's"103). I hope to show that what seems like a simple metaphorical connection between bodily difference and cunning thought can be re-claimed as a means of challenging physical and intellectual norms, norms that connect with the discursive and logical assumptions Derrida critiques. As Certeau wrote, *metis* allows for change. *Metis* creates the space of possibility, as opposed to the place of order—the "foreignness [of *metis*] makes possible a transgression of the law of the place" (85).

THE GREEK MYTHS OF HEPHAESTUS

Into this story moves (perhaps sideways or backwards) Hephaestus, Greek god of metallurgy, god of fire, the forge, and engineering. As a god with a noticeable physical disability, Hephaestus obviously represents an important character as we consider the story of disability in the classical period. As Stiker recounts, "we do not know what exactly [Hephaestus'] disability was, nor how it occurred…but that he is disabled and that his birth was special, we are sure" (Stiker 59). How Hephaestus was presented reveals much about how norms of Greek society were figured and refigured—every story, every sculpture, every vase depicting the god wove Hephaestus into the cultural context, as part of an artistic and rhetorical, dialectical process of self- and societal understanding.

As I suggested earlier, and hopefully illustrated through my discussion of the myths of Tiresisas and Hermaphrodite, mythical discourse "is capable of containing the beginnings of…public argument and internal debate" (35). Susan Jarratt writes that there is evidence that the Homeric myths, in particular, were sites of conflict, conflict "of the kind rhetoric would eventually be formed to negotiate" (35). Laura M. Slatkin writes that the Odyssey "continuously repositions itself with respect to a tradition made up of alternative narrative possibilities…each performance/composition must necessarily reflect, and participate in, the evolution of possible alternatives to the version it actually presents" (226). Slatkin suggests that each myth "embodies, in its many weavings, its reversals, its twisting of time, a *metis* of its own" (237).

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Recognizing this change and evolution allows me to suggest that cultural ideas about disability also changed, as they were told through myth. I hope to show that a seed for this emergent rhetoric is the plurality and diversity that Hephaestus represents. Reading of Hephaestus and writing his story, one might expect to see difference, deformity and silence 're-affirmed,' to borrow Garland's words. But I want to suggest that these representations did not always re-affirm and re-inscribe his difference as deficit. Hephaestus's role in myth yields an often contradictory picture—a complexity that challenges simple constructions, reductions, or dismissals of his important role in rhetorical history. The confusion and the flexibility of 'norms,' as applied to and embodied by Hephaestus, suggests to me that Greek society did not see disability as simply as our history might suggest. If an arena for the negotiation of a hegemonic norm was rhetoric, a symbol of this negotiation was Hephaestus's body.[25]

Suitably, as I hope to use my radical history to combat a canonical story with fragments and apocrypha, the stories of Hephaestus are loose and diffuse. He is the least-represented of all of the Greek Gods, at least in the myths, textual fragments and artifacts we now have access to. Still, he can be found, even if there seems to be no cohesive or continuous narrative to discover. Hephaestus is stories, more than he is a story, in fact. The contradictions abound. With this in mind, I think it is worthwhile to create an inventory of many of the things Hephaestus has been, in the context of my own 'double and divergent' narrative.

I will follow the suggestion of Detienne and Giulia Sissa, who write that "all things considered, a [most] profitable method for analysis of myths is first to read all their different versions" (Sissa and Detienne 213). Borrowing from the recorded words of Homer, Apollodorus and Hesiod, I have been able to nail together a branch of stories, a tangle of representations, a variety of different forms that tell the myth of Hephaestus. I focused on the second book of Hesiod's Homeric Hymns, as translated by Evelyn-White. I read Frazer's version of the

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[25] There are many problems with my sideways, reverse approach, as there are problems with all movement towards history. First and foremost, I worry that although Hephaestus challenges typicality, he is too typical. That is, the danger of studying a mythical figure is that I further mythologize disability. Saying, as I did in my introduction, that disability is partially socially constructed does not mean that people who actually experience disability do not have a powerful voice. One would hope that, assuming such reclamation is ever possible, this voice would be recovered from the period. I have failed to do this—in some ways, I have shuffled around this task. Yet, as a cunning historian, and having the desire to, like Hephaestus in his forge, craft a story that might be useful and artistic, I worry more about leaving disability un-researched. As C. Jan Swearingen has said of her own desire to uncover the voices of women from the classical period, "you have to have something to problematize, and if you have no history at all…you're talking about a non-existent problematic" (Octolog 22). So the work, for me, is first to bring the stories together, and then to look at the problems these stories present.

collected Apollodorus. I set Lombardo and Murray's translations of Homer's <u>Iliad</u> and <u>Odyssey</u> side-by-side, seeing that even in different translations, the stories greatly diverge. Finally, I looked at some of the existent imagery, the iconography of Hephaestus, as found on vase paintings and in engravings. In this way, I have first looked to the traditional historical 'texts' to find Hephaestus. Of course, I have also worked to make this narrative jump, to make it wriggle, to avoid smoothing the story into flatness, or massaging it into a line. So, my story is hard to read, and it is even harder to see how this myth, or any other, could have functioned to strictly re-inscribe a polarity with any hope of holding its charge.

Pausanius declared that, "the legends of Greece generally have different forms, and this is particularly true of genealogy" (8.53.5). Tracing Hephaestus' births reinforces this truth, and also reveals that the question of origin is of particular import in myth. Origin—in the stories of Athena, Hephaestus, or Hermaphrodite—is always rhetorically contested, and this contestation should be seen as a particularly lucid example of the ways that the social and 'biological' construction of bodies fluctuates. Hephaestus is the son of Hera. He is born of Hera alone, a virgin birth. Or, Hera invented this story to cover up an affair. Or Hephaestus is born of Zeus and Hera. In this version of the story, he is also the son of the goddess Metis, however, because she lives in Zeus's head. Zeus ate the pregnant Metis to consume the cunning intelligence which bears her name, and after this meal, all cunning must channel through Zeus. Because of this lineage, Hephaestus (and Athena) carry Metis's *metis* and are thus a constant threat to Zeus's control of this, the most powerful form of intelligence.[26] We are sometimes told that Hephaestus's feet were crooked from birth. Consequently, he is sent away from Olympos—he is rejected by Hera, and by Zeus, because of his disability. Yet in other stories, Hephaestus is not crippled at birth, but is injured by Zeus, for coming to Hera's rescue when Zeus threatened or bound her. In this version, Zeus expels Hephaestus and it is his long fall from Olympos that injures him. Or is it Hera who throws Hephaestus, hoping to hide his infirmity from Zeus? In any case, he finds himself tossed out of Olympos, his very godliness threatened, and as he lays on the ground we see him as very mortal—he has a 'crooked' leg. And then the story gets weird. Hephaestus is rescued by the Nereids, sea nymphs who take him to their underwater caves. In

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[26] I would argue that Hephaestus's disability also symbolizes his *metis* to Zeus—the disability is a reminder of Metis, and thus of the threat that her descendents pose to his sovereign power. Therefore, it is impossible not to read Metis into the drama of Hephaestus's banishment. It would not be a stretch to say that, in the same way that Metis is eaten because she embodies *metis*, Hephaestus is thrown because his disability is evidence of his cunning intelligence.

seclusion, Hephaestus proves that he is crafty and creative. He is known as a trickster, but he also perfects the craft of metallurgy, utilizing his *metis*. He builds two voice-activated tripods, what we would call robots, to help him with his work, and he befriends the Cyclops, teaching him to work with fire as well. Throughout these stories, he works with others, is a teacher, and often comes to the defense of friends. Descriptions of his bodily movements, while they may seem to the modern ear to clash with descriptions of his industry, become part of a whole—Hephaestus as *metis* enacted.

Next is the story of his return from seclusion to 'civilization' (Olympos). This becomes the tale most often told about Hephaestus. The story is commemorated in numerous works of art, celebrated by archaic vase painters. But again, there are many ways to tell this story. In some paintings, on some pottery, Hephaestus's disability is made glaringly obvious—for instance, he is shown riding a mule, his leg grotesquely twisted (Image 2.2). These works may be meant to focus the viewer's attention solely upon his disability as an object of pity, or they may denote, in a kind of shorthand, his ability to think laterally.

Image 2.2: "Return of Hephaistos to Olympus," Dionysos, c. 525 B.C.E.

It has also been said that, before the journey, Dionysius gets Hephaestus roaringly drunk, and that this is why he rides the mule—this story also makes a fool of Hephaestus (Images 2.2,2.3). In some paintings, he is nearly falling from his mount. In others, his mule has an erection—is about to mount another mule and throw him (Image 2.3).

Image 2.3: "Hephaistos, God of Fire, Bronzework and of Craftsmen, Returns to Olympus." Artist unknown. c. 590 B.C.E.

But, in many depictions, Hephaestus's ride back to civilization is heroic. He is now the god of fire, a gifted craftsman. He has resumed his place in Olympos and he is seen by the other gods as *able* even if he has a disability—perhaps because of this disability. His inclusion in the pantheon then also subtly (or not so subtly) changes the way gods are seen. In <u>The Daily Life of Greek Gods</u>, Sissa and Detienne suggest that there is a shift in perceptions of the god's effort and industry (29; 50). Hephaestus describes himself as *achnumenoi,* affected by pain (Sissa and Detienne 29). Hephaestus also sweats, proof that he engages in real labor (Sissa and Detienne

50). As a worker (Image 2.4), Hephaestus sets a new model for the lives of the Gods. That his body labors, and that this labor is itself cunning, challenges our modern impression of the gods as being lazy.

Image 2.4: "Skyphos, Side A, Detail of Hephaistos." Kleophon Painter. c. 420 B.C.E.

Now back in Olympos, Hephaestus begins his new career. He appears throughout Homer's stories, making and extinguishing fire, distributing thunderbolts, building clever traps. He builds each of the gods a house (Sissa and Detienne 44). He makes a golden breastplate for Heracles, armor for Achilles (Hesiod 240; Auden). Interestingly, Hephaestus is also said to have built a home and then a scepter for Zeus, his father (Murray, Iliad, 2.100). He also builds a bronze man, or perhaps a bronze bull, another archetypal robot. In one particularly interesting twist, Hephaestus is credited with creating woman. He builds an army of females, golden women who are strong, smart and able to speak their mind (Lombardo Iliad, 18.417). Or, in another version, he makes one woman, firing her from clay (Hesiod 60). This woman is Pandora, and Hephaestus gives her a special jar that she is not to open. In these stories, we see that *metis* was more than just an industry; it was a craft of innovation. Hephaestus's *metis* is at times an actual creation of bodies while it is always an extension of the body. Finally, *metis* is an application of ingenious bodies to the problems the world presents, answering the shifting contexts of existence with shifting rhetorical/mechanical/corporeal positions.

In less favorable stories, Hephaestus is said to have attempted to rape Athena. He is also the one who bound Prometheus, with special chains that he made himself (Aeschylus 39).

In his lengthiest cameo appearance in the Odyssey, Hephaestus appears for comic relief. He has married Aphrodite, and he finds that she is having an affair with Ares, "who is handsome and clean-built," he says, "whereas I am a cripple" (Lombardo, Odyssey 8.267). Hephaestus fashions a trap for the adulterers and tricks them to have his revenge. He appears as a cuckold, yet he is also represented as crafty, smarter and the 'better man' than Ares, even though Ares supposedly has the superior body.

And so it goes, back and forth, from one story to the next. Hephaestus is never fully a hero, never fully a villain. He is seen reverently—as "renowned smith" (Murray, Iliad 18.463), "glorious Hephaestus" (Murray, Iliad 8.286,-8.287). Such images and honorifics deify *metis* as it

is performed by Hephaestus, embodied by him. Yet other times he is seen pityingly, reductively, objectively—"God of the dragging foot" (Murray, Iliad 18.371).

To summarize: It is true that, in comparison to the other Greek gods, we rarely see Hephaestus. When we do, the eye that beholds Hephaestus sometimes focuses wholly and negatively upon his disability. But sometimes it gazes positively upon his ability. His appearance and his movement send a message about the power of cunning intelligence. Yet there is no one essential Hephaestus. The inventory I've just recounted contains within it many contradictions. The way that he is figured is a matter of constant conflict. Of course, questioning the significance of these distinctions is worthwhile. I see the myths and images themselves as a sort of heuristic—a set of questions propelling a cycle of discovery and re-discovery. Here, then, I want to extend my own version of a heuristic loop, expressed through the questions that matter to me.

ASKING QUESTIONS

The stories I've retold represent, themselves, a kind of narrative prosthesis. Rhetorically re-positioning Hephaestus doesn't inscribe or incorporate a new history, but rather reveals the ways signification generates from within partiality, from the margins, and from the impossibility of the whole story, or the whole body. As their re-telling was understood in the ancient period, and as I revive their many meanings here, the "interpretation [of mythology] is an exercise of *metis*" (Doherty 4).

How are we to see Hephaestus's trade? In some ways, is he doubly-marginalized because he is also "working class"? What does his prolific production signify? How is his craft specifically suited to his body? How does his body *create* his craft? How does *metis* stand as an 'accessible' intelligence, something one can develop, something that dovetails with one's abilities, something syncretic with the body, yet not in service of a normate image of the body?

What of the drama of his banishment and return? How does this symbolize the conflict between acceptance and exclusion of disability from society? How does this story comment on the cultural value of citizenship in Athens—that Athenians were not wanderers, like others, but were tied to their city (Ong and Jarratt 21)?

What about the visual images of Hephaestus? Sometimes he is in a chair, sometimes on a horse. And what about his 'wheelchair'? Sometimes he stands with crooked feet—in vase paintings his disability is drastically represented (Brommer 159). Other times he has no

noticeable disability—in most sculptures, his body is 'normal' (Garland 113). And he is said to have a very strong upper-body, presumably as a symbol of his labor (Murray Iliad, 1.607, 14.239). So what are all of the significations of his body and, together, what do they represent? What about the tools he holds? Is his power contained in the tools, or in the hands that hold the tools, the body that labors around them, the mind that trains them upon his craft? Are these tools a significant aspect of his embodiment, a prosthesis that is integrated into, a part of his intelligence, his action?

How does Hephaestus 'reincarnate' Metis herself? How does the consumption and usurpment of Metis by Zeus mirror the consumption and usurpment of *metis* by the rhetorical tradition? Plato rejects *metis*—it is *foreign* to his view of wisdom, to the realm of Truth he idealizes. Aristotle, as well, "displaced and devalued" *metis* (Detienne and Vernant 5). I would suggest that these philosophers are also eating *metis,* digesting it and, in the words of Detienne and Vernant, "pick[ing] out from the skills of the artisan anything that…produces in the world of Becoming creations that are as real, stable and organized as possible" (4). In this way, Aristotle and Plato make *metis* logical and systematic; this is *metis* with the cunning wrung out. Karen Kopelson argues that the "obliteration of *metis* is…fundamentally related to, if not one and the same with, the denunciation of rhetoric" ("Rhetoric" 133). How, then, can we fully understand rhetoric in the classical context without understanding what *metis* is and why it was eaten? How does Hephaestus's story fit into this denunciation or a possible reclamation?

Is Hera, his mother, truly ashamed of Hephaestus? The answer to this question would reveal much about the ways a mother regarded, or was encouraged to regard, a disabled child. If Hephaestus's return to civilization was indeed celebrated, he stands as a symbol of reversal—as Marie Delcourt and Henri-Jacques Stiker have written, there is some evidence from the period of the expulsion and exposure of children with disabilities. This expulsion was "not primarily a killing but a return to the hands of the gods" (Stiker 40). That Hephaestus was expelled from the heavens may have represented "insecurity in the face of the divine, linked to the wrongdoing of men and anger from above" (Stiker 40). Were the disabled really seen as 'sent from above' as punishment? If Hephaestus is welcomed back by Zeus, the angriest of all the gods, how are the disabled only a "sign of the god's anger and…also the reason for it" (Delcourt, La Legende 39)? Does Zeus's acceptance of gifts from this disowned son, or Hera's change of heart, signal a change in the perception and valuation of his existence?

Does the fact that Hephaestus is very capable, very much able, very creative, allow people to overlook or ignore his disability? Does a valorization of his *metis* negate his disability, or does it require it? Might this allow for an identity for the disabled that *incorporates* or *corporates* a variety of different roles? Is Hephaestus's presence in myth more about his ability than his disability? Is his cunning, not always used in service of 'good,' a form of trickery, or a kind of crafty pragmatism? What of the tension between his role as an 'exceptional cripple' and his labor and sweat, which seem to be a symbol of the God's humanity? Is he a symbol of the weakness of gods, or of their normalcy? Is he a symbol of godliness in the normal? Or, is he just Hephaestus, a true original?

With each question in my heuristic, we are offered a glimpse of the rhetorical power of the myth of Hephaestus, the challenge his body and his body of work represents. As Jarratt suggests, my questioning is not out of place; in fact, it is consistent with a view of myth as a site of cultural conflict—conflict that travels back into the middle of the crowd that comprised its original audience. To be able to question Hephaestus in this way reveals his importance. Hephaestus is a rhetorical figure, and he represents the rhetorical power of myth and its cultural importance. He allows us to configure important questions about ability and disability, and to recognize their coexistence with Greek rhetorical theory. This, in turn, uncovers the central importance of the question of normalcy to all of rhetoric, and it locates this question in the classical period, allowing us to see it in a new light.

Just as an inclusive view of rhetoric would ask us to look beyond speech and the 'controlled' body, I want to look beyond the text, beyond the image. James Fredal, the rhetorician and historian I looked to earlier for a definition of the role of people with disabilities in rhetorical history, points out that while historians of rhetoric have been obsessing about the 'authority' of texts, "important events, trends, places, terms and cultural conditions" have been overlooked ("Herm-Choppers" 592). Fredal asserts that such overlooked cultural and societal practices and institutions can "replace the author as focal points for historical investigations" ("Herm-Choppers" 592). With this in mind, I want to suggest that the study of Hephaestus, the recognition of the richness and complexity of his representation, would be a starting point for further historical study. I also want to suggest that the very rhetorical nature of this study, and of the Hephaestus stories themselves, might reveal something about the rhetoricity of disability and

the rhetorical nature of the idea of the norm. The division of normal from abnormal is an argument. It is an argument that, I would suggest, Hephaestus might refute.

I want to end this section as it began, by introducing more, and different ways of looking at Hephaestus. I've been enabled by Fredal's call to "replace the author as (the) focal point of historical investigations" ("Herm-Choppers" 592). I am also excited by the work of historian Harlan Hahn, who has suggested that there is archeological evidence that disability was actually held in high regard in the classical period. He says that "the appearance of physical differences seemed to be associated with festiveness, sensuality and entertainment rather than loss, repugnance and personal tragedy" (31). Here is my final story.

Image 2.5: "Temple of Hephaestus." Carr, Adam. 2004.

In Periclean Athens, around 420 B.C.E, at a time when metal-workers were in great demand, Hephaestus became, briefly, one of the most popular of mythical figures. The city was being re-built on an epic scale after the Ten Years war. Workers were needed. 'Disabled' or not, if you were skilled, you were in demand. The 'norms' were slightly re-calibrated. We've been given a version of history that asserts that a person's physical ability to wage war was paramount. Yet as Periclean Athens emerged from the wreckage of war, this was not the case. There was real cultural value assigned to a citizen's technical ability as a craftsperson—different ways of knowing were valued. Hephaestus became a symbol for production. This Homeric hymn to Hephaestus expresses the societal adoration for the god quite clearly:

> Hephaestus famed for inventions. With bright-eyed Athene he taught men
> glorious crafts throughout the world, - men who before used to dwell in caves in
> the mountains like wild beasts. But now that they have learned crafts through
> Hephaestus the famed worker, easily they live a peaceful life in their own houses
> the whole year round. Be gracious, Hephaestus, and grant me success and
> prosperity! (Homeric Hymns II, 1-7).

Pausanius tells us that at this time, in Athens, a temple was built in Hephaestus's honor, an accolade reserved for only the most major gods (1.14.6). This temple still stands (Image 2.5). A large festival was also held, commemorating his return to civilization. Historian Takahiro Saito suggests that this festival, called the "Hephaistia" served as a citizenship rite for Athenians,

honoring Hephaestus and Athena as the parents of this great civilization (par. 20-26). Walter Burkert writes that the festival took place in the city of Hephaistia, on the isle of Lemnos, and incorporated rituals of re-birth by fire. The Suidae Lexicon reports on a similar festival, possibly the same one, calling it the Kalkeia (chi 36). The festival, it seems, was designed to recognize Hephaestus as a parent of an emerging civilization, as a teacher, and as a hero. Burkert suggests that the festival on Lemnos was a way to recognize the craftsmen of the island, but also to celebrate the very invention of fire (3). He goes on to write that such festivals are a part of a worldwide tradition: "festivals of the new fire are among the most common folk customs all over the world" (4). But fire, in the Greek context, is "the triumph of Hephaestus" and his festival is a celebration of new life (9). According to Saito, the festival in Athens also had the purpose of reminding citizens of their civic responsibilities: "when the 10 years-long war ended, Athens felt a need to tighten up and reintegrate her citizen body. It was the Hephaistia that was utilized for this purpose" (par. 26).

As I mentioned before, when discussing the festival of Hermaphrodite, festivals celebrating alterity might in fact have reinforced the seperation of the dominant group from the temporarily celebrated Other. There can be a carnivalesque catharsis, a release of normative tensions played out through the assumption of Other roles, and then an immediate re-integration into the old masculine and ableist custom. Yet there is evidence that the festival of Hephaestus was a way to reach out to excluded members of society, or to re-cast ability in a new paradigm of social productivity, rather than an opportunity to try on difference or throw a pity parade. According to Alison Burford, "metal workers and miners were especially vulnerable to injury" at this time (72). However, "having acquired a physical impairment, [they] would have had no reason to stop working or change trades" (72). In some ways, the celebration of Hephaestus as metalworker could have reflected the idea that this trade was actually one of the only inclusive trades in the culture. Or, his image could have been 'used' to attract people with disabilities to the trade, to get everyone working. I prefer my version of the story: that the respect shown for Hephaestus was motivated by an acknowledgment of the ways a society relies upon a wide range of contributions. In re-building the city, brute strength may not have been as important as cunning artistry.

Saito writes that Athena and Hephaestus were situated as the parents of this 'new' Athens. In Aspasia's famous speech, "Pericles' Funeral Oration," retold in Plato's Menexenus,

she too mentions this role for Hephaestus and Athena. That the two are not specifically named is perhaps the result of some historical editing. Yet, at the time of the speech, I'd suggest Pericles's audience would know exactly to whom he was referring. He praises "the gods who ordered our lives, and instructed us, first of all men, in the arts for the supply of our daily needs, and taught us the acquisition and use of arms for the defense of the country" (Menexenus 934; Ronald and Ritchie 4).[27] Plato also mentions Hephaestus's 'fatherly' role in his Critias, lamenting that over time (the time between his own and that of Periclean Athens), society had failed recognize the importance of Hephaestus (par. 7). Since then, unfortunately, he has been even more neglected.[28] Yet the festival of Hephaestus, at the time, may have been a revolutionary event. Sissa and Detienne suggest that his festival was one (unlike nearly all others) where metics or foreigners were welcome, and not just the upper class celebrated (200). The Hephaistia, in this way, seems like a sort of Athenian Labor Day (or week).

Clearly, Hephaestus's image in Athens, and on Lemnos, was not burdened by the stigma that historians like Garland suggest disability entails. I would go so far as to suggest that the stigma comes from a modern reading and writing of the history. Clearly, there are ways to view disability as something worth celebrating. Hephaestus wasn't expelled from the city; he was celebrated as the father of Athens. Hephaestus's disability is not his sole characteristic. The invention of fire is his triumph, evidence of his *metis* as an embodied knowledge concomitant with his bodily difference.

In addition to his reputation for industriousness and ingenuity, Saito suggests that instead of stigmatizing physical difference, Hephaestus actually deified it—his disability is not hidden, but becomes part of his godly image. Cicero wrote that "at Athens there is a much-praised statue of [Hephaestus] by Alcamenes, a standing figure, draped, which displays a slight lameness, though not enough to be unsightly. We shall therefore deem god to be lame, since tradition represents [him] so*"* (De Natura Deorum, 1.24). The positive perception of his mind, his

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[27] Notice the parallelism between these words and those of the Homeric Hymn previously quoted ("he taught men glorious crafts throughout the world, men who before used to dwell caves in the mountains like wild beasts") as well as Hephaestus's role as metalworker, building arms for the Gods. In the the Paul Ryan translation of the "Menexenus" (in the Hamilton and Cairns Collected Dialogues) the gods are not named and he attributes to Aspasia the aside that "(it is fitting to omit their names on an occasion like this: we know them)," a nod to the audience of Athenians (954). It is worth noting, however, that the rest of Aspasia's speech focuses on the autochthonous 'birth' of Athens, an origin myth that has particularly chauvinist import.

[28] Susan Jarratt and Rory Ong point out that Plato mentioned Aspasia as well, and despite this she has been ignored until just recently.

craftiness, was balanced with—not negated or superceded by—the positive symbolism of his disabled body. Detienne and Vernant write that "the peculiar shape of his feet is the visible symbol," not of weakness, but of "his *metis*, his wise thoughts and his craftsman's intelligence" (272). As I have suggested, *metis* can be seen as a rhetorical framework, a way to move, rhetorically. Thus, instead of 're-affirming the unity of the hegemonic group' based upon a narrow view of ability, Hephaestus may have dissolved it. He may have allowed the monologue of unity to morph into a polyphony of differences. His body might stand as a symbol of power, rhetorical facility, godliness, disability. These terms might in fact be inclusive of one another.

If Hephaestus has so many stories, why should we believe that disability was silenced in ancient Greece? If Hephaestus was so respected and celebrated as a tradesman and an artist, why should we believe that craft and art, that rhetoric and expression, were exclusively the realm of the 'able-bodied'? Hephaestus might become not just a model for 'other' versions of agency, but also a model for the agency we might all have access to, once we are willing to consider reversing, moving sideways, facing traps. This is not to suggest that disability should be 'erased.' Just because Hephaestus might symbolize the ways we all move, the rhetoric we all have access to, does not mean that we are all 'disabled,' nor does it mean that disability does not exist. Instead, I want to suggest that the world we write (through our histories, our research, or in our classrooms) partially constructs disability—we can see disability as deficit, or we can recognize potential. I argue for the latter.

It is now time to return to ancient Greece, guided by Hephaestus, one of the symbolic fathers of this civilization, and to revise our perspective, exporting all of the exclusions we have imported over time. In the end, this is not about superimposing a new history over the 'old'; it is instead about enlightening the many stories of western civilization with the fire of an even flame.

Hephaestus has led me to question some of the foundational concepts of rhetoric. Hephaestus pulled me into the myths, into the art, and I brought along the lens of disability studies. This view of history allowed me to trouble the idea that rhetorical facility was and is only about controlled, measured bodies and speech. *Metis*, as Detienne, Sissa, Vernant, Ballif, Hawhee, Fredal and Kopelson have shown, presents a rhetoric that disrupts the linear, the logical, and that challenges the separation of mind and body. The celebration of Hephaestus, his craft, his cunning, his ability, as well as the deification of his disability are means of challenging held perceptions about the mythical character, but also about all of us—defined as we all are by

concepts of ability, by rhetorics of normalcy. I want to conclude this section by repeating an Orphic hymn, written in tribute to Hephaestus. Yet I also want to pause here to suggest that, as historians and teachers of rhetoric, we can all look to celebrate Hephaestus each day as we move into the classroom. Telling Hephaestus's story makes a difference. As we re-tell it and re-interpret it with one another, with our students, we make a difference. As Fredal, Kopelson, Ballif and Hawhee have suggested, I think we need to use *metis* ourselves. Yet, more importantly, I think we need to recognize our students' cunning intelligence. This means that we must move like a crab—sideways, doubly, divergently—through the rhetorical history we present. This means that we must recognize students' embodied knowledge, specifically by valorizing double and divergent embodied orientations.

> Hephaestus
>
> Your hammer and pincers
>
> Master every art
>
> Molten bronze and gold
>
> Flow from your workshop.
>
> Volcanoes, lava, flame from earth
>
> Pure clean light of the shining sun,
>
> That is all we see of you.
>
> You are the heat and strength of fire.
>
> Father of tribes, builder of shelter, inventor of cities we honor you.
>
> Our strong bodies your handiwork.
>
> Breathe upon us an even flame (Taylor "The Hymns of Orpheus" 198).

METIS AND THE STORIES OF *METIS*

The celebration of Hephaestus, his craft, his cunning, his ability, as well as the deification of his disability are means of challenging held perceptions about the mythical character, but also about all of us—defined as we all are by concepts of ability, by rhetorics of normalcy. In the first chapter, however, I also made the assertion that rhetoric won't admit it has a body; I argued that rhetoric does indeed have a body, a normate body; I suggested that this narrow image limits our ability to recognize our own real bodies and their inevitable connection to our being-in-the-world as thinking, persuading, collaborating subjects, as embodied selves; I suggested that a tension thus always underlies the 'rhetorical body,' the tension of our anxiety about

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imperfection, our sublimated desires, our need, finally, to affirm our (incomplete) bodies and embodiments. So, celebrating Hephaestus is also a way to give rhetoric a body. And *metis*, I have suggested, is an embodied knowledge: one that refuses the sexist, ableist body-image of rhetoric, an image that we have *chosen* from our (Western, Greco-Roman) versions of rhetorical history. There is work to be done here to explain just why, and how, *metis* has been overlooked. So I want to introduce Metis, the Greek god who is named after this form of intelligence, because I believe her role in myth can be seen as an analogue for the role *metis* has been relegated to in the rhetorical tradition.

I will argue that a rhetoric of *metis*, unlike the rhetorical picture introduced by Aristotle or Plato, is about the available means of doing something *to* the world, rather than doing something *in* the world. This calls up Bourdieu's concept of embodiment, via his explanation of the *habitus* as "constituted in practice and always oriented towards practical functions" (52). More specifically, this re-invokes Certeau's definition of *metis* as the 'art of the moment,' action which changes, re-orders and subverts its own context. Indeed, a complex exploration of embodied knowledge—the basis of this entire project—asks me to consider materiality and practicality always in dynamic relation with, never separate from discourse and thought (my own and that of others). Thus I see this work as a machine which I must constantly tinker with—a practiced and practical machine—which produces perspectives on the politics of embodiment. I believe the stories of Metis and Hephaestus urge their readers to consider *who* gets to be cunning, who gets to do something to the world. *Metis*, as an embodied intelligence, also illuminates a shadowy tangle of body-values, body-denials and body-power. With what cunning I can muster, I hope to address these rhetorical relationships, as I construct a more inclusive tradition.

Hephaestus's and Metis's roles in myth yield an often contradictory picture—a complexity that challenges simple constructions, reductions, or dismissals of the important role of *metis* in rhetorical history. The confusion and the flexibility of norms, as applied to and embodied by Hephaestus, suggest to me that Greek society did not see disability as simply as our history might suggest. If an arena for the negotiation of a hegemonic norm was rhetoric, a symbol of this negotiation was Hephaestus's body. In this chapter, in focusing on the mythological role of *metis*, and of the character of Metis herself, I want to further my thesis about the fusion between mythology, rhetoric and the body; to examine embodiment as the

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interrelation of all three. I will suggest that witnessing a rhetoric embodied in a mythological figure, though such personification may seem foreign to the modern reader, actually lays bare many of our assumptions about any rhetoric, and specifically about the corporeal nature of the 'available means of persuasion.' Metis, perhaps no more so (and no less) than any other rhetorical figure, is body. In exploring this connection and in re-telling this story, I hope to reveal the attachment between myth and rhetoric, and to show that rhetoric is indivisible from embodiment.

I suggest that *metis* is a way for us all (teachers, students, citizens) to move. *Metis* is a way to think and also a way to think about thinking. Because I see history as shifting and fluid, and because I see our rhetorical interpretation of it as particularly powerful, I hope to pursue a reading inspired by *metis*—mobile and polymorphic. When we re-read rhetorical history for evidence of different abilities—as both good rhetoricians and as anti-ableist historians—we will be drawn to double and divergent ways of knowing. History might be thought of as a forward march. My historiography will move differently—from side to side and in reverse. Donna Haraway suggests that "we exist in a sea of powerful stories…changing the stories, in both material and semiotic senses, is a modest intervention worth making" ("Manifesto" 45). In this sea I hope to move like a crab, like Hephaestus. This means that we must recognize and provide opportunity for students to forge their own rhetorical tools.

THE GODDESS METIS

Image 2.6: "Birth of Athena." Phrynos Painter. 560-550 B.C.E.

Image 2.7: "Birth of Athene." Painter C. 570 B.C.E.

Metis is known through Greek myth as Zeus's first wife, as the diety embodying, and naming, the cunning intelligence that Zeus would claim for his own when he swallowed her whole. As the popular story goes, Zeus and Metis were married immediately following the victory of the Olympic Gods over the Titans, and her role in this victory was central: "without the help of [Metis] without the assistance of the weapons of cunning she controls through her magic knowledge, supreme power could neither be won nor exercised nor maintained" (Detienne and Vernant 58). The form of intelligence that Metis is to represent, as a result of this mythical

incarnation, and as explained through this story, was seen as dangerous, as Other, and as eminently powerful. Metis has always been associated with trickery—those with *metis* can see the world slightly differently, can find opportunity to turn the tables on those with greater *bie*, or brute strength, than they have access to. Defeating the Titans, a race of giants, was only possible due to superior cunning. That said, Zeus himself, before joining with and then consuming Metis, was pure *bie*. Because of her pivotal role in defeating the Titans, and also because he foresaw the threat her children would be to him (having inherited her *metis*), Zeus saw immediately that Metis's wisdom and ingenuity were a threat to his sovereign power—a power that he attained only with her aid. Not content just to marry her, to learn from her, or to share power with her, he swallows the pregnant Metis and becomes, himself, *metieta*. Yet, after he consumes Metis, thus evading the inevitable usurpment of his power, Zeus gets a huge headache. In one version of the story, he asks Hephaestus to knock a hole in his temple: Metis's daughter Athena springs out (see Image 2.6 and Image 2.7).

Hephaestus and Athena then, from this moment on, share a strange lineage—Athena never really knowing her mother (Metis) and Hephaestus carrying on her artisanship in the shadow of Zeus. Athena begins a line of inheritance down to, most notably, Eros—all of Metis's descendents cunning and crafty, yet disconnected from the legacy. It might be said that Athena's androgyny—a quality she is most known for, and which augments her artisanship—becomes a symbol of her *metis* as well. Thus we have an abnormal triad at the 'head' of the *metis* family tree: the consumed cunning of Metis, the craftiness of Hephaestus, and the ambiguous sexuality of Athena. When Hephaestus and Athena become the 'parents' of Athens, it might be suggested that Metis is the grandmother of the great city. Certainly, as I mentioned in the last chapter, the parents of Athens were valued specifically for their cunning, in a society that would value such ingenuity as it rebuilt itself following the Ten Year (Trojan) War. Yet, in the mythical stories, in the immediate aftermath of the wedding dinner, "there [could] be no *metis* without Zeus or directed against him"—all cunning would have to pass through him, he would be forewarned of any tricks that might be played (Detienne and Vernant 107). Zeus internalized *metis*. Some versions of the myth insist that Metis continued to speak to Zeus from inside his head, an advisor only he could hear. In this way, though in Greek mythology there was a rhetorical push for the substantiation of *metis* as a rhetoric—something which the great philosophers would later

obscure—*metis* was also quickly appropriated. In Greek myth, *metis* was wrested from the feminine, its lineage became unofficial, and its uses were co-opted and controlled by Zeus.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the great philosophers also ate *metis*, recognizing it only as the inferior Other to logos. In this way, eating *metis* was eating rhetoric, affirming logos was an affirmation of philosophy. Eating rhetoric was eating the body, affirming philosophy was gilding the soul. Philosophy aside (yet always in opposition), both Plato and Aristotle did define rhetoric. The essential difference between Plato, Aristotle and, for instance, the Sophists, who were proponents (and living examples) of *metis* was that the rhetoric of Plato and Aristotle was isolated to either theoretical or practical knowledge of the available means of persuasion—how to do things *in* an ordered world.

The rhetoric of *metis* intervenes and invents, doing something *to* the world. *Embodying metis,* the stories of Metis shift the frame from action *in* the world to action *on* the world, even if this is the world of myth. Her cunning creates the Olympic world, as Hephaestus's and Athena's cunning creates Athens (and the artisans they empower to *get working*). There is a connection and an elaboration, then, between her rhetoric, her actions, and their 'products': a cunning woman uses cunning to create a cunning world, a world of chance. These connections showcase the holistic articulation of *metis* as an embodied knowledge: we are not bodies in a world, we are embodied subjects constantly co-creating worlds. N. Katherine Hayles, in her definition of embodiment, writes that "information [discourse], like humanity, cannot exist apart from the [instantiated, local and specific] embodiment that brings it into being as a material entity" (How We Became 47). Simply, embodied subjects create worlds, which create embodied subjects.

It is then clear that Zeus's eating of Metis is both the consumption of a body, and of a world. Zeus destroys the possibility that individual agents might master *metis*. He does so as he destroys a world of embodied difference, femininity—a most powerful femininity. This subordinates Other bodies—it subordinates bodies, period. This mirrors the denigration, belittlement and perversion of *metis* by the philosophical tradition (and the real suppression this prescribes). From our viewpoint today, it is difficult not to learn a lesson from this story about the injustice of patriarchal and ableist suppression of Other forms of knowledge. The work of this writing is to reverse such suppression, and I hope to show I'm not the only one willing to free Metis from my head.

EATING *METIS*

As I previously mentioned, Plato himself rejects *metis*—it is *foreign* to his view of wisdom, to the realm of Truth he idealizes. Aristotle, as well, "displaced and devalued" *metis* (Detienne and Vernant 5). I would suggest that these philosophers are also eating *metis*, digesting it and, in the words of Detienne and Vernant, "pick[ing] out from the skills of the artisan anything that…produces in the world of Becoming creations that are as real, stable and organized as possible" (4). In this way, Aristotle and Plato make *metis* logical and systematic; this is *metis* with the cunning wrung out. This is *metis* in an ordered, proportional, hierarchized rhetoric. On the whole, because these philosophers are in the business of *composing history,* they also impose their own terministic screens. Detienne and Vernant suggest that "in the picture of thought and intelligence presented by the philosophers, the professional experts where intelligence was concerned, all the qualities of mind which go to make up *metis*, its sleights of hand, its resourceful ploys and its stratagems, are usually thrust into the shadows, erased from the realm of true knowledge and relegated, according to the circumstances, to the level of mere routine, chancey inspiration, changeable opinion or mere charlatanerie, pure and simple" (4). This denunciation has a particular xenophobic accent (aimed at the Sophists, non-Athenians), and it arrives part and parcel with a larger ideological agenda.[29] Karen Kopelson argues that the "obliteration of *metis* is…fundamentally related to, if not one and the same with, the denunciation of rhetoric" ("Rhetoric" 133). I would suggest that there was an ableist accent on this denunciation, yet I would also assert that there is an ambivalence in these judgments about *metis*. Cunning is not always so easy to chew on. These stories are shadowed by doubts, slippages and qualifications.

In the Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle mentions the stigma against *metis*, stating that many believe "that some who are *practically wise and clever* are incontinent" (1037 italics mine).[30] You will recall, from the first chapter, that Aristotle in fact makes an argument that such estimations of continence are always a social construction. Yet the suggestion that lingers over

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[29] *Techne* was similarly made practical. As Atwill explains in Rhetoric Re-Claimed, *techne*, when it is allied with *metis* (as it is by the Sophists), "deforms limits in to new paths in order to reach—or, better yet, to produce—an alternative destination" (69). Yet we now refer to *technai*, handbooks full of sets of rules and examples, when we think of *techne*. In Atwill's telling of the history, *techne* became specific class markers, things that could be *possessed* and then distinguished craftsmen from one another. Instead of a view of *techne* as an overarching knowledge or means, it became a classificatory system. William Covino argues that "reactions against the Sophists contributed to the establishment of rhetoric as *techne* without magic" (20). This distortion is similar to the attempt to ally *metis* only with the forms of knowledge Plato and Aristotle most highly value—to make it precise, a science, as Aristotle does. Of course, *metis* vehemently resists precision.
[30] The word he uses for incontinence is *akrasia*—lacking self control.

this discussion is that some forms of thought (particularly scientific and philosophic thought) are continent, while others (like *metis*, practical intelligence or cleverness) are linked with incontinence. Aristotle suggests that a soul can be disabled or incontinent. He asserts that "exactly as paralyzed limbs when we intend to move them to the left turn on the contrary to the right, so it is with the soul; the impulses of incontinent people move in contrary directions" (Nicomachean 951). This body-metaphor seems also to hint at a fear of difference that is semiotic in nature: one could read this construction as a denigration of the shifting unpredictability of signification, a way to say that signification isn't broken, but rather that certain bodies can't signify properly. There is perhaps an unconscious (and perhaps connected) dig, here, at the double orientation of *metis*, of Hephaestus. An incontinent person cannot have virtues as he is not "adapted to receive them" (Nicomachean 951). Signification isn't broken, but rather certain bodies aren't adapted to receive signs as signified. This same bias extends into the diagnoses that we now make of student writing—so often attributing error to the student her or himself, to their body, rather than to the discourse. We are allowed to perpetuate the myth that rhetoric works perfectly for perfect people, instead of admitting that discourse is as wonderfully broken as we are.

In the Phaedrus, recall Socrates's playful strategies, examples of a rhetoric of *metis*. Plato seems to be saying Socrates wants to pursue Phaedrus wantonly, that *he* desires the scroll beneath Phaedrus's cloak, even as he condemns this. His is a double orientation, an indirect pursuit of desire. There are also direct parallels between this cunning seduction and the myths of *metis*. Just as Socrates holds forth about the chariot and horses in the soul, one of the central stories of *metis* concerns two horses as well: one horse of 'excellence,' Arion, and another of the fleeting moment, Kairos (Detienne and Vernant 203). Unlike Socrates's version of the story, in which he states that the un-excellent horse must be suppressed (even as he identifies with, and wants to follow, this Other horse), the message of the mythical stories of *metis* is that the good charioteer must understand and follow *both* the 'proper,' 'proportionate' horse, and understand and utilize *metis* to harness fleeting opportunity. Even if it is a 'massive jumble of a creature'—there is something to be desired in following the second horse in each of these stories, not 'beating it down.' When Socrates states that this other horse must not be followed, he implicitly devalues *metis*. But the desire underscoring his exchange with Phaedrus, and his identification with the ugly horse also maps onto *metis,* and significantly overlaps with the

mythical chariot-and-horses metaphor that calls for *metis* as a means of harnessing excellence *and* opportunity—the perfectable and the partial.

In some instances, when Plato and Aristotle speak of *metis*, they recognizes the value of practical intelligence, even while they would never embrace a conception of the world as windswept by chance, of thought as a matter of momentous (and embodied) inspiration, of logic as the curve and circle. Thus they remove *metis* from the body, and digest it through philosophy. Yet even those who embrace *metis* qualify its uses and definitions. Defenders of *metis* work to defend it from those who would label it *lepte*, light or airy. This defense is on one hand semantic, on the other hand symbolic. First of all, in insisting that *metis* be *pukine*—"thought that is dense, rich and compressed," anchored and forward looking instead of light and airy—authors from Oppian and Homer, all the way up to Detienne and Vernant, erect a complex linguistic bulwark around the concept (15). They write that while "the man (sic) of *metis* is always ready to pounce" and "acts faster than lightning," "this is not to say that he gives way to a sudden impulse" (15). Detienne and Vernant insist that "in no way does [*metis*] act lightly" (15). Key words for *metis*, in this schema, are 'informed prudence' and 'vigilant premeditation' (111). I would suggest that, even while *metis* may be the inverse of an Aristotelian logic, even while the world of *tuche* and *kairos* is 'foreign' to Platonic Truth, one must stress the depth, the strength and the practicality of *metis* in order to save it from ridicule—it is not incontinent. This was necessary, perhaps, because *metis* is specifically *not* identified with the strongest and the best, with the ideal, with the unchanging, but rather with an artisan like the 'lame' Hephaestus. The fact that *metis* represents a "revers[al of] the 'natural' outcome of the encounter" may have been threatening (13). Naming *metis 'lepte'* was certainly pejorative. Yet Detienne and Vernant state that, in the Greek intellectual world, there was an understanding that "whatever the strength of god or man, there always comes a time when he confronts one stronger than himself" (13). In a world full of such inevitable instances, *metis* is what the 'fittest' employ, therefore it is truly weighty. Labeling *metis 'pukine'* and not '*lepte,'* was one way to defend it, another way to define it as being linked to the 'practical'; another way, perhaps, to combat the stigma of disability.

I suggest that we recognize *metis* as a rhetoric and that we recognize its embodiedness: as light or heavy, as a jumbled horse, as Socrates's seductive self. We can also think of Metis as rhetoric *herself*. Ballif sees the 'text' of Gorgias's <u>Encomium of Helen</u> as a seductive *body*

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which eludes capture both physically in the story and symbolically in Gorgias's re-telling of it, highlighting the "deceptive and ambiguous nature of truth and subjectivity" (<u>Seduction</u> 66). She then suggests that we see "Helen and/as rhetoric" (<u>Seduction</u> 66). I would argue that the same can be said of the stories of Metis—Metis is embodied rhetoric—so long as we see rhetoric as Other-bodied, seductive, practically ambiguous. Also, recall Karen Kopelson's argument that the "obliteration of *metis* is…fundamentally related to, if not one and the same with, the denunciation of rhetoric" ("Rhetoric" 133). In the same way, when Aristotle and Plato make *metis* logical and systematic they swallow Metis, and eat rhetoric. So when we recognize *metis* as a rhetoric, we must connect it to embodiment and to the bodies I have illustrated: Metis and Hephaestus. We must always remember the rhetorical strategies of the Metis myths, which forcibly masculinize this intelligence; we must always remember the rhetorical moves of Plato and Aristotle, legitimating only that which is Greek, denouncing *metis* as foreign and 'alien'; we should never forget their attempts to make *metis* logical and proportional, and to ally it with incontinence (and disability) when it is not. Michelle Ballif suggests that rhetorical history poses *metis* "as the illegitimate offspring of language" (<u>Seduction</u> 58). She suggests that an alternative tradition of *metis*, like the one I have spun here, shows us that language is not for 'technicians' but for artisans like Hephaestus (189). Utilizing *metis,* we might begin to write a new mythology that values partial and contextual knowledge and that makes space for figures like Hephaestus and Metis.

Given this space, it might be interesting—and useful and empowering—to see where Metis takes us when we free her from Zeus's head.

MEDUSA

Image 2.8: "The Stalk of the Sleeping Medusa," Nausicaa Painter. 450-440 B.C.E.

In the writing of Helene Cixous, we can find a similar manifestation of *metis*, this time very specifically mythologized. The link is first of all etymological: Metis, Medus, Medea and Medusa all share the same root—and all denote cunning.[31] In her reclamation of cunning,

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[31] There also may have been a familial connection between Hephaestus and Medusa—in some myths, the two are sexual partners. Their child, Cacus, was said to be a fire-breathing giant. Cacus was said to eat human flesh and nail human heads to his door (Graves 158). Killing him was one of Heracles's twelve labors (Graves 158). This link is not made by all scholars, though the story shows up in Ovid and in Virgil's <u>Aeneid</u>.

Cixous confronts the tradition that has denigrated *metis*. She explains that men have "riveted us between two horrifying myths: between the Medusa and the abyss" ("Laugh" 315). She implores her female listener to "write her self: [women] must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies" (309). This driving away from the body resonates with Zeus's consumption of Metis: Here is a symbol of exactly what Cixous means when she says that "writing has been run by a libidinal and cultural—hence political, typically masculine—economy; this is a locus where the repression of women has been perpetuated, over and over" ("Laugh" 311). Metis becomes a woman's whispered voice in a man's head. The Medusa myth, as told in the poetry of Ovid, and elsewhere, warns that proud women, women who speak out, will be made ugly (Metamorphoses).[32] The beautiful Medusa is 'disfigured,' her head writhes with snakes, or perhaps the arms of the octopus. And this connection to the octopus of *metis* may not have been coincidental. Certainly the original myth relied upon a reference to the dangerous, trapping, 'knot made up of a thousand arms' that the octopus represented.[33] In this way, the myth of Medusa furthers a larger debate.   This is the contrast between *metis* and Platonic or Aristotelian logic that has resulted in *metis* being rendered Other, threatening, female and foreign. As shown in Image 2.8, the only remedy to the dangerous power of Medusa, made ugly because of her cunning, is murder. In the image I have included above, Perseus stalks and murders Medusa. Later, Athena flays Medusa and uses her skin as an aegis, as wings, perhaps in this way co-opting her power, or channeling the cunning of both Medusa and Athena's own mother, Metis (Graves 45). Just as Metis was eaten and imprisoned in Zeus's head, her wiles incorporated by him, Medusa was beheaded, her blood harnessed by her killers for its magical

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[32] As an example of the ways that myths crucially disagree with one another, we can see that in Homer's version of the story, Medusa comes into the world *with* her head of snakes. I think such differences reveal quite marked transitions in and contestations of signification. As with the difference between Hephaestus as injured *by* his fall from Olympus vs. Hephaestus as disabled and *thus* thrown from Olympus, the chronology matters. On one hand, disability is divine punishment for an action; on the other hand, disability is the condition which qualifies you for divine punishment,

[33] According to Graves's re-telling of the myth, Medusa was "once beautiful…but one night Medusa lay with Poseidon, and Athene, enraged…changed her into a winged monster with glaring eyes, huge teeth, protruding tongue, brazen claws and serpent locks, whose gaze turned men to stone" (127). This version tells a story of female jealousy, unlike Ovid's version which traces the fall of Medusa as the descent of the great goddess religions and the ascent of the male gods Zeus and Poseidon (Melville). The myth may also express the subjugation of women's bodies: a male fear of Medusa's creative power—she is so 'procreative' that her children Chrysaor and Pegasus spring from her dead body (Graves 127). In Graves's version, Poseidon kills Medusa to have her head to give as a sort of bachelor-party present—a totem of fertility and also women's persecution—to his friend Polydectes (238).

powers (Ovid IV. 618).[34] The myth communicates male fear of women's power, as does the story of Metis: when women are recognized as cunning, thus powerful, they can be seen only as a threat and thus must be appropriated, silenced, slain.

Cixous, recognizing this vilification and refusing its legacy, asks us to reexamine the myth: "look at the Medusa straight on" and you'll see that "she's not deadly. She's beautiful and she's laughing" ("Laugh" 309). Her message to women is this: "Write! Writing is for you, you are for you; your body is yours, take it" ("Laugh" 309). Writing, according to Cixous, is "the very possibility of change[...]precisely working (in) the in-between, inspecting the process of the same and the other without which nothing can live…to admit this is first to want the two, as well as both, the ensemble of the one and the other, not fixed in sequences of struggle and expulsion or some other form of death but infinitely dynamized by an incessant process of exchange from one subject to another" ("Laugh" 265). I will later challenge this emphasis on the literary, because I actually believe that Cixous overstates her case for writing. I think that what she refers to is the act of communication, embodied communication which involves the individual always with the other, and instantiates within the body changing and (at least partially) shared experiences of embodiment which challenge the norm, specifically phallogocentrism. Indeed, in dialogue with Catherine Clement, Cixous stresses that "there will not be *one* feminine discourse, there will be thousands of different kinds of feminine words…until now women were not speaking out loud, were not creating their tongues—plural" (39).

This incessant process of creation as change and exchange is an example of the power of *metis* and is driven by Metis, rescued from within Zeus's head and restored to the body. This rescue, in some way, should also reconnect us all to a focus on embodiment as we 'write'; it should certainly remind us that Greek mythology, and each version of rhetorical possibility that we create, potentially holds counter-narratives, is full of other bodies, other tongues, and therefore so are we. I would finally argue that, as teachers, we need to avoid the temptation to 'eat' *metis*, and wrest control over knowledge away from students. Student's cunning strategies and divergent expressions may threaten us or challenge us, but we cannot believe that *metis* is something we use on students, that we can be the sole tricksters, holding student bodies captive.

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[34] Graves writes that vials of Medusa's blood were widely distributed: the blood had both the power to kill and to cure (175). There are many contradictory stories about who received the blood, who distributed it, and who used it for good, who for bad (175).

CHAPTER THREE: EMBODIED (DIS)POSITIONS

I have suggested that we must recognize the body as rhetorical—as having a powerful rhetoricity, and as being rhetorically negotiated—thus valorizing our own and student bodily difference as meaningful and meaning-making. As an integral part of this process, I think, we also need to continually interrogate the ways bodies are inscribed and how these inscriptions are incorporated—how we come to terms with and through embodiment, and how we come strolling up to the body, carrying a baggage of terms. To begin with, we need to address the vanishing of the body, how and why it is scotomized, erased. The body is absented, disappeared from the rhetorical tradition, from rhetoric. When the body is 'present,' we are offered limited means of conceptualizing it as anything other than cohesive, disciplined, perfect, unobtrusive, arhetorical. Therefore, if rhetoric is as embodied as any other aspect of communication—as any life process—it must appear, and appear wielding all of its prostheses, in its wonderful uncertainty.

In this chapter, I want to speak to the position or (dis)position of disability as difference, as an identity which is both socially/rhetorically constructed and yet ineluctable from the lived experience of oppression. To do so I will think through the concept of embodiment by reading *metis* into the foundational works of phenomenology, and then into more recent work by Donna Haraway, Judith Butler, Elizabeth Grosz, Paul Varela, Brian Massumi, N. Katherine Hayles and others. I want to look at models, metaphors and movements of embodiment so that I can further clarify my project, my exploration of embodied rhetoric—so that I can explain why thinking about embodment matters, and why *metis* is an important model for embodiment.

THE CONTINGENCIES OF NORMATIVITY—*METISSAGE*

There are connections between the *metis* of Hephaestus and Metis and the *metis* of Certeau. Further, there are important connections between *metis* and normativity—indeed, one might say that normativity functions to deny the possibility of doubleness and divergence, chance and change. In critical theory, the concept of *metissage* locates and interrogates this denial. *Metissage*, meaning mixture or miscegenation, has been used as a critical lens through which one might observe issues of identity, Empire, resistance, cultural construction and intersectionality. Relying upon metaphors of mixture that are biological and cultural, this concept of *metissage* is also tightly united to space, particularly to space as conceived in cultural geography: space as a locus, rather than as a necessarily fixed physical environment; space created and re-created contextually by cultural practices, shifting identities and identifications, as well as by bodies and technologies. *Metissage* both *is like* and *is* what Gloria Anzaldua refers to

when she writes about *mestiza* consciousness. In response to antagonism and in the face of cultural forces that value 'purity' and 'coherence,' Anzaldua recognizes the need for an identity and a language with "a malleability that renders us unbreakable" (64). The *Mestizo* Race is a vision of modern *metis* which, "rather than resulting in an inferior being, provides hybrid progeny, a mutable, more malleable species with a rich gene pool" resulting in an "alien consciousness" of the borderland, all cultures at the same time (77). This language echoes the Greek idea of strength not through brute force (*bie*), but through cunning and adaptability (*metis*). Interestingly, the French word *métis* is related to the Spanish word *mestizo*, both coming from the latin word *mixtus*, the past participle of the verb 'to mix' and connoting mixed blood.

As Kincheloe and Steinberg write, *metissage* "can be employed as a heuristic device that induces teachers, students and cultural workers to study the ways cultural interaction and exchange take place" (25). Such an initiative is of course particularly important to the program of interrogating racism, Empire and hetero-normativity and also, connectedly, to interrogating ableism, the cultural logic of normativity, and the relation of all of these forces through eugenic thinking. 'Miscegenation,' in such a framework, might be a way to invalidate the idea of biological 'purity,' whiteness, hetero-normativity, the supposed biological differences between first and third world, and so on, as each movement towards hierarchization relies upon the attribution of physical and cognitive difference or disability, the ensuing fear of 'contamination' and the ongoing insistence on the marginality and marking of other bodies and minds—premised upon the invisible presence of a pure and unmarked center. This is a tricky rhetoric, because not all groups that are marginalized by binary thinking, by science, or by colonization share an 'inherent' disability. Rather, disability as stigma is a socio-cultural attribution in service of normativity in all forms. More positive values for disability must be sought. It is important to use *metissage* here to show how we might respond more cunningly to normativity.

As Vivian May and Beth Ferri write of feminist discourse, many leading thinkers respond to the attribution of physical and mental inferiority to women by dismantling the false construction of woman-as-disabled without challenging the construction of disability as a biological fact. They argue that "by definitively asserting that women are not disabled by their sex, many feminists have simply replaced one subject-object dualism (male vs. female) with another: woman vs. disability" (120). This response only serves to make disability seem grounded and static, and to reinforce the stigma of disability, while it "obscures the multiplicity

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of identities and overlapping layers of experience which become overly simplified as discrete and inseperable" (121).

Of course, the norms of whiteness, masculinity, American-ness or ambulatory mobility are not natural givens. Rather, central positions rely upon the marking and positioning of other bodies around their periphery in order to hold a (tenuously) coherent shape. Image 3.1 perhaps better conceptualizes the process than my words do. Here I have tried to depict how an array of bodies (of all shapes and sizes, in wheelchairs, and so on) outlines an ideal body in white space—implying the ways that the norm is implicitly constructed by an arrangement of abnormal bodies. A kind of 'negative image' implies that the norm is a blank, unmarked space. What is outside of its boundaries is occluded, is excessive. (Thus) the white space is pure. The point is that we do see the world through this white body, even as cultures focus on marking and re-marking the world the white body disqualifies. *Metissage* is a way to write into and over this unmarked whiteness.

Image 3.1: "Normative Body." Jay Dolmage. 2005.

As you see, this image is a negative of the traditional image of the body politic, a society that is truly made up of its members. An example of this is Hobbes' conception that a sovereign leader would be a sort of artificial, amalgamated person. The frontispiece to the first edition of Leviathan shows a single body built out of the many bodies of the citizenry, with the sovereign's head on top (Image 3.2). The reversal of this idea that a society is built of the bodies all of its

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members is the idea that a society is actually constructed by abjecting and marginalizing those who are conditional, temporary, or expendable members, as, for instance, Giorgio Agamben has suggested.[35]

Image 3.2: "Detail from Frontispiece." Hobbes, Thomas. Leviathan, or the Matter, Forme, & Power of a Common-Wealth, Ecclesiasticall and Civill. London: Andrew Crooke, 1651.

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson extends this line of argument in her scholarship on the 'freak show,' arguing that there are cultural processes which make physical abnormality or particularity "a hypervisible text against which the ['normal'] viewer's indistinguishable body fades into a seemingly neutral, tractable and invulnerable instrument of the autonomous will" ("From Wonder to Error" 10). The excessiveness and Otherness of the disabled body *allow* for the construction of a mythical norm. It is only against an Othered body that the normal body is allowed to perpetuate its deceit (of transparency, of being standard, of being whole). A range of enstranged and estranged bodies is arrayed around the blankness of the norm, so that it might take ideal shape. And the incarceration, pathologization, or deportation of the strange body/mind is the ground upon which the liberty, health and citizenship of the supposedly able-bodied and rational subject is based. Elizabeth Grosz reinforces this argument, writing that the 'freakish' or 'freakified' Other "imperil[s] the very definitions we rely on to classify humans, identities and sexes" ("Intolerable Ambiguity" 57). Yet because of this "defiance of the structure of binary oppositions that govern [us]," the Othered body "confirms the viewer as bounded, belonging to a 'proper' social category" ("Intolerable Ambiguity"57; 65). Disability becomes "all that must be ejected or abjected from self-image to make the bounded, category-obeying self possible" ("Intolerable Ambiguity" 65). In this way, disability can 'serve' as a way to eject and abject many forms of corporeal, cultural and ideological Otherness. Butler refers to this abjection as part of a repressive relationship, channeling Foucault and Freud, and labeling it the abjected

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[35] As Agamben writes in Homo Sacer, perverse as it sounds, questioning who should be allowed to live reifies one's sense of belonging in the human race (10). He argues that, "the first foundation of a political life [for all] is [marking] a life that may be killed" (89). Society relies upon "the materialization of the state of exception" (174). Agamben looks specifically at concentration camps—in Germany, but also in the U.S, Cuba, Hawa'i and elsewhere—and suggests that there is a connection between the materialization of modern society and the material creation of a category of human who can be killed or against whom crimes can be committed without impunity. He notes that this expendable human has often been deemed disabled. I would note that this logic is at work even in less overt circumstances, as disabled people are oppressed, and as disability is used as a category that reifies 'ability' and its attendant privileges.

outside/constitutive inside (<u>Bodies</u> 10). That which we abject is also constitutive of our personhood. This formula constructs the diagram of the norm in Image 3.1, creating a form for the norm by demarcating and arranging bodies on the margins.

So what can be done?

My response to this process, a performance infinitely repeated, is that we need means of irruption and reinscription—not erasing disability and difference, but disregarding the boundary (and the violence that reinforces this boundary) between the white space and its outline, its outliers. To do so is also to see this white space as ghostly, hallucinated. I believe it might be possible to reinsribe the body, materially, through a positive, rather than negative process of affirming disability and difference.

A first step is to look closely at the body, in order to disallow assumptions of its neutrality. The charged, interested body cannot warrant exemption from rhetorical analysis. And I will suggest that we begin with the belief that no body is enabled by abjecting disability.

Scholars of whiteness such as Alcoff, Haynes, Keating, McLaren, Wellman, Kincheloe and Steinberg suggest that cultural *metissage* is a concept that can lead to careful interrogation and critique of all processes of cultural exchange. Kincheloe and Steinberg specifically link the logic of whiteness, that which opposes *metissage*, to science, and here we also see why the idea of *metissage* is essential to disability studies, and vice versa. As the authors suggest, there is a science, reason and technology of whiteness; science leads to the idea of the biological/psychological universality of whiteness, allowing whites to "project irrationality, sensuality and spontaneity on to the other" (6). My suggestion would be that such projection, as an attribution of disability in a pejorative sense, always overlaps with discourses of ableism, and through science with a culture of eugenics. Siobhan Somerville and others have shown how scientific discourses construct(ed) homosexuals and African-Americans as deficient contingently and referentially. Much of the scholarship of disability studies critiques the medical perspective on disability as dehumanizing, and obviously the T-4 program in Germany represents an extreme application of such ideas, connected of course to the entire Holocaust. Programs based on such scientific assumptions and attributions of disability have been used to violently reinforce the boundaries around the able-bodied white male heterosexual, marking his others out multiply—contingently and referentially. Medical discourse abjects and objectifies the disabled,

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as medical discourse also disabled the abject. Therefore any study of disability is also a study of the interestedness of medical and scientific meaning-making, as I will show.

Metissage's connotations of miscengenation usefully subvert its biological entailments. In La Pensee Metisse, Serge Gruzinski puts forward the concept of metissage as a hermeneutics capable of calling into question its own suggestiveness—first of all impaling and examining the presumptions inherent in the idea of biological cross-breeding: namely the assumption of the "existence of pure, physically distinct human groups" (19). That is, as Stefanie Dunning points out, we have to critique how the compartmentalization of ethnicity "does not allow for multiple racial identifications" (125). Secondly, the suggestion of cultural hybridity put forward by metissage calls into question even the mestizo logic that Anzaldua employs, the very idea that "mestizo processes are mechanisms that occur on the edge of stable entities," as disorder imposed upon rationality (Gruzinski, 25). I have argued that disability is (inherent in) the very process of making meaning, assuming a centrality that is constantly disavowed yet never truly 'marginal,' never located in opposition to 'purity' or 'normality' and therefore capable of challenging the assumedly natural position of 'ability.' Using the concept of metissage is a way to break down normative assumptions about bodies and cultures, and to lead us to think about space and embodiment more dynamically. As Rosi Braidotti writes in Metamorphoses, "the problem is not to know who we are, but rather what we want to become, how to represent mutations, changes and transformations, rather than being in its classical modes" (2). Fear of disability is in some shape this fear of change, the fear that we are only temporarily able-bodied, a fear that the body isn't static, rational and whole. Recognizing this fear as characteristic of normativity allows us to recognize the need for rhetorics, across marginalized groups, which seize control of the representation of bodies and spaces. We can think through alternative accounts of embodiment, and we can interrogate the cultural logic and biopolitics that are so resistant to mixture and difference and transformation.

Metissage can then be what Hardt and Negri call a "counterimperial ontology" (Multitude 363). That is, the logic of normalcy, and/or whiteness, and/or, in Hardt and Negri's frame, Empire, function to "limit public access and interaction in such a way as to avoid the chance encounter of diverse populations, creating a series of protected interior and isolated spaces" (Multitude 188). Empire is normative in that it suggests that all members of the 'global economy' must conform to the corporate free-market system. As Maria Barile points out, people

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with disabilities can be seen as undesirable if they are not 'productive' in the global market, or physical disability can be seen as a biogenetic commodity (213).[36] Empire can reinforce normativity by limiting encounter. Disability can also be attributed to entire nations—underdevelopment is, after all, not coincidentally suggestive of 'cognitive delay.' This metaphor seems to become *incorporated* when we examine the fact that, as Dinyar Godrej points out the New Internationalist, 60% of the world's 500 million disabled persons live in 'developing countries,' and one in five of these persons is disabled by malnutrition (14).

When Hardt and Negri suggest that "nomadism and miscegenation (*metissage*) appear…as the first ethical practices on the terrain of Empire" (361-362), they suggest that the space of Empire inculcates a particular embodied normativity, and so contributes to the construction of disability. This construction of disability is connected to a centuries-long project of othering the colonized, a project which Robyn Wiegman and others have shown scripts the African body, for instance, "as simultaneously corporeally and libidinously excessive" due to a fear of mixture (American Anatomies 58). This construction is augmented in the 'new world order' as the world market creates a "constant process of hierarchization," and this process also reaches into bodies (Hardt and Negri, Multitude154). We seem able to justify the idea of consumer nations, manufacturer nations, and the huge class gulf between the two. Opening up global trade allows the market to reproduce this hierarchy in much less visible ways. One response would be to demand that, like the erasure of debts to the World Bank, the ethical response to globalization would be the erasure of disability. The erasure of economic debt is much different than the eradication of bodies, their parts and minds; fluids, fats, neurons, code. These things don't disappear, they accrue untraceable interest. Of course, the erasure of debt might not erase inequity. And this subtractive response to disability leaves little room for the subjectivity of people with disabilities, as it supposes that disability is static, thus eradicable, and that we should want to be rid of 'it.' This also supposes that we can erase 'it' without erasing people and their potentials (both in what they add to the world and to the gene pool). This is not to suggest that a cure for AIDS—for instance—is not desirable. Instead, I want to highlight the ways that a discourse of cure leans towards a discourse of eugenics. It is intensely difficult to

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[36] The interaction between the spatial and the biological entailments of *metissage* are also usefully connotative. Donna Haraway points out how, through the "capitalization of the genome" the gene "becomes property within the regulatory regimes of advanced capitalism" ("How Like a Leaf" 153). How this regulatory regime will design the place of perceived genetic 'others' is a pressing question, and forces us to pay attention to the overlap of capital and biological normativity, bio-economics.

de-couple the push for a less oppressive or painful life experience for a person with disabilities from the push for a homogeneously 'able' world. Eradication of supposed disability can often veil (and often has veiled) the eradication of ethnic groups. Less overtly, the push for cure entails that the life-experience of those who cannot be cured loses value.

What might be proposed, instead, might be a counter-logic, one that perceives of embodiment, and of space, as changeable and traversable—a movement not necessarily towards normality, but perhaps towards mixture, hybridity and partiality as the cunning and tactical *modus operandi* in response to processes of segregation and eradication.

Thus, Hardt and Negri push the metaphor of miscegenation to suggest that what is also needed are corporeal mutations as "an extraordinarily important, but still quite ambiguous" element of resistance to Empire (Multitude 216). The authors suggest we need "a desire that creates a new body; a metamorphosis that breaks all the naturalistic homologies of modernity" (Multitude 216). They continue: "the will to be against really needs a body that is completely incapable of submitting to command…incapable of adopting to family life, to factory discipline, to the regulations of a traditional sex life, and so forth. (If you find your body refusing these 'normal' modes of life, don't despair—realize your gift!)" (Multitude 216). Of course, it is easy to valorize an 'alternative' embodiment as being so purely oppositional, without investigating how such logic is also normative—why should certain bodies *have* to be oppositional? Yet, side-stepping this essentialism, my argument is that we can all realize this gift. That is, although the disabled body has been absolutely commanded, historically, and as disability is the category under which the commanded are categorized, so as to facilitate control, the disabled, marginalized, body, might also positively disrupt 'naturalistic homologies.'

It is my intention to put forward *metis* as an alternative rhetoric of disability, as well as *metissage* as a hermeneutics through which we might critique those cultural forces which oppress and deny the creative possibilities that come from embracing our multiple identities, our multiple bodies and knowledges and embodied knowledges, and finally the processual spaces in which we cunningly move. Connecting the normativity of embodiment to whiteness, Empire, heteronormativity and so on is not to create a stronger alliance of otherness, but rather to follow a logic of *metissage*, suggesting that normativity is a constantly referential process, relying upon reinforcements of cultural, corporeal and capital otherness—to demarcate its outside and secure the central position. *Metissage* is not necessarily a logical replacement of domination; rather it is

a rhetorical frame which might point up the interestedness of boundary-drawing and the function of power in discourse, in language. *Metis*, then, is how we move ambiguously, through metamorphosis, to harness chance and generate change, cognizant of the power of discourse and the changeability of this power.

WANDERING

Theorizing space and embodiment, one 'begins' perhaps with Plato, who in the Timaeus planted the seeds for an obsession with the wholeness of space and of the body-as-space. Plato saw space (finally) as a container which does not change even as its contents do. He also saw space as a continuum, a view shared by Euclid, Descartes and Kant. I want to propose models of the body, and of space, which disrupt these notions of continuum and wholeness. I want to shake up the binary relation between mind and body; I want to suggest holes in the idea of the cohesion and continuity of experience; I want to challenge the boundary of the skin…and I want to call attention to the gaps between models of embodiment and experiences of embodiment by asking you to read through an inventory of such models, metaphors and movements.

In the Phaedo, Plato lectured that "we shall continue closest to knowledge if we avoid as much as we can all contact and association with the body" (111). As Kristen Lindgren points out, this fear of the body was attached to a fear of disease—"any diseases which attack us hinder our quest for reality" (Phaedo 111, Lindgren 146). The body has been seen as "a distraction for philosophers and an unfit subject for philosophy" (Lindgren 146). This denigration and effacement of the body has always been connected to the perceived weakness and vulnerability of the body. I hope to show the ways that philosophy has re-claimed the body, how this reclamation has figured disability, and how we might reverse Plato's notion, recognizing (as I argued in the first chapter) just how bodily his own discourse was, how bodily our own discourses are, and how the disabled body can be re-connected to knowledge as a fit subject for our investigation.

Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, expanding on her study of the 'freak,' and the ways that disability is made freakish, actually argues that, in viewing and categorizing Other embodied subjects—making objects of them—there is a "privileged state of disembodiment[…]conferred upon [the] spectators, however fraudulent" ("From Wonder to Error" 10). Gazing upon objects that we have culturally constructed as excessively corporeal, we are allowed (even asked) to ignore our own bodies, our prosthetic connections and our intersubjective reliances. Paying

attention only to what we believe we are not, we can be autonomous, inviolable, invulnerable, untouchable and coherent. I would argue, then, that disability is actually used to reinforce the denial of the body and to justify an ignorance of embodiment. As Vivian Sobchack argues, reversing Plato's statements about knowledge and reality, "the normative practices of our culture estrange us phenomenologically from our own bodies and the bodies of others. As a consequence our comportment becomes inhibited and restrictive rather than a capacious system and style" (204).

I want to loosen up and stroll/roll through some of the (often-competing) conceptions of the body that have been proposed by philosophy, particularly in the field of phenomenology, to locate a different 'system and style.' I will argue that rhetorical attention to the body, and attention to the rhetoricity of the body, instead of hindering us, might actually propel us 'in our quest for reality.'

This will be what Certeau called a "perambulatory rhetoric" (108). As he wrote in The Practice of Everyday Life, "the paths taken by strollers consist of a series of turnings and returnings that can be likened to "turns of phrase" or "stylistic devices"…verbal figures and "perambulant" figures may be homologous" (108). He goes on to suggest that strolling "plays with spatial organizations…it creates of them shadow and ambiguity. It insinuates into them its multifarious references and citations. It is in itself the effect of the successive encounters and occasions that are constantly altering it into the advertisement for the other, the agent of whatever may surprise, cross or seduce its route…these different aspects establish a rhetoric; they even define it" (109). These ideas obviously overlap with his thinking about *metis* as a tactical, practical intelligence—a moving. They also smoothly introduce rhetoric as embodied insofar as embodiment, first of all, is about movement. Husserl suggested that the living body is that which we "wield"—we wield our body and/or the objects at hand through space, and we experience this through the kinesthesis of our movement—kinesthesis being "the sense of muscular effort that accompanies a voluntary motion of the body. Also, the sense or faculty by which such sensations are perceived" (O.E.D, "Kinesthesis"). So, 'perambulation,' as such, is a knowing, and Certeau wants to suggest that it is an embodied knowing that always challenges attempts to rule it—to measure it or to regulate it. I would further suggest that such strolling is never exactly *able*—that is, I wish to get rid of the image of the good man walking upright. Instead, imagine the backwards and sideways, the crab-like motions of Hephaestus, or imagine

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him in his self-styled winged wheelchair. Also, consider those thinkers and communicators whose thought-processes we label deficient due to their perceived non-linearity, or because we want to reduce the complexity that their difference introduces—they too embody *metis*. This movement is the tactical locomotion of a critical rhetoric. Recall the idea of prosthetic movement—as Wills wrote, "the zigzag is the movement of discourse, the shift involved in the body's articulation with exteriority" (<u>Narrative Prosthesis</u> 24). Every rhetorical move is a "running hither and thither," and communication is always "dealing with the sideways as well as the forward momentum" (<u>Narrative Prosthesis</u> 25). Importantly, this movement is "perhaps not structurally different from a natural gait," "an explicit infraction upon or departure from the straits of linearity" (<u>Narrative Prosthesis</u> 25). This is *metis* as embodied rhetoric. Know that this wandering transforms space profoundly. And here you have rhetoric—perambulatory, prosthetic, an embodiment of *metis*, always a transformation of the 'physical,' the 'discursive' and the 'social.'

(DE)CONSTRUCTING DISABILITY

Using a disability studies filter to view *metis*, I have tried to recognize the emancipatory potential of new stories in both the material *and* the social sphere, through the embodied rhetoric of *metis* which makes this relationship syncretic. As a practical intelligence, *metis* is also a phenomenology—only understood in the context of practice, of space, of the body. Disability is itself bodily and rhetorical—two concepts that are tightly united. I will argue that disability must be thought of through its phenomenology—that is, not just through its inscription as a biological or social deviance, but as a continuum of inscription and incorporation united to the very process of understanding the contradictions and ellipses of space and embodiment. Kristen Lindgren suggests that "the examination of the body in trouble, particularly when it foregrounds the viewpoint of people who live with illness and disability, enlarges and complicates phenomenology" (160). I'll argue in this chapter that this challenge is necessary, as the models and metaphors we use to think through phenomenology imply a particular body, and a certain facility or ability that ignores the experiences of people with disabilities and of bodies in trouble, and therefore fails to trouble our understanding of all of our bodies/minds.   Jennifer H. Edbauer, summarizing recent scholarship on writing and the body, observes that "the writing scene can never be reduced to mere signification insofar as the body is the very apparatus that creates meaning" (133). We may accept this as given, but the crucial work is an interrogation of the

ways that the meaning applied to this 'apparatus' also shapes signification. Which body is it that we suppose we write with, and how does this supposition shape the body and the communication?

Rhetoric can be seen as the function of power within language, and I connect it to the body because the body is what has been traditionally defined and (thus) 'disciplined' by rhetorics of disability, while at the same time our bodies speak back, insisting (prosthetically) upon the impossibility of a normative essence. Saying this, however, introduces static. Who owns, and what constructs—what owns and who constructs—the disabled body? In order to assert that *all* bodily rhetoric is *metis*, these questions of power and agency must first (and continuously) be addressed.

Within disability studies, there has been a relatively recent—and much reflected upon and theorized through—split between social constructivist and materialist positions on disability identity. As Bonnie G. Smith suggests:

> The term 'disability' is becoming increasingly polymorphous…it can suggest a
> set of practices, kinds of embodiment, interactions with the built environment, an
> almost limitless array of literary types, frames of mind and forms of relationships
> (1).

Indeed, disability (via this contestation over meaning) puts the somewhat malleable rubber of constructivist theories to the road of lived experience. Through an observation of this tension, we also learn a lot about the split between biologism and sociologism across other discrete yet often convergent discussions—as it plays out in feminist, queer and critical race discourses, for example. I want to show that a disability studies analysis of socio/material tension is a way to foreground these convergences—to recognize how race, gender, class and ability are characterized by marked bodies. What these discourses do share, upon first glance, is the attribution of disability, most often pejoratively. To mark out otherness, society has most often ascribed mental and physical inferiority. In order to claim subjectivity, then, all groups and individuals must claim that they are not disabled. The effect is a chorus conveying the consistent message that disability is the ground against which any positive human value must be opposed. But disability studies examination of embodied rhetoric takes up Judith Butler's argument that it is equally important to examine "how and to what end bodies are *not* constructed" (Bodies 16 italics mine). She argues that we gain power by questioning the normative conditions of the

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emergence of materiality (<u>Bodies</u> 10). Butler's vision is that "it will be a matter of tracing the ways in which identification is implicated in what it excludes, and to follow the lines of that implication for the map of future community it might yield" (<u>Contingency</u> 119). To interrogate the meaning of disability is to better understand all bodies and their discursive/corporeal markings, effacements and rewritings, and to question the exclusions that underpin materialization.

Disability studies as a political movement has been very much about claiming disability (see Linton), owning disabled identity and the right to define this lived experience. In the face of the medical model of disability, in which the individual was often reduced, via synecdoche, to the sum of his/her dysfunctional parts, disability rights has been an identity movement—a reclamation of the symbolic power of self-definition. Disability rights is a direct challenge to the abbreviation of subjectivity. If there were an image for the medical model—a scene that I would never reproduce here—it would be a picture of an individual in which the head is out of frame, while the medical 'abnormalities' of the body are centered, indeed are the central and singular focus. Such images, unfortunately, fill the medical files of people with disabilities, as they fill the files of anthropological studies of colonized Africa, as Londa Scheibinger and Robyn Wiegman show us. If there were a film to enact this image, it would be of a doctor lecturing to interns in front of the exposed body of a patient, named only by their disability, with this disability on display for the consumption of the student. Obviously, I am responding to this model when, throughout this work, I position people with disabilities, in their own claimed bodies, as *makers* of meaning—rather than as surfaces reflecting the meanings of others, rather than as objects of knowledge.

While medical discourse couched disability in the negative and reductive terms of affliction, cavalierly applied the abstractions of pseudo-scientific labels, and placed individuals in passive and disempowered roles, the disability rights movement said 'label jars, not people.' 'The disabled' asked to be seen as people first, insisted on 'nothing about us without us' and re-claimed formerly derogatory terms like 'crip,' channeling their subversive meanings into potent outsider critiques of societal norms and of an ableist culture. People with disabilities both reached out to, and critiqued self-defined 'normals' by labeling them 'temporarily able-bodied.' Essential to this movement was the message that disability is beautiful, that people who

experience disability do not want to be cured, do not want to overcome their disabilities, and that they can and will lead very valuable lives in the face of oppression.

Yet as this activist identity evolved, and as people with disabilities and their allies took aim at society's discriminatory attitudes, exclusionary practices, and violent and eradicative actions, a new sense of the disabling impact of society itself emerged and took precedence. The protests which led up to the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in the U.S often centered around the message that exclusionary structures at least partially created disability; that if society and culture were more accessible, people with disabilities would face fewer barriers, their lived experience would change. Adrienne Asch introduces this sentiment as a "possibly radical proposal" and then suggests that "instead of discussing which kinds of people have impairments or disabilities and which people do not, instead of saying that some members of society are disabled and others are not, we should consider which people cannot perform which activities in given environments and question how to modify the environments so they are not disabling" (16).

Another elaboration of this idea is that society actually creates barriers, in part because of a failure to imagine difference when designing structures (both physical and cultural), or perhaps to more consciously exclude. I will expand on this argument in the next chapter, and in doing so I hope to further reveal the tangle between disability as a material, lived experience, and as a result of cultural constructions. To fully conceptualize disability, we must consider—as Asch and others argue—that disability is more than just a biomedical condition. Yet she qualifies that "saying that disability is socially constructed does not imply that the characteristics are not real or do not have describable effects on physiological or cognitive functions that persist in many environments" (18). I hope to show that an awareness of socio-spatial constructions of disability could allow for an even greater awareness of the uniqueness and essential difference of 'physiological and cognitive functions' if we think of socio-spatial change in a slightly different way. That is, why not imagine that we could change the environment to minimize the constraining and impairing effects of intellectual and architectural structures, but also to emphasize and enable embodied differences to thrive? In this way we would move from synecdoche—the reduction of disability to an array of disabled parts which stand in for individuals—to disability as a generative asyndeton, the introduction of subversive gaps and reconfigurations of definitions which have been seen as natural and monolithic. Such a shift

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would advocate for a cultural logic of biodiversity in the face of the rhetoric of survival-of-the-fittest, recasting *metis* as what the (re-defined) 'fittest' employ. It is important to combat oppression and to eradicate violence—and living with a disability need not be excessively painful or uncomfortable, even while we are wary of the push for 'cure.' But how might we also transform environments so that instead of erasing disability we can value it, allow it to be seen and experienced as generative and essential to meaning, instead of as essentially negative and negatable? How too can we think through the body, and of the body, without re-inscribing the abbreviations of the medical model, and do so in a way that *values* instability, change, partiality-as-multiplicity?

In the 1980s and 1990s a British 'social model' of disability also drew greater attention to the environment. The social model stood in opposition to the 'individual' and 'medical' models of disability—which held that disability was located within the individual, and that a disability held meaning only as pathology, defined entirely by its symptoms.   The social model was of key importance politically, drawing attention to the oppression of people with disabilities. That said, this was largely a materialist movement, and suggests a clear bifurcation. This model posited that disability is purely social, an oppression stacked onto people *on top of* their impairments, which are real. The view was, as Michael Oliver wrote, that "disablement is nothing to do with the body, impairment is nothing less than a description of the body" (34).

Image 3.3: "British Social Model of Disability." Jay Dolmage. 2005.

disablement =
from without

impairment =
within the body
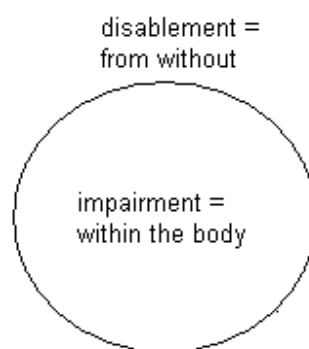
Asch's suggestion that there be a critique of cultural disablement that retains a synergistic view of cultures and bodies emerged from this model, suggesting that disability is socially constructed. Yet so-called postmodern disability studies also contradicts the British philosophy by suggesting that the strict separation of impairment and disability is a chimera (Tremain, "On

the Subject of Impairment"). The British model suggests the existence of both physical impairment and cultural disablement as engaged, yet independently sovereign, truths. The postmodern model blurs the lines between the two.

Image 3.3: "Postmodern Model of Disability." Jay Dolmage. 2005.

d i s a b i l i t y

i m p a i r m e n t
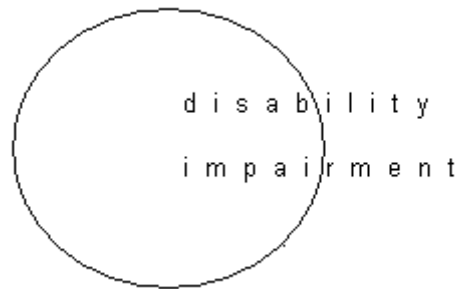
This second philosophy interrogates the ways that bodies and cultures, biology and social structures—even texts—interact and co-create one another. Much as Judith Butler has troubled the natural/cultural binary of sex and gender, this social model has troubled the notion of natural bodies; the very idea of a body curtained off from culture. Judith Butler's definition of a 'partial' social construction of the body, from her introduction to <u>Bodies That Matter</u>, nicely distills this idea: "to claim that discourse is formative is not to claim that it originates, causes, or exhaustively composes that which is concedes; rather, it is to claim that there is no reference to a pure body which is not at the same time a further formation of that body" (5). Any reference to a body is also a formation of that body. In this way, every formation is a further metaphor—these metaphors, in referencing the 'pure body,' may fortify it, while new metaphors might reform it. Obviously, such blurring of boundaries between culture or discourse and the 'pure body' is necessary to me, as well, to think through the rhetoric of embodiment, that crucial interweaving of body, power and discourse.[37] A tactic of *metissage* also allows us to interrogate the

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[37] Christopher Newell and Gerard Goggin have offered a good example of this 'partial social construction': "the wheelchair is liberating, allowing a person to get from one place to another, something that they may not otherwise be able to do unassisted. However, in a different set of circumstances the meanings and structures associated with the wheelchair might be different" (11). My brother's experiences illustrate this point. When he moved to Toronto, into a house directly across from an accessible subway stop, he became capable of traversing the city faster and more deftly than nearly anyone else he knew. Even the presence of well-maintained sidewalks and reliably-placed curb-cuts changed his mobility. Earlier in his life, when he lived outside a small town in Northern Ontario, he was certainly less mobile, and perhaps in this way more 'disabled' by the environment. Yet social factors were also key to this change: in Toronto, he had many more friends of like mind, he had opportunities to pursue his music and to work, he was connected to a community, and was part of a diverse culture; the small town in Northern Ontario, because it also housed a huge institution for men and women with mental disabilities, could imagine only carceral

metaphorical and material boundaries that my diagrams suggest, as well as movement across lines, tensions between terms.

This postmodern model remains influential, often to the chagrin of people with disabilities who feel that their experiences of disability are undermined. There certainly are dangerous implications for the issue of agency when a focus on individual empowerment and bodily reclamation cedes to discussions of social construction—particularly when a common assumption among 'able-bodied' bigots is that people with disabilities are 'faking it' anyhow, or that they should just try harder to overcome their impairment and cure themselves. In a more nuanced and perhaps even more sinister sense, this emphasis on social construction can often defuse the political power of an identity group. Social constructionism, in some ways, can be used as a method of silencing. Particularly, social construction can remove the focus on the particularity of differences of bodies and minds, a focus that I've been arguing is so important. If we are 'all disabled' by an oppressive environment in some way, why does the disability perspective really matter? How is the embodied experience of disability any different from the norm? The final effect can often be just as oppressive as the reality that social construction served to critique—without the solidarity and political unity that comes with disability identity, it is very difficult to challenge the norm.

How can we propose a model of embodiment, whether we call it postmodern or not, that not only recognizes the meeting and mixing of nature and culture, but also recognizes and translates the consequences of this movement? Rosi Braidotti writes that "we live in permanent processes of transition, hybridization and nomadization, and these in-between states and stages defy the established modes of theoretical representation" (Nomadic 2). Or, as Dawn Cartwright suggests, the body schema itself is "never fixed but durational in that it moves and also ages, injures and heals" (149). I hope to show how *metis* might be a rhetoric responsive to this being/becoming.

As Janet Price and Margrit Shildrick argue, it is "in an acknowledgment of the permeability between bodies and between embodied subjects that disability studies might move forward" (62). This could be seen as a deconstructive move, and the starting point for this deconstruction is with 'ethics,' as I would argue Derrida also has suggested. There are ways to

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lives for my brother, and wondered who had let him out. These contrasting environments and cultures did not shape him, but they did some shaping. The discourses of disability (and diversity) in these spaces do and do not inscribe/incorporate bodies.

negotiate a theory of embodiment between the static and the shifting. That is, Derrida writes that although the body "lives off a belief in the transcendental signified," and while "naturalizing always comes to neutralizing," our body as a play of difference is still connected to the 'rules' of this game ("Where a Teaching Body Begins" 95; 85). Derrida writes that "the body effects with which I play…feign to suppose or to make believe that my body is in no way responsible" to the systems within which it plays, particularly when we play at a "semblance of mastery" ("Where a Teaching Body Begins" 105-106). An 'ethics' of embodiment could still attend to the effects of such play at normativity, without insisting on the static *presence* of the body—indeed this is where we find ourselves when we place social constructivism and materialism together. We might search for what Don Ihde calls a "nonfoundational phenomenology," a "perceptual-bodily-referentiality" that takes into account the idea that "our perspectives are multiple, refracted, and compound…simultaneously both deconstructive and yet structural" (6, 86). We can be empowered, as Derrida and Butler have argued, to be cunning with our body's semiosis—we can be artisans and craftspeople of our own embodiment. We might materialize via *metis*.

EMBODIMENT AND NORMATIVITY

I am looking for theories and images of embodiment, but also for an ethics of embodiment—that is why I feel this is an important *rhetorical* study. That is, I am not looking to solve the riddle of embodiment, but rather to discover the function of power in this discourse, the location and interestedness of boundaries, and finally the means of persuasion available to embodied subjects. Or, to paraphrase Donna Haraway, I situate rhetoric as *pleasure* in the confusion of boundaries and *responsibility* in their construction ("How Like a Leaf" 33). I would argue that to be human is not to come to terms with our embodiment, even as we keep coming to embodiment with our terms. Instead, to be human is to strive to be in the world as reflective, embodied subjects, a body of body-thinkers who might embrace rather than bemoan our struggles. Paul De Man wrote that rhetoric must pay attention to the "non-convergence of 'meaning' with the devices that produce 'meaning,'" referring specifically to the sense that the body can be textualized or the text embodied (Allegories of Reading 7). His suggestion is that in 'paying attention' we see this non-convergence not as evidence of a failure, but as generative of a meaningful tension. Margrit Shildrick suggests that this non-convergence leads to a generative question: what are "the consequences—ontological, epistemological and above all ethical—of viewing all bodies as unable to comply with the norms through which they enter the space of

discourse, and thus of what counts as reality" (<u>Embodying</u> 2). Judith Butler also suggests that, confronting the paradox of autonomy, we must undertake a "labor of transaction and translation which belongs to no single site, but is the movement between languages, and has as its final destination this movement itself" (<u>Contingency</u> 179). Thus, if we are to interrogate rhetorical embodiment, we have to move beyond the idea of writing without the body, or of definitively writing the body, and we must also recognize and claim the tension created when we try to fit rhetoric into the body, or the body into rhetoric. Therefore I think it is rhetorically instructive to work through images of embodiment from a transitional perspective—to be willing to admit to partiality, to cede to my incompleteness, and to recognize after all, and with whatever constraint or enablement it implies, that this is an act of translation. As such, it is also a *labor*. As Henri Lefebvre argues, metaphor and metonymy are *acts* that become figures of speech, they are "the body metamorphosed" (139). This metaphorization transports the 'physical' body outside of itself (203), and the "body serves both as point of departure and as destination" (194). In this way, the models, metaphors, and movements that I will present in this chapter cannot be completely disconnected from my body or yours, beginning and ending only in both. On the next page, to illustrate one way that the body frames discourse and is discourse, I've offered a frame for my own writing (Image 3.4). This example is meant to be just one way to recognize the ways discourse is filtered through, shaped by, always deferent and referent of bodies. When this male body is cut out, you can see through it to the writing on the next page. I mean for this example to suggest that we always view writing—we sense the whole of discourse—through this normative body, which then shapes every utterance and performance.

Image 3.4: "Body Cut-Out." Jay Dolmage. 2005.
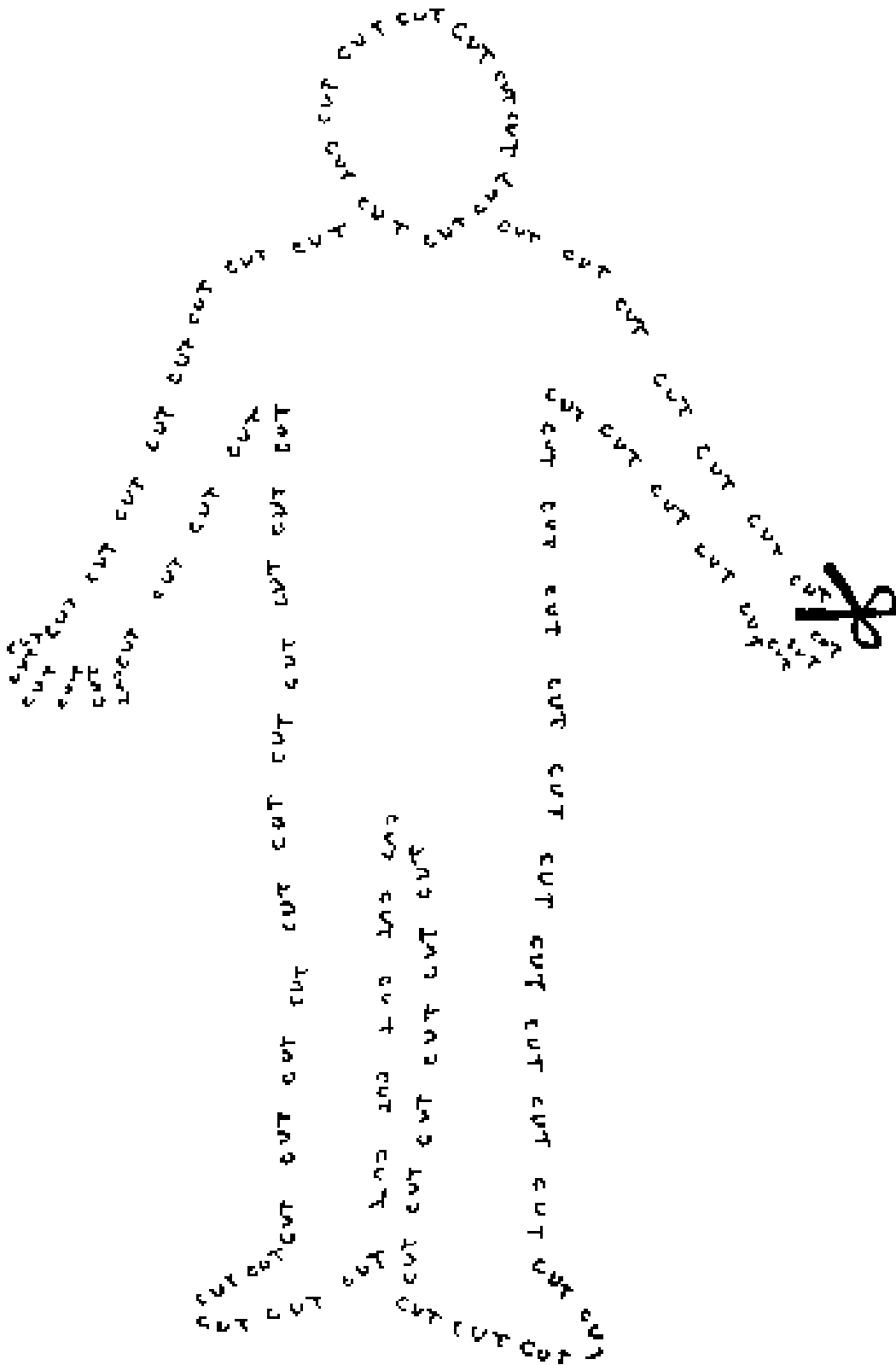
I have argued that we have accepted a version of rhetorical history that denies the body, and that particularly disavows bodily difference—normative ideas about rhetoric are always connected with normative ideas about the body. The cut-out example from the previous page materializes this idea. So I begin by blending my rhetorical study with a phenomenology. The phenomenologist starts with the premise that one knows the world through his (sic) direct experience of it. There is then a short jump to the idea that one experiences the world through one's body and one's mind, through their interaction in our embodiment. I'm interested in what this body/mind is supposed to look like: is this model sufficiently complex, is the conception and theorization of embodiment sufficiently inclusive? Is the subject a body, or an embodied subject? How do we wear or wield, or embody our prostheses? How do we move, where do we move, and what do we move? I argue that we need rhetoric to understand embodiment, and that we need embodiment to understand rhetoric.

HABITUS AS (DIS)POSITION

In Pierre Bourdieu's The Logic of Practice, he develops a theory of phenomenology via the body—an exploration of our embodied being-in-the-world, through our "structured, structuring dispositions," which he labels the *habitus* (52). The Oxford English Dictionary traces this word back to 1886, where it appeared in the journal Science and was used to represent "the disposition to the disease, the consumptive habitus" ("*Habitus*").

It is perhaps illuminating that the first recorded use of this word *habitus* is in reference to disease—used to describe the sort of body that is prone to consumption, the body with consumption, altered by the disease, formed in response to it. The French definition of the word is perhaps even more implicitly medical than the English: *un aspect extérieur du corps*. The term's usage in French is also chiefly medical or psychological, but Bourdieu has clearly moved beyond the *extérieur*, and breaks down the inside/outside binary. However, I think that the original uses of the word, to describe a bodily symptom, a bodily language of disease, nicely illuminates the idea—my argument—that there is only ever a *habitus* in relation to, in 'disposition to' some perceived (medicalized, thus normative) body, while at the same time the *habitus* or 'disposition to' forms this body and our perceptions of it. Embodiment always inculcates normativity. I'll argue that the 'disposition to the disease,' to disability or abnormalcy, is essential to embodiment. Further, all dispositions are of dis-ease, partiality.

Bourdieu, importantly, defines the *habitus* as "constituted in practice and always oriented towards practical functions" (52). In this way, the *habitus* is a kind of practical intelligence, a way to account for the everyday. Here is Bourdieu's definition of *habitus*:

> Durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function
> as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize
> practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes
> without presupposing conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the
> operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively 'regulated' and 'regular'
> without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be
> collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a
> conductor (53).

For Bourdieu, the *habitus* is both material and cultural, always. Further, in insisting that the *habitus* is neither necessarily an intentional phenomenon, nor a set of rules laid down by an outside agent, nor a set of limits located within the body, his definition arrives at the kind of doubleness (or quantum quanta) that I am looking for, with my own qualification: the *habitus* is a way of understanding the body as both socially constructed and material, and I would add that this material experience involves a differing and changing (from body to body) sense of enablement and constraint, as this cultural construction is also always, and never statically or singly, conditioned by norms. Bourdieu intended for the concept of *habitus* to help explain those things that you 'just do,' and their implication in your knowing, to open up the idea that these things are of great import. As the concept opens up, it brings with it huge questions, however. For instance, I want to suggest that it is very important to link the *habitus* to its definition as a 'disposition to' norms, even and especially as it is used as a way to understand the somewhat normative practices of everyday life.

Of course, this normativity is both enabling and disabling. Recall Iris Marion Young: "experiences of moving, perceiving, interacting with others, manipulating tools, thinking through problems and expressing oneself are always conditioned and constituted by social structures of *constraint and enablement*, as well as by forms of representation of persons, as both normal and 'deviant.' The subject of disability herself is constituted as varying and culturally constituted lived body" (xiii, italics mine). This relationship to forms of 'representation' becomes part of

what we might call the *habitus*—representation is as much a part of embodiment as is kinesthesis. In fact, there is no kinesthesis without representation. As Elizabeth Grosz points out, for instance, female knowledge is *different* because there have always been such "sexually differential forms of body thinking" (Volatile 37). Thinking has always been represented as masculine, and thus as the non-presence, non-implication of the body (39). The very markedness of other bodies allows them to be thought *of*, represented, but not to think. The important lesson to learn from this is not to repeat this elision, but rather to recognize that these other forms of knowing, situated within bodies, can be claimed, as we constantly examine the normativity of the everyday.

When she suggests that we continually question the normative conditions of the emergence of materiality, Butler introduces to phenomenology a critical recursivity—locating power not in the product of the read body, but in the process of critically and repeatedly re-inscribing it (Bodies 10). What allows us to recognize the enablement and constraint of embodied rhetoric is a self-reflexivity, a sense of the normativity inherent in embodiment. A cunning feeling for embodiment is also a sense for metaphor, for being located *between*. Therefore *metis* is a practice of wielding the body as a locus of tension but also, maybe, as that bridge which allows something new to pass. I suggest that we challenge the interpretation of the *habitus* as an unconscious doing—challenge the idea that we smoothly incorporate any bodily practice. It is necessary to recognize the sexist, ableist and racist foundations of our thinking of the body, and to be conscious of their influence on our theorizing of body-thinking. It seems to me that the *habitus* can be used as a 'white' space, an assumption of commonality of habit rather than a recognition of the vicissitudes of our bodily life, the turbulence and mixture, the *metis* and *metissage*. Instead we might rescue the definition that I began this section with: of the *habitus* as a *dis*-ease, a being-between, never quite fitting into collective orchestration, never without re-mixing. First, Bourdieu himself creates an inventory of the stringent demands of the *habitus*, the ways that "in a society divided into classes, all the products of a given agent, by an essential overdetermination, speak inseperably and simultaneously of his/her class" finally expressed and conditioned through "physical properties that are praised, like strength or beauty, or stigmatized" (79). But then he calls for "subversive action" which would "bring to consciousness and so modify the categories of thought which help to orient individual and collective practices" (141).

THE ETHICS OF EMBODIMENT

To write through the tension between a physical body and a constitutive culture, one must raise difficult questions and perhaps also embrace their unanswerability. In her introduction to the collection <u>Body and Flesh</u>, Donn Welton suggests that, by examining embodiment, we can also raise the issue of "whether bodily structures have an organization that allows us to treat them as "inscriptions"" (4). That is, can there be a 'language' written on/in the body, a body semiology through which we understand ourselves and others, through which we move and signify? Or is any 'inscription' immediately effaced, any effort to freeze the body's significance ultimately blurred? Also, following these questions, we need to ask how we might place different types of bodily experience in relation to each other, particularly if it is difficult to 'inscribe' this experience. This reminds us of Paul De Man's call to pay attention to that which exceeds the 'text,' and to Butler's argument that meaning resides within the movement of transaction and translation, not as its origin or product. Welton's question is also posed directly to Bourdieu, in a way: How will your foundational phenomenology find its limits in language? In response to these questions, phenomenology has proposed a series of models and metaphors. Thinking through these figures, and particularly analyzing their entailments and exclusions, is a way for each of us to establish our own (dis)positions towards embodiment, and perhaps to also work through an ethics of embodiment, recognizing that any embodied knowledge is incomplete, and that through discourse we might seek the means to address this incompleteness: not to 'fill' ourselves in, but to seek felt resonance and dissonance, perhaps to allow us to better recognize our bodies, or at least to recognize their implication in our knowing—or, even, to come to sense the ineffability of embodiment, and thus come to terms with its implication in our knowing. To 'consciously' write through these models and metaphors is to embody a perambulatory rhetoric—wielding under-utilized tools, making available the neglected means of embodied, self-reflective critical thought.   Perambulatory rhetoric names the process of writing ourselves into knowledge. Think of the stroll shared by Phaedrus and Socrates, outside of the borders of the city, unfolding philosophical possibilities and unrolling scrolls while (perhaps unconsciously, or perhaps playfully) allowing the body and the text to exist as maps of desire. Wandering demands an awareness of maps and borders, as it asks us to subvert them; an embodied rhetoric also asks us to be aware of cultural (and biological) bodies, as we are asked to move through and beyond them.

THE BODY IMAGE

Elizabeth Grosz, paraphrasing and revising Schilder, writes that our 'body image' is more than just a mental picture. "The body image is capable of accommodating and incorporating an extremely wide range of objects. Anything that comes into contact with the surface of the body and remains there long enough will be incorporated…[these things] mark the body, its gait, posture, position, etc. (temporarily or more or less permanently)" (Volatile 80). I would argue that this applies not just to those things we touch and hold, or incorporate as tools or prostheses, this is also true of proximate discourses, the rhetorics that rub against us and the words that we hold in our mouths, hands—they shape us too, more or less permanently. And there is a politics to this incorporation. Our control over the boundary around our body is tenuous and embattled. Gail Weiss writes that "the boundary between the body image and what it is not is not (merely) a symbolic one; rather, it must also be understood as a corporeal refusal of corporeality" (42). She writes that the abject, that which we exclude from our body image, is both necessary, as it enables a coherent construction of self, and impossible because that which we exclude continually erupts within. This more clearly explains the relationship between abjected outside/constitutive inside that Butler describes—nothing is ever successfully abjected. Any examination of the body is also an examination of its incorporated prostheses, and its inscribing, incorporated discourses, as well as the ways it is *not-spoken*. As Eve Kosofsky-Sedgwick has written of closetedness, it is "a performance initiated as such by the speech act of a silence…that accrues particularity by fits and starts, in relation to the discourse that surrounds and differentially constitutes it" (3). As though (and sometimes literally) closeted, the abnormal or divergent body is often molded by silence. Likewise, the supposedly normal body often relies not on a repeated performance of normality, but a range of markings of abnormality around its borders, as my diagram showed (Image 3.1).

Margrit Shildrick suggests that the body is "an always insecure and inconsistent artifact, which merely mimics material fixity" (Leaky Bodies 13). What is at stake in this abjection, silence and exclusion—the construction of the body by the definitions of what it *isn't*—"is not only the protection of one's own body from encroachments, but a denial of the leakiness between one's self and others" (Leaky Bodies 179). As Shildrick writes, "vulnerability is not a debased condition of the other, but the very condition of becoming" (Embodying the Monster 133). To understand embodiment is neither strictly to examine the body, the body-image, or the thinking of the body. It is also to examine the shadows and scissions that 'differentially constitute'

embodiment. So this examination will also be of those things we attempt to eject from the body, those discourses made illegitimate, the doors closed.

In this process of abjection, we can recognize the central problematic of normativity—that is, the construction of ability versus disability. This recognition is instrumental in myriad critical exercises, and in a multitude of deadly serious intellectual projects, as it is an ever-present element of materialization.   Such differential constructions gird one another to reinforce hierarchical sexual differences, racism, nationalism, heterosexism, classism, ageism. Indeed, these discursive constructions of difference are truly material and biological, constituting at their height nothing less than eugenics. The creation of a 'biological' line between bodies, between minds is preliminary and attendant to almost all cultural hierarchization. So the study of embodiment is an important critical project for dismantling certain models and metaphors, just as it is a generative project for discovering new and more inclusive models and metaphors.

One argument is that we have an existential need for Other bodies. As Gail Weiss writes, we need to "negotiate the turbulence of our corporeal existence, a turbulence that cannot and should not be abjected from our body images, since it is precisely what enables us to meet the vicissitudes of our bodily life" (56). This turbulence is also central to a rhetorical study of embodiment, as it likewise characterizes the vicissitudes of our corporeal rhetorical life. One thesis we might try on, following this idea of abjection, is the sense that embodiment cannot fully separate "I" from "you." For Husserl, via kinesthesis (sensing our own movement, thus sensing change, moving through the continual abstraction of the lived body) we experience movement as we direct it. I would therefore assert that this is a sense in which embodiment is prosthetic—we never experience movement 'purely,' but rather sense our bodies both as movers *and* as movable. Husserl also suggests that the human "I" includes the living body, which includes the physical body *and* relations to other bodies which, in turn, are related the same way. He writes that while only "I" can directly experience my own intentional movement, "I understand another physical body as a living body in which another I is embodied and wields [control over that body]" (Ideas 2, 62). This understanding of another body is empathy, and is as much a part of the experience of the living body as one's own physical body is. To paraphrase Bakhtin, as every utterance is only ever half our own, each movement is only ever partially ours. Bakhtin phrases his point about dialogism many different ways: "Discourse lies on the boundary between

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its own context and another, alien context" ("Discourse" 284); "of all words uttered in everyday life, no less than half belong to someone else" ("Discourse" 339); "the ideological becoming of a human being is the process of selectively assimilating the words of others" ("Discourse" 342); "the importance of struggling with another's discourse, its influence in the history of an individual's coming to consciousness, is enormous" ("Discourse" 348); all speech is "filled with echoes and reverberations of other utterances" ("Speech Genres" 91); "to express oneself is to make oneself an object for another and for oneself" ("Text" 110); the life of a text develops "on the boundary between two consciousnesses" ("Text" 106); "the word is interindividual" ("Text" 121). However we choose to interpret this discursive/material conjunction, the dialogism of embodiment must be seen not just metaphorically. That is, the metaphor of the shared, interindividual word is not just a reflection of shared and interindividual embodiment. Rather, embodied beings shape discourse (doubly) and the shared word shapes shared bodies.

As Barbara Couture has argued, "we are designed to think through attending to others[…we are] always already directed toward what is *other than*" (221 italics mine). Further, embodiment is rhetorically intersubjective: "meaning evolves from continuous interaction" (94). The movement of consciousness is "embodied through speaking with others" (94). Couture concludes that rhetoric "is a conscious embrace of the Other[...]embody[ing] in language our shared consciousness of the world" (95). From this idea of embodiment as dialogic and rhetorical, we can move on to think about embodiment and culture or society—and to frame these relationships in terms of norms, and in terms of both constraint and enablement. The shared word allows for the shared body, and vice versa. In this way discourse shapes embodiment (and the inverse). This shaping is rhetorical. Available means—discursive and material—are negotiated socially. I have argued that, as a result, the shaping of discourse and of bodies has been normative.

I will now look more closely at some models and metaphors for embodiment, to show how phenomenology might foreground messiness, prosthesis and intersubjectivity. I'll also look at what basis we'd have for thinking the body and for bodying thinking when the foreground is normate.

UPRIGHTNESS AND THE EYE

Iris Marion Young writes that sexist modalities of "feminine bodily comportment, motility and spatiality" create a situation in which "women in sexist society are physically

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handicapped" (269). Critiquing phenomenology more generally, she registers her objection to the fact that "a perspective that takes body comportment and movement as definitive for the structure and meaning of human lived experience" does not take "feminine" styles of embodiment into account—there is no "concern to specify such a differentiation of the modalities of the lived body" (260). Linda Martín Alcoff also writes that " a reduction in racism will affect perception itself, as well as comportment, body image, and so on" and "noticing the way in which meanings are located on the body has at least the potential to disrupt the current racializing process" (281). The focus on the able, male, white body under-theorizes *and* in a sense 'handicaps,' as culture delimits bodily styles when it reaches into bodies. This 'handicapping' doesn't necessarily create disability, but rather harms the body when it fails to recognize it.

Elizabeth Grosz insists that there is a violence inflicted by the supposed 'universal' normal body on "its others—women, the 'disabled,' cultural and racial minorities, different classes, homosexuals—who are reduced to the role of modifications or variations of the [normate] human body" (Volatile 188). Grosz lists a series of warnings about the development of alternative accounts of the body, suggesting that even new bases for re-thinking the body may "share unarticulated assumptions" with the old (Volatile 20). She warns that we must: avoid the mind/body division; no longer associate corporeality with one sex (or race); "refuse singular models, models which are based on one type of body as the norm by which all others are judged" (Volatile 22); avoid biologism and essentialism, looking for "new models and metaphors that implicate the subject in the object, that render mastery and exteriority undesirable" (Volatile 23); create a model of the biological and the psychological, the inside and the outside of the body working together; and maintain the "indeterminable position" of the body, therefore making it a "particularly powerful strategic term [which we can use to] to upset" binary frameworks (Volatile 23).

As we move towards a more complex theory of embodiment, we must take forward her thesis about our body's many connections and prostheses, as well as her important warnings about the possible violence that theories of embodiment can inflict. It is important, following Grosz, to point out many of the ways that theories of embodiment enforce norms, create singular models while ignoring bodily differences. For instance, in many accounts of the body's

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involvement in understanding, there is a troublesome and 'naturalized' emphasis on the upright and horizontal body, as in this image from Li Fu Tuan.

Image 3.6: "Upright Human Body, Space and Time." Li Fu Tuan. 1977.

According to Tuan, there are "two fundamental principles of spatial organization":

> 1. "the posture and structure of the human body"
> 2. "the relations (whether close or distant) between human beings" (34).

This posture is upright. When man (sic) is not upright he "loses his world," he is just a "body occupying space" (35). Without the ability to focus and move forward authoritatively, man is conscripted to the profane, the shaded, lower third of the diagram. But, upright, man is "at home," "in command" (36). Upright, "man is ready to act" in the sacred world (35). And this action is then essential to spatialization and/as "space is articulated in accordance with his corporeal schema" (36). According to Tuan, and to many others, the "shape and posture of the human body define its ambient space," privileging vertical instead of horizontal, high instead of low, front instead of back, right instead of left, enlightening the future. This schema clusters profanity, darkness, lowness and backwardness. Of course, there is the possibility that the experience, and thus the understanding could be otherwise—these aren't 'natural' but experienced dispositions—thus Tuan calls them 'biases.' Yet nowhere are other possibilities explored, and they are certainly not schematized. Tuan's image, which is a serious abstraction of *any* human body, still re-inscribes the idea that even this abstracted body knows the world as it moves through it normatively. This norm entails penetrative metaphors and movements; this could be seen as a phallocentric embodiment, void of any suggestion of receptivity or even envelopment. Samuel Todes concurs that: "the world as the field of all fields is sensed through our upright posture as our most general capacity to be up and about as an active percipient" (264). Embodiment, in these metaphors, sounds like a remedy for erectile dysfunction. For Todes and Tuan (and many others), the "horizontal field of the coming-to-pass of things in the world is sensed in our forward-directed movement to encounter the passing of events" (264). Skillful bodily response, as upright and forward moving, *is* embodiment. This conceptualization privileges a certain ontology and has a very narrow definition of what being a percipient is—there is also an implicit predominance granted to visual perception. One would think that

when not in motion one doesn't perceive, or that motion only happens when the body itself is 'moving' forward in space (and time, via collected perceptions).

Brian Massumi and other theorists comment on the connected and similarly normative monopoly of the visual in embodiment theory. Martin Jay writes that such critique is of a piece with a wider reception of anti-ocularcentric discourse developed by French philosophy—he suggests that the North American 'turn to the visual' in cultural studies "has often been accompanied by a hostility or at least wariness towards [ocularcentrism], which seems very different from that generally celebratory mood accompanying the previous 'linguistic turn'" (166). This wariness, according to Jay, comes from a distrust of "triumphalist" ideas of aesthetic truth and political freedom entailed by the discourse of 'pure' vision (178). I would suggest that such triumphalist discourse underlies many models of upright and visually-oriented embodiment, tapping into the (mistaken) belief in the perfection of vision, absolute mobility and unhindered, penetrative (and perhaps phallic) forward progress. Contemporary phenomenology does often re-invoke these tropes, yet Massumi and others also challenge and complicate them.

Massumi challenges the singular, ocular approach to perception when he writes that "all the sense modalities are active in even the most apparently monosensual activity. Vision may ostensibly dominate, but it never occurs alone. Every attentive activity occurs in a synesthetic field of sensation that implicates all the sense modalities in incipient perception, and is itself implicated in self-referential action" (Massumi 140). In the scholarship of composition pedagogy, Kristie Fleckenstein makes the similar point that sight tends to nest a range of senses, and Henri Lefebvre writes about the ways that other senses, for instance hearing, play an integral role in our movement, effecting our sense of balance profoundly, for example. Yet within phenomenology, the dominance of the visual is also a creation of a certain body: a body that *must* be upright and moving forward in space to perceive at all, because perception (and thus kinesthesia) is solely visual.

These models do have physical, practical effects. As Lakoff and Johnson write, "it is not just that we have bodies and that thought is somehow embodied…[but] that the peculiar nature of our bodies shapes our very possibilities for conceptualization and categorization" (Philosophy 19). First of all, as with metaphors, such figurative models, as Richard Boyd writes, "introduce terminology for future theory construction (and) refer to as yet only partially understood natural phenomena…long before our study of them has progressed to the point where we can specify for

them…defining conditions" (493). Models and metaphors come to program the way we theorize certain aspects of reality. This is problematic because, as Henri Lefebvre suggests, though metaphors might be seen as "the body metamorphosed," these metaphors express much but "lose and overlook, set aside and place parentheses around even more" (139-140). One critical response to models and metaphors is to point up their incompleteness—but part of my argument is that metaphors are never 'complete,' and are therefore meaningful, so that interrogating that which they parenthesize is essential to how we *enact* their meaning. So it is important to see that, as George Lakoff suggests, metaphors interact in hierarchies. Metaphors will inherit mappings from other metaphors higher up on a hierarchy (224). I would argue that the same could be said for the ways we conceptualize the body when we talk about embodiment—if the model of the body looks normative, what does this entail for the normativity of assertions about how this body thinks, how we reason, feel, communicate, interact? Metaphors and models move bodies. Lakoff suggests that "metaphors impose a structure on real life, through the creation of new correspondences in experience" (241). But further, metaphors and models are incorporated—the body also serves as a destination for metaphors, as Lefebvre argues (194). Thus, normative models can create normative and perhaps oppressive embodied correspondences—they condition our sense of how we wield ourselves and thus how we think. It so happens, then, that our sense of ourselves, when it doesn't conform to the model of comportment offered by Tuan, struggles to find the language to express this critical difference.

What Lakoff and Johnson don't address is the fact that the body that shapes dominant discourse is not 'peculiar' at all. Nancy Mairs does recognize this, and in Waist-High in the World she comments on the way that one 'healthy,' normal and 'proportional' body shapes even our idea of morality. She grounds her examination of metaphor in a study of the 'dead' metaphors that align morality with physicality. Her examples, such as the way that 'keeping your chin up' signifies courage, show that in everyday language, good traits are equated with 'upstanding,' negative traits are 'looked down on' (57). It then so happens that a woman in a wheelchair, waist-high, is offered little access to the metaphors that might construct her morality in a positive light. The body that shapes the language is not hers—in fact, the language negates her body. As Iris Marion Young argues, our "sense of bodily (and moral) integrity…will be undermined if[...]regulated by others or dictated, more generally, by a hegemonic symbolic order" (Young 86). So, part of the rhetorical work that needs to be done is to stroll subversively

through models and metaphors for embodiment—to challenge and change this discursive space. In How We Became Posthuman N. Katherine Hayles suggests that, in response to such change, "metaphors would vary in response to different experiences of embodiment" (206). She adds that "from such considerations emerges an enriched appreciation" of the dynamic processes of constructing culture and of being in the world (206).

As I stated in chapter two, there were models and metaphors for meaning, used in the ancient context, that link what we now see as human 'deficit' to the generation of meaning, to creativity—most notably, of course, via *metis*. Recall the word *pseilos*, most commonly used to describe Demosthenes's 'impediment' and which we translate as "faltering speech." Martha Rose argued that this pseilos also meant the meaning behind written words. The idea of a "stutter" suggests the deconstruction of rhetorical norms based on narrow customs (Martha Rose 57). Derrida would certainly agree that to communicate is to stutter. In this way *pseilos* is not unlike the word *apate*, which Susan Jarratt suggests was also a term for the mysterious transfer of meaning from thought to expression, for the play of signification. *Apate*, in her definition, is an exploration of how probable arguments can cast doubt on conventional truths (Re-Reading 55). Both *apate*, deception, and *ate*, human blindness, have non-pejorative meanings, roles in the making of meaning. *Apate* means "the emotional experience between reality and language" (55). *Ate*, then, is the human condition that locates us within that space. Blindness or stuttering in these conceptions serve to remind us of the partiality of rhetorical expression—occlusion and asyndeton as the view and the language of embodiment. Recall Derrida's statement that writing "has a blindness to do with it…hasn't a damn sight to do with it" ("Plato's" 135). In this way, then, we move away from an idea of disability as deficit. Instead, disability is the very possibility (and concurrently the uncertainty) of embodied human knowledge. In contrast to the upright body penetrating space, I propose the body of Hephaestus, moving cunningly with *metis*, shifting sideways, his body a 'visible' symbol of the generative, rhetorical artistry of the imperfect body/mind, more powerful than brute force.

THE MOBIUS STRIP

Elizabeth Grosz explains her theory of embodiment through the image of the mobius strip, an image she borrows from Lacan (who uses this image to explain subjectivity). For Grosz, the mobius strip is a way to illustrate the idea that "bodies and minds are not two distinct substances but somewhere in between those alternatives" (Volatile xii). As Ann Fausto-Sterling

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explains, the mobius strip offers Grosz a means of illustrating the ways that "bodies create psyches by using the libido as a marker pen to trace a path from biological processes to an interior structure of desire" (Sexing 25).

Image 3.5: "Mobius Strip." Paul Bourke. 2000.

Grosz argues that the mobius strip "has the advantage of showing the inflection of mind into body and body into mind, the ways in which, through a kind of twisting or inversion, one side becomes another" (Volatile xii). Importantly, Grosz writes that "this model also provides a way of problematizing and re-thinking the relations between the inside and the outside of the subject, by showing not their fundamental identity or reducibility but the torsion of the one into the other, the passage, vector, or uncontrollable drift of the outside into the inside and the inside into the outside" (Volatile xii). The moment of twisting is unpredictable and movable, unlike in the image above, where the twist happens in one spot. Were you to handle this mobius strip and manipulate it, imagine that it would constantly twist in different spots; there would be no single kink. This twist represents, for Grosz, an "interface of the outside and inside" like the surface of the skin (Volatile 36). This surface, for Grosz, "provides the ground for the articulation of orifices, erotegenic rims, cuts on the body's surface, loci of exchange between inside and outside…sites not only for the reception and transmission of information but also for bodily secretions, ongoing processes of sensory stimulation which require some form of signification and sociocultural and psychological representation" (Volatile 36). While we currently understand the word interface in relation to technology, Grosz hijacks that image of a clean computer interface and bloodies it, sweats into it, and twists it into the body. Yet this entailment perhaps goes beyond Grosz' image; it is an inference rather than a deduction. In the main, the mobius strip is about breaking down the clean distinction between mind and body. This is a strip, a simple figure, and it occludes so much. Different models are needed in order to add complexity to this dualism.

While her image seems reductive, Grosz herself *writes* a theory of embodiment that holds that the body has the capability to "open itself up to prosthetic synthesis, to transform or rewrite its environment, to continually augment its powers and capacities" (Volatile 188). Her strip asks

to be fleshed out, enculturated, minded. Importantly, she also expands her theorization to take into account the role of lack, break, or partiality—also all constitutive of embodied subjectivity.

THE PHANTOM LIMB

Elizabeth Grosz also writes extensively about the phenomena of the phantom limb, an example that allows her to further trouble the body's boundaries, the margin between our material sense of ourselves and the social suggestions that partially form this sense. Grosz psychoanalyzes the phenomena—and this particular form of analysis is of little interest to me here. However, it is incredibly useful to begin to examine the thesis that our wielding, our feeling of our body, is partially a matter of 'immediate' physical sense and partially a product of memory or suggestion. We might look to Head's definition of the 'body schema,' defined as "knowing where the parts of our body are," to conceptualize this wielding and feeling (13). Schilder suggested that Head's schema, seen as the use of past physical experiences to form a model against which further sensory experiences can be measured, might be extended—he uses the term 'body image' instead of 'body schema.' Schilder writes that the body image is more social or cultural, relying upon our experience of other bodies—it can be defined as "the picture of our own body which we form in our mind, that is to say, the way in which the body appears to ourselves" (11). Head also suggests that we use the schema as a "self-picture" that we hold up to other moving bodies (13). But Schilder goes a step further, arguing that the body image is at the very core of psychological life (14). What is of interest to Grosz, and to me, are the limits of this knowing and appearing; the reliance we have on others to come to know our bodies, the incompleteness of our parts, our unsurety about where they should be. Silvan Tomkins's theorization of the phantom limb is then equally useful to me. I'll try to use the phantom limb to explain Grosz's, Tomkins's and my own view of the permeable and somewhat ghostly boundaries of the body.

There are many documented cases of amputees having the experience of feeling a limb that has been lost, and there are many similarities across these cases. As Tomkins and Grosz recount, these subjects reported feeling their limb 'physically' despite its non-presence. Eventually, in almost all cases, the limb was felt to 'telescope'—to shorten—and though the subjects reported being able to easily 'pass' the limb through solid objects, this did little to diminish their 'sense' that it was there. For Grosz, this reinforces the Mobius Strip model: our embodiment brings together inside and outside, material and social. The material 'fact' of

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having a limb is only one part of the existence of that limb. Likewise, the materiality of our body is not strictly a matter of skin and bones, and not strictly an image, memory or idea. The limb regenerates via the continuum between these spheres; when physical sense is no longer there, the skin and bones don't necessarily disappear. Tomkins is also interested in using this model to talk about loops. He asserts that perceiving is "not partly some mediate process but entirely so" (144). He breaks down the phantom limb example by saying that it proves that the human being is a feedback system, not a communication sytem (36). That is, for the individual who does have an arm, the memory of the limb interacts with the material sense of the limb. Then, even when the limb is gone, the memory of the limb is 'enough' to maintain the sense of having an arm.

Image 3.7: "Phantom Limb Loop." Jay Dolmage. 2005.
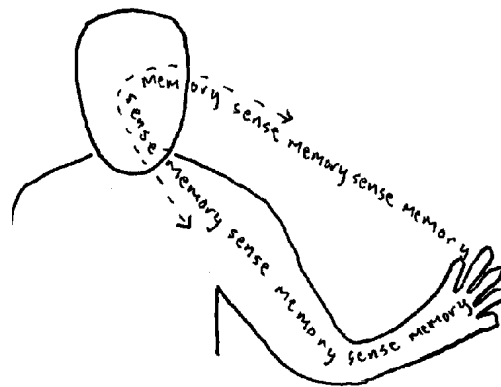
As I sketch it, this is a very simplified model—and Tomkins suggest that this feedback loop is by no means isolated. In fact, we have innumerable "central assemblies" (like the loop that 'produces' our feeling for an arm), and these assemblies are "incompletely overlapping" (43). Also, as these myriad loops work together, there is a gain in information as though they were "combined according to the rules of a language" (44). There is an interesting resonance here with Kenneth Burke, who wrote that we experience the world as association and dissociation "ambiguously together," and that this also has a kind of grammar which generates meaning. I would argue that we need to extend Tomkins's scheme of overlapping loops towards *more* social connections (ambiguous or incomplete as they may be). The loop of memory is not just of sense-memory, but is also shaped by social interactions, by the 'idea' of the arm etc. And Tomkins goes on to write that, for instance, a sense like vision is an "intermittent source of stimulation for the body image because what is figural in vision is rarely one's own body" (248).

The woman who experiences a phantom limb doesn't just 'feel' her own memory of her lost arm, but also feels all of the arms she has ever seen. As Tomkins writes, "one looks out of [her own] body but rarely at it" (248). This is the same sort of principle at work in body dysmorphia. This outward focus can lead to what we commonly call 'negative body image'—it's the reason we can believe our bodies are abnormal, that we are too fat or too skinny because we literally *feel* fatter or skinnier than we may be, 'materially.' We constantly re-create a feeling for our own body (in part) by referencing those around us. Clearly, this is a theory necessary to a reconsideration of disability—especially as it introduces a clear idea of how bodies are (partially) socially constructed. It is also important to a rhetorical study of embodiment, and to the creation of an embodied rhetoric. Closeting disability—literally through institutionalization, perhaps—is a means of disembodiment. Looking at a disabled mind and body as *not mine* is a (negative) formulation of that other body as well as a (defensive) material formulation of your own body…and that which is abjected will intermittently (or constantly) erupt. Within our own body's 'assemblies' and always connected to our body schemas, our view and our feeling of other bodies—in all of these looping relationships—there are myriad acts of translation, myriad vectors of suasion.

Image 3.8: "Phantom Limb Mobius." Jay Dolmage. 2005.
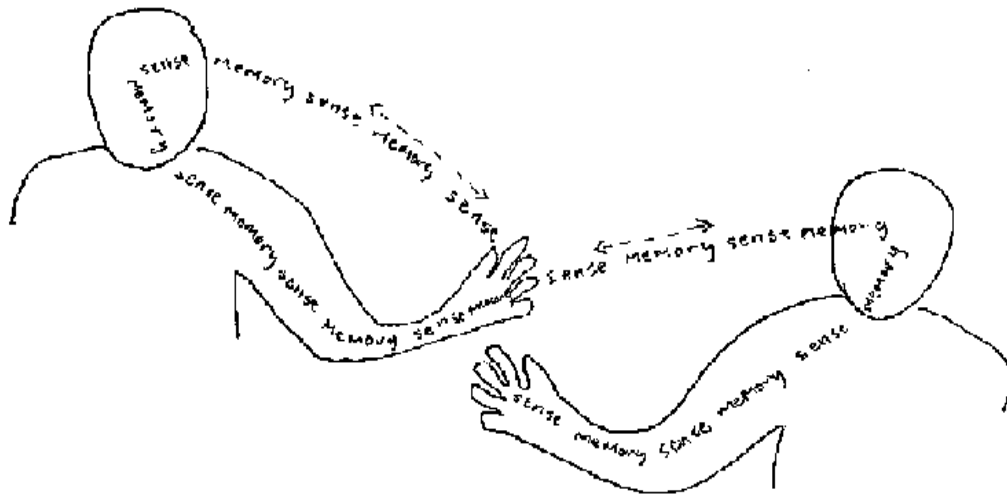
Above is another crude diagram—notice there is a kind of mobius strip created, a twisting figure-eight of movement, here between two people (Image 3.8). The same model could be used for three people, adding smaller loops and also looping all three together, and the image could

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increase exponentially. Of course, the 'loops' do more than just establish our arms, they establish our embodiment.

Tomkins goes on to write that "limbs on and off aren't the only way in which we may profitably experiment with the body 'image'" (249). He offers another very interesting example—he asks you to draw a picture of yourself, a diagram of your body. Then he asks you to close your eyes and again draw your body.

Tomkins shows the two drawn images beside one another—one drawn by a woman with her eyes open, and then one with her eyes closed. Obviously, the second drawing (on the left) is much more abstract.

Image 3.9: "Body Diagram." Silvan Tomkins. 1962.

He writes that "the introduced distortions are a consequence of not being able to visually monitor what [you] are doing. The outcome…is extraordinarily illuminating" because "what is produced is a caricature of a caricature" (250). While the image drawn with eyes open has an "almost schematic quality," has even a "posture of defense," the other image is jarring in its discontinuity, its seeming irrationality (250). I would argue that the one drawing shows how our sense of ourselves is normative—thus the schematic quality and the defensive posture. My argument would be that we draw such a normative diagram over and over again, all day, every day. We make a movie, in a sense, of our sense of ourselves, by repeatedly, through a looping process, imagining/feeling/remembering a particular body. This body changes, and our imagination/feeling/remembering of it changes, but we work to continue to inscribe it in a particular way. Every moment we sketch ourselves. This is an essential function of all linguistic systems as well. And, across domains, norms may discipline but disability erupts. As Margrit Shildrick writes, the leakiness of bodies, as discursive constructions, also equates with the "inherent leakiness of meaning in the *logos*" (Embodying the Monster 84).

As we sketch ourselves, we constantly cite the other bodies we sense. As Kenneth Burke argued, we have "common sensations, concepts, images, ideas and attitudes" enabling common action through language (Rhetoric of Motives 21). These commonalities make us consubstantial. Burke uses the term substance to suggest a material overlap, but I would be more overt. We don't just have these things in common; often we more literally share them: we form and feel

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bodies with and through one another. We are intercorporeal and concorporeal. Elizabeth Grosz suggests that "a body is produced from other bodies, and its cohesion and continued existence and integrity as a body are contingent on its ability to glean energy from other bodies" ("Naked" 192). In this way, "a body reproduces itself not only biologically but through its self-representations and the rigors of its practice" ("Naked" 193).

Perhaps most importantly, Grosz first suggests that "we don't know what bodies are capable of" ("Naked" 191). This is an argument both to pay attention to the body, but also a statement of the result of paying attention. And because of this, I'd argue we could re-write her definition of bodily co-production: a body's atomization and continued existence in/and tenuousness as a body is contingent on other bodies. Tomkins argues that his exercise reveals something about the affective investments of embodiment. He writes that his second image is a caricature of a caricature "since the body image is, to begin with, usually an exaggeration of characteristics about which the individual is hyperaware with pride or shame or fear" (250). The defensiveness of the stance of the body (drawn with eyes open) in his example, he would suggest, is a product of the tight tangle between body-image and our most meaningful emotions—pride, shame, fear. Thus the messy drawing either amuses or distresses (250). He would argue that these emotions aren't just reflective, aren't just cursorily noticed and notable, but form the "primary motivational system in human beings" (34). Amusement and distress aren't just reactions; they form actions and motivate embodied action. Thus the normativity manifested in his drawing activity is part of an everyday, embodied drama. Intercorporeality, I would argue, allows us to see embodiment as never an autonomous process, and also asks us to foreground the fact that the intercorporeal exchange might be distressingly incomplete, the iteration of need or desire for the other is never fully requited, and thus eternally re-issued.

EMOTION AND EMBODIMENT

As Antonio Damasio argues, the "body [is] a theater for emotional realization" (293). The body may not be the exclusive theater, but "the body is the main stage for emotions" (287). Damasio argues that "feelings are largely a reflection of body-state changes" (288). We learn from emotion with the help of the body (294). Tomkins also "locates in the body some important part of the difference among different emotions" (19). Damasio would go so far as to argue that consciousness begins as a feeling, and he writes that "human consciousness relies on feelings" (312, 314). In his scheme, changes of body state, initiated by either body or mind,

connect to emotions—an emotion might cause the state of the body to change, or an emotion might be the result of our perception of a change of state. He too proposes a "body loop model" to explain this, and thus there is resonance between his theory and those of Tomkins, Grosz, and Hayles. Clearly, it is important to think about the role of affect in the loops of embodiment. Tomkins would suggest, and Damasio might concur, that affect is the very engine for this process. As Tomkins writes, affect is biologically rooted, and the affect system is the "primary motivational system in human beings" (34). Affect offers us varying degrees of freedom, and affects vary in degree of intensity, in our investment in them, our learning from them, their *object*ivity, combinations, role in motivation, and in their suppression of other affects. So emotion, like discourse and materiality, is generative in its gaps and overlaps, in its messiness and commotion.

It is important to me to introduce this theory of affect into thinking about embodiment, and I think it is important to do so at a crucial point in this project. As I said above, Tomkins argues that bodily difference either amuses or distresses—bodily difference, or more precisely the recognition of the abstractions of embodiment, the understanding of the sketchiness of our body-borders, this feeling carries or inspires the most pointed of emotional reactions. My argument is that, for reasons neither wholly biological nor completely social, and never void of the influence of either, concorporeality also inspires significant panic. To think of our embodiment as the product of co-operation with and co-optation of other minds and bodies can be strikingly strange. Intercorporeality thickens the theorization of embodiment and also—sometimes via strong affective response—tears and crumples the theory as it stretches between and across people and groups, envelops us. Only this stretched, torn, worn result can be truly useful, because it might be capable of continued wear.

IMAGES, MOVIES, MULTIPLE DRAFTS

It is important to clarify that when I write about body 'image,' even though I have relied largely on visual models, on highly visual metaphors, and on printed type as a visual medium, I am trying to suggest that 'images' are not just visual. This has bearing on my discussion of the drama of embodiment, as such figurative language calls-to-mind the Cartesian theatre model of cognition. In this model, images appear on a stage in the mind and then disappear. I want to work to move these 'images' offstage, out of the mind and into the body. As Damasio suggests, images should be thought of as "patterns with a structure built with the tokens of each of the

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sensory modalities" (318). He argues that these images are mental, but I'd suggest that they are also 'felt,' and embodied—we feel and use images in many different ways. For instance, having an 'image' of yourself was what allowed you to draw a picture of your body with your eyes closed. And the point that this activity was trying to prove—that you always carry 'images' of your body and of other bodies, 'images' which in fact (help) shape these bodies—was predicated on the thesis that you feel and sense yourself and others through some mechanism, through the medium of what I'll call the 'body image.' You don't just draw this; you also move in accordance with it, write towards it, and so on. Damasio also suggests that images depict both concrete and abstract things—clearly, the two pictures that Tomkins juxtaposes reveal this duality—they are concrete and abstract, and relate both our concrete feeling for our body, and our abstract sense of self/selves. Damasio goes on to argue that 'mental' images run together to create 'movies-in-the-mind.' Like film, we flip through these many images to create a narrative. But unlike (most) film, Damasio writes that there is an irregular 'flow' of such images as we experience them and utilize them. Images are "sometimes concurrent, sometimes convergent and divergent, sometimes they are superposed" (318). In this way, the movie is unlike a conventional narrative. The movie is more like hypertext or an interactive flash narrative, in that the progression is not dominated by continuity. Further, because such images are not just visual, they instead incorporate all senses, including the somato-sensory (touch, muscular feeling, temperature, pain, visceral and vestibular sense) (318). One way to think about this irregular sequence would be to see these images as what Katherine Hayles calls "flickering signifiers" (How We Became 26) This example challenges the Cartesian model of the static image on a stage, introducing a different sort of drama and narrative, and implying stage-direction. She suggests that the mediation between person and technology that a typewriter represents "lends itself to a signification model that links signifier to signified in direct correspondence, for there is a one-to-one relation between the key and the letter it produces. Moreover, the signifier itself is spatially discrete, durably inscribed, and flat" (How We Became 26). Like the Cartesian theater, when we type a letter it appears before us, and then we move on to the next. This is complicated by electronic media because, Hayles writes, the "computer restores and heightens the sense of the word as image…as I work with the text-as-flickering-image, I instantiate within my body the habitual patterns of movement that make pattern and randomness more real and more powerful" (How We Became 26). We feel that we are writing into a "medium as fluid and changeable as

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water," and we "know kinesthetically as well as conceptually that the text can be manipulated" in ways that it can't if it is 'typed,' or if its role in the Cartesian Theater is to appear, signify, and just as quickly disappear (How We Became 26). Conceptualizing the randomness of the appearance of images, and our felt *use* of them in our embodied consciousness grants us a complexity that the movie-in-the-mind metaphor does not.

Damasio also briefly mentions Daniel Dennett's 'multiple draft hypothesis' for this movie in the brain, and this is a model that is useful in thinking (and in writing) about the rhetoricity of embodiment. Unlike the Cartesian theatre—a concept which Dennett himself first named as such and explained—in which the image appears and is seen and used almost instantaneously before rushing offstage, Dennett suggests that we sometimes interpret images over a much longer period of time. The suggestion is not that this time is used to thoroughly consider each image, but rather that there is so much going on in our cognition that "understanding [is] a property that emerges from lots of distributed quasi-understanding in a large system" (Consciousness 439). James Paul Gee puts forward a similar definition of embodied cognition: he says that, "humans have embodied experiences, store these experiences, and make connections or associations among them" (72). And we "edit according to our interests, values, goals, and sociocultural memberships…this editing process helps us to structure the ways in which we pay attention to our experiences…learn, think, and problem-solve" (72). Our choice between multiple drafts of embodied experience is socially determined. Further, according to Dennett, in the multiple drafts model of consciousness, "enough information may often be available to fuel more than one version of reality" (810). These multiple versions stick around in the mind. 'Drafts' of reality "compete in Pandemonium-like rivalry and the rivalry is resolved in favor of one over the rest (the one that "makes most ecological sense")--but not for good. The competition is never- ending. There is no definitive or archival draft" (810). So this idea of the multiple drafts of reality, combined with a richer sense of the multi-modality of the 'image' gives us a confused, but possibly very connective and connotative 'vision' for embodied consciousness. Importantly, this also asks us to seek echoes between this view of signification and our prescriptions and descriptions of signification in other arenas: if consciousness is polysemous, flickering, quasi-understood, a confounding interpretive task, we should be less sure that embodiment is a feeling of normalcy, of order; and we should be suspect of any effort to

write the body, or write through the body, that doesn't make space for a more dynamic, quantum, and perhaps absurd theater.

LOOPS, SYNTHESIZERS

If we experience the world through a sense of our partial understanding of it, rather than our penetration and consumption of it, we become cunning synthesizers. In this way, if there is an 'orientation' for embodiment, it might be seen to reside, as it does for Husserl, in empathy, in a sense of the presence of other embodied subjects, a feeling for our 'almost-something'-ness that mandates a cyclical and collaborative process of synesthesia. The loop is a model that allows us to conceptualize our role as synthesizers, as borrowers and lenders in a sensory ecology. N. Katherine Hayles critiques Grosz' image of the mobius strip, and places emphasis on the limitations which Grosz herself recognizes. Grosz writes that "the mobius strip is only one possible representation; it neither precludes other possibilities nor is necessarily the best or most enabling representation…[it] limits our understanding of the subject in terms of dualism" (Volatile 210). Hayles writes that "the attraction of the [mobius] model for her is that it undercuts dichotomies by having one turn into the other" (How We Became 196). For Hayles and others, the metaphor/model of feedback and feedforward loops expands upon Grosz' model. The idea of 'looping' addresses the (mis)perception that information "can circulate unchanged among different material substrates," including but not limited to the circulation between bodies (How We Became 2). To suggest that our interaction with information changes it is to introduce something very important into thinking about communication, and about writing. In his book Literacy in the New Media Age, Gunther Kress argues that we *transform* through the processes of reading and writing rather than *acquire* (46). We transform knowledge, information, media, and literate 'skills'—we don't just withdraw them and then possess them. This then also asks us to take responsibility for our emplacement in an environment and in a community—as a constant creator of this environment and community. To ignore this 'looping' is to shirk this responsibility.

This shirking of responsibility is connected to the notion that rhetoric, or philosophy, does not have a body. Hayles insists that not only is the body there; it is part of an "informatics" in which we recognize technologies of information only ever in the context of the biological, social and linguistic changes that initiate, accompany and complicate their development (How We Became 29). The feedback and feedforward loop is articulated as a "cybernetic system," but

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is illustrated by the image of a man walking with a cane, interestingly expanding Certeau's metaphor of strolling or wandering by including the prosthetic device. In this image, Hayles suggests that "cane and man join in a single system, for the cane funnels to the man essential information about his environment" as he manipulates it as well, as both cane and man engage in the 'perambulatory rhetoric' that Certeau writes of. Yet there is also something disturbing about the idea of embodiment as a complete or complete-able system of loops. The metaphor calls to mind the circuit, and thus invokes a certain proportional architecture, a clean language. But can we not imagine this looping as somewhat haphazard, as a kind of novice weaving, when we are interacting with others who, like us, operate along a continuum of confusion, within an environment full of the asymmetry of life?

Mark C. Taylor emphasizes the presence of "undecidable openings" even within information and media networks, and this nicely answers Grosz' call for models of embodiment that insist on the indeterminacy of the body (93). It also introduces some equivocation into the loop model. Taylor cites Hofstadter's idea of the *strange loop*, a model that adds complexity to Hayles's loop image, writing that "loops become strange when, in turning back on themselves, they generate irresolvable paradoxes" (96). In a simplified model of embodiment, such openings and complexities are seen as instantaneously, perhaps even unconsciously rejectable, abjected—they don't 'work' in the system. But conversely, strange loops *rely* upon the abnormal for their novel regeneration. In my last chapter, I'll try and provide some tangible examples of how such strange looping can *lead* to novel regeneration, to learning.

Problematically, in Hofstadter's book <u>Godel, Escher, Bach</u>, from which Taylor borrows this idea of the strange loop, the body is never referenced: the system of strange loops, for Hofstadter, is between the mind and (what we think are) exterior systems—technological, scientific, mathematical. The strange loop, for Hofstadter, is a "phenomenon [which] occurs whenever, by moving upwards (or downwards) through the levels of some hierarchical system, we unexpectedly find ourselves right back where we started" (10). He refers to certain of Bach's compositions, Godel's theorems and Escher's drawings to illustrate this concept. In <u>The Embodied Mind</u>, Paul Varela introduces a similar alternative model for embodiment. His image is of M.C Escher's drawing of a hand drawing itself.

Image 3.10: "Drawing Hands." M.C Escher. 1948.

Varela, taking off from Hofstadter's emphasis on the continuity between mind and system, or the circularity of compositions (like Escher's drawing as a system-in-itself), searches for a sense of the "deep circularity" between inner and outer, body and mind, and finds this in the three dimensions of the drawing, somehow more evocative and dynamic than the image of the mobius strip. The Escher hand invokes the ways that behavior writes the lifeworld, the mind writes the body, and vice versa and vice versa. I would also add that the Escher drawing expands upon the mobius strip in four important ways.

1. The drawing physicalizes recursivity. Even if the hands are 'disembodied,' at least the body is part of the context of the image; bodies are suggested in the margins of the image, creating and being created simultaneously.

2. The presence of two hands does suggest collaboration, the ways that bodies write and are written by other bodies as part of the process of embodiment.

3. The image introduces tools: the pencil as prosthesis, fully integrated into the body and mind, part of the inside and the outside and not supplemental to the process of embodiment.

4. The image, though precise, is paradoxical, irresolvable[38]

MOVING

Paul Varela mentions, in his search for a more 'rich' and contextualized and syncretic image for embodiment, Certeau's theories of spatiality and embodiment. As I wrote in chapter one, Certeau writes that there are apparati designed to channel speech according to hierarchies of accepted rhetoric that also institute silences (106). He recognizes that body norms institute

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[38] Of course, in a sense, the Escher hand is simply a more complex figuration of the *mobius* strip. Yet this image is also autopoietic—it generates itself. It is important, however to trouble the idea of embodiment as an 'independent' autpoietic system. If embodiment is conceptualized as self-generating, we have no means for conceptualizing our rich interdependence. Yet the idea of autopoiesis figures more into the act of description than the process of embodiment for Maturana and Varela—their key argument is that embodiment is not symbolically transferable. As Maturana and Varela point out, "the space defined by an autopoietic system…cannot be described by using dimensions that define another space. When we refer to our interactions with a concrete autopoietic system, however, we project this system on the space of our manipulations and make a description of this projection" (89). This point is central to the very idea of embodiment—pointing out the gap between inscription and incorporaton. Merleau-Ponty wrote that, because all discourse, all actions derive from some 'purely biological being,' and because all actions deviate the natural through "a sort of leakage" it is "a genius for ambiguity which might serve to define man" (Phenomenology 189). The Escher hand, or Bach's fugues, or Godel's theorems confound, as they ask us to solve them—they function like zen koan, in a sense, producing not answers, but the tension of unanswerability, a desire. So, in this way, instead of looking to produce ever more complex models of embodiment, we come to a more complex feeling for embodiment through this ineffability, through the creative motion of thinking (with) the body.

rhetorical norms: bodies and rhetorics become disciplined. He also recognizes that any act of mapping—as, perhaps, in the images I've used—can make action invisible (106). Tuan's upright body with its forward pointing arrow makes us march, while the strip and the hands only *imply* action, and translate poorly into a feeling for action. Certeau's metaphor for embodiment is walking—a metaphor that is dynamic and which also addresses the problem of place vs. space, *lieu* vs. *espace*. A place, according to Certeau, is definable, limited and enclosed, while space is constantly being produced by the practices of living. It could be said, in his schema, that our picture of the body is like a place while embodiment is spatial, consitituted and re-constituted through 'space acts,' bodily performances based on often unconscious but not arbitrary choices shaped by the environment and also constitutive of it.

As Merleau-Ponty writes, "our body is not primarily in space, it is *of* it…a group of lived-through meanings" (Husserl 153 italics mine). Certeau extends this metaphor into his conception of perambulatory rhetoric, equating strolling with turns of phrase and stylistic devices. Just as rhetorical history erects a hierarchy of bodies, an arrangement of normative body-meanings, a city planner constructs meanings and maps to "establish a normal and normative level to which the deviations of the 'figured' can be referred" (108). Walking is "making sense" in an Other sense: to walk is to impel movements and "change them into passages" (108); it is to "be other and pass the other," to realize the heterogeneity of movement within the planned homogenous city (116). This city is both a city, and it is discourse—Certeau playfully exchanges the meanings through this metaphor. Rhetoric may be a planned city, an architecture designed to validate and reveal order and normality, but any embodied experience of discourse is a strolling through discourse that experiences these norms, creates new pathways and instantiates changing articulations of space within seemingly intransitory places. The metaphor locates the body within the expression, and thus expresses a different role for bodies within rhetoric: not the body as intelligible expression, as arrangement of signifying positions, framed or filtered, but as involved in a transforming and transformative stroll, a series of (dis)positions, space-acts, and speech-acts. A moving amalgamation of informational systems unite in this image.

Yet in what ways can this image of walking also entail undecidable openings? How can it call-to-mind the indeterminacy of bodies? In order to more richly conceive of Certeau's metaphor I think we need to break down the normativity of walking, the assumptions about and

constructions of embodiment that this metaphor instantly expresses. To do so is not to suggest that Certeau is being ableist, but to take his metaphor and run, roll and ride with it.

Merleau-Ponty, in his essay "The World of the Living Present," also talks about the ways that 'walking' establishes a dynamic sense of spatio-temporality.[39] And he writes that "by walking…I change, on my own, my distance relative to persisting objects" (Husserl 152). In this way, "I can approach every site and be there, and thus my flesh is also a thing, a res extensa, etc., that is mobile" (Husserl 153). Merleau-Ponty, after making this assertion, an assertion that walking is 'constitutive' in our system of a kinesthetic sense of change—as opposed to a "homogenous object world [and our] homogeneous spatiotemporality" (Husserl 152)—ends this essay with a provocative rhetorical question: "But does not being moved in space, mechanically (e.g being driven, being carried etc.), accomplish nothing for the constitution, does it accomplish nothing essential for the possibility of empathy?" (Husserl 153). Indeed, considering walking with crutches, or moving in a wheelchair, even in an automobile, is to introduce meaningful complexity.

So, what we might look for in images or metaphors of embodiment would be a sense of dynamism, a rich concept of the interanimation, co-creation and co-dependency of body and mind and technology and space…or rather a rich sense of the cycling of bodies and minds and technologies and spaces. Such a moving image would also have to be, I would suggest, capable

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[39] For Merleau-Ponty, acknowledged to be the 'philosopher of speech' (as opposed to Derrida, the philosopher of writing), the walking metaphor is also about 'talking.' More specifically, he believes that "ideal beings exist only in speech…in the other and in me" (Husserl 56). Yet more specifically, "speech as the universal questioning of the world" is speech-as-walking (Husserl 57). This questioning makes speech active, and therefore distances it from writing, which to Merleau-Ponty is "thought which works with passivities" (Husserl 59). While movement is never exactly movement, per se, because the body always experiences itself as 'center,' and while writing is never exactly static, always entailing some degree of simultaneity, nevertheless writing is the "stratification of the past, its passage away into the inactual, the flux reclosing itself" (Husserl 58). Speech, like walking, is the inverse for Merleau-Ponty: opening flux up. Derrida critiques this as the "historic destiny of phenomenology": "on the one hand phenomenology is the "return to an active constitution of sense and value in general through its signs [i.e walking]. But at the same time, without simply being juxtaposed to this move, [phenomenology] will necessarily confirm the classical metaphysics of presence and indicate the adherence of phenomenology to classical ontology" ("Speech and Phenomena" 26). It is this ontology to which many of these theories of embodiment *do* adhere, yet my goal here is not necessarily to critique phenomenology at this 'level'—even as I do want to point out that, for these phenomenologists, the body does appear, does have *presence*, in sometimes uncomplicated ways—each of these theories could benefit from deconstructive analysis. I suggest that the starting point for this deconstruction is with 'ethics,' as I would argue Derrida also has suggested. That is, he writes that although the body "lives off a belief in the transcendental signified" ("Where a Teaching Body Begins" 95), and while "naturalizing always comes to neutralizing" (85), our body as a play of difference is still connected to 'rules' of this game. Derrida writes that "the body effects with which I play…feign to suppose or to make believe that my body is in no way responsible" to the systems within which it plays, particularly when we play at a "semblance of mastery" (105-106). An 'ethics' of embodiment could still attend to the effects of such play at normativity, without insisting on the presence of the body—indeed this is where we find ourselves when we place social constructivism and materialism together.

of revealing and challenging norms—of revealing boundaries and vectors of oppression as well as the power of difference.

As Detienne and Vernant wrote, *metis* is exactly that which the 'weak' employ to become the 'fittest'—in my estimation, cunning intelligence is not 'feeble,' but rather adapted to be most powerful in a world that does not respond to the monolithic logic of brute force. Certeau defines *metis* as a means to "obtain the maximum number of effects from the minimum of force" (82). *Metis* appears in the "right" time, has no fixed form, and is only detectable through its effects. Certeau writes that *metis* "remains hidden (it has no determinable place) until the last instant in which it reveals itself" (82). *Metis* is to be understood as a trick through which a situation, played out in time and space, "mediates spatial transformations," but also in the same way "produces a founding rupture or break" (83). Perambulatory rhetoric is the example par excellence of *metis*, and this example becomes 'excellent' in my estimation when the 'break' and the indeterminacy of *metis* are foregrounded. What goes along with the 'break' is a kind of connection and incorporation—of prostheses and of others. *Metis* as a phenomenology insists that we are never whole, we are always becoming, and we are never alone.

Metis is also necessary because normative models of embodiment, and normative images of the body, do not "promote and preserve the space for differentiation that make our intercorporeal exchange possible" (Young, 128). In other words, when we limit our idea of embodiment, we negate the possibility of *metis* and *metissage*, of wandering and being or becoming other, drafting something different, and of understanding the stakes involved. As Weiss suggests, "developing a sensitivity to the bodily imperatives that issue from different bodies is a necessarily starting place for our moral practices" (163). Knowing our own available means is impossible without thinking through the available means we share with others. As Kenneth Burke wrote, rhetoric is "identification and division ambiguously together" (Rhetoric of Motives 25). The sense of embodiment, 'felt' as this ambiguous mix, impels rhetoric—no embodiment, no rhetoric.

Embodiment can be best understood rhetorically, and through the lens of disability studies. The rhetorical negotiation of disability is intrinsic to all attempts to understand phenomenologically: we construct able and disabled bodies, and thus able and disabled ideas of being and becoming. My argument is that all knowing arises out of disability, as does meaning. Rosi Braidotti explains this nicely, suggesting that "language is not only and not even the

instrument of communication but a site of symbolic exchange that links us together in a tenuous yet workable web of mediated misunderstandings…all knowledge is situated, that is to say partial; we are all stuttering for words, even when we speak "fluently"" (<u>Nomadic</u> 14). We *are*, only because language, rhetoric and embodiment are communally not normal, not 'able.'

LOOPING BACK TO RHETORIC, EMBODIMENT AND DISABILITY

What I've tried to do, in this inventory of images for embodiment, is to recognize complexity but also to put forward an ethical vision. Before I roll on, I want to return to the debate which began this chapter—my description of the ways that disability studies brings crises of social construction to light, the ways that disability challenges us to think about the body more ethically, with greater complexity.

My definitions of rhetorical embodiment move between models of disability identity—perhaps in dangerous ways. Certainly I want to admit that many people in the disability community would reject, and rightly so, arguments that all bodies are fragmented, that affirming disability is a means of recognizing all of our 'real bodies' and embodied experiences (in relation to norms), and that all rhetorical expression is prosthetic. Of course, I'm not the only body out on this limb. Instead of shying away from the politics (or the phenomenology) of disability, I've tried to work *through* my theses about embodiment to show how these hard questions in fact clarify my project. I want to suggest that these positions on materiality, social construction and agency do not have to clash, nor do they have to fuse together into a homogeneous compound, and thus negate the uniqueness and situatedness of the disabled body, or of each of our differently abled bodies. Instead, there may be ways that perspectives on embodiment decenter the logic of equality, of a mean, ideal or normal embodiment, even if the final result can never be full autonomy. Indeed, I hope this examination calls into question the possibility and desirability of autonomy, proposing intercorporeality as a generative possibility. Perhaps, examining embodied knowledge might reveal how we rely upon disability to make sense of the world we move through—not disability as our inverse image, but disability as the fount of human creativity, erupting from those lines of subduction where our embodiment clashes with our desire to ignore it, reduce it, simplify it. I want to offer some uncertainty to you, to suggest this is something you might feel.

Hayles writes that, as there is a feedback/feedforward system in the cane example, "the same is true of a hearing aid for a deaf person, a voice synthesizier for someone with impaired

speech, and a helmet with a voice-activated control for a fighter pilot" (How We Became 84). "This list is meant to be seductive," she adds, "for over the space of a comma, it moves from modifications intended to compensate for deficiencies to interventions designed to enhance normal functioning. Once this splice is passed, establishing conceptual limits to the process becomes difficult…cybernetics intimates that body boundaries are up for grabs" (84-85). This introduces some discomfort.

Ernst Knapp, one of the first philosophers of technology, wrote that tools and technologies are "organ projections," material extensions of the body (44). He suggested that, "in the tool the human continually produces itself…a wealth of spiritual creations thus springs from hand, arm and teeth" (45). He described tools as coming from specific body parts, as a shovel looks like a bent hand, or a knife is a large tooth, and refused the line of distinction between the tool and the tissue. John Dewey also saw tools and technologies as extensions of the body, and as capable of reaching into the body—"there are things inside the body that are foreign to it, and there are things outside of it that belong to it" (Art 75). Yet, as Jennifer Bay has argued, "one of the reasons why many theories of embodied rhetoric have not addressed technology might be that technology poses a threat to the perceived organic unity of the body" (937). The idea of a relationship with the world mediated by technology might be acceptable, but the idea of the *incorporation* of technology as part of this process is less easily accepted. In the next chapter I'll look closely at the rhetorical uses of the trope of technological prosthesis, because the theoretical use of prosthesis raises a similar problematic—we resist the idea that we may need technologies to trespass beyond the boundaries of our bodies; we won't admit that we all extend ourselves through our relationships with others and our use of tools. We won't admit that our knowing of the world is fragmented because our knowing of our bodies and therefore ourselves is fragmented—or, rather, relies on constant augmentation. Furthermore, this is related to a fear of interdependence. What we finally come to see, in a strange looping around from what we want to believe about embodiment to what we do not know about our bodies and through our bodies, is that embodiment is a phenomenology defined not by boundaries, but by openings. We rely not just on technological, prosthetic incorporation, but we also rely upon others. The result is that embodiment means never being alone. As Certeau wrote, wandering is encountering the other. But perhaps this is one of the most difficult norms to confront: the norm of autonomy.

There must be ways to theorize difference *and* commonality, and to carefully utilize metissage to recognize the spaces in which the overlap of same and different is useful. Merleau-Ponty wrote that it is "a genius for ambiguity which might serve to define man" (<u>Phenomenology</u> 189). This genius can be beneficially applied in an analysis of normativity. When Lennard Davis writes that the experience of being non-standard [in some contexts] is universal, he is distilling the idea that, as Hayles says, "embodiment is the specific instantiation generated from the noise of difference…at once excessive and deficient [in relation to the body] in its infinite variations, particularities and abnormalities" (197). Or, as Donna Haraway has carefully written, "multiplicity is at play with questions of standardization, and no one is standard or ill-fitted in all communities of practice[…but] the point is to learn to remember that we might have been otherwise, and might yet be, as a matter of embodied fact" ("Modest" 38-39). In this way, attention to embodiment directs our focus towards bodily variation, the noise that is the soundtrack to our lives. Many would take issue with Davis's assertion, and my use of Hayles and Haraway here because, as I said at the beginning of the chapter, such statements can be used to diminish the importance, or challenge the veracity, of the lived experience of oppression—something which certainly effects people with disabilities (or with otherwise differently marked bodies) more than it does people who 'feel' able-bodied, in a world in which our embodiment always works through norms. So it is with worry that I table these arguments, and I serve them mainly to worry the arguments of others, unsure about the politics of claiming disability, confident only in the belief that disability cannot be denied.

In her theory of "Situated Knowledges," Haraway calls for a "doctrine of embodied objectivity," situated knowledges that accommodate both radical contingency and 'made' meaning as well as "modest meaning," faithful, shared accounts of the world ("Situated Knowledges" 191). She calls for "partial, locatable, critical knowledges sustaining the possibility of webs of connection called solidarity" ("Situated Knowledges" 191). In this scheme, "subjugated standpoints are preferred because they seem to promise more adequate, sustained, objective, transforming accounts of the world" ("Situated Knowledges" 191). It would follow that "partiality not universality is the condition of being heard"—a partiality "for the sake of the connections and unexpected openings situated knowledges make possible" ("Situated Knowledges" 195, 196). She insists that "no particular doctrine of representation or decoding or discovery guarantees anything" ("Situated Knowledges" 199). The world is a "witty

agent," a coyote, a coding trickster, so we need to "give up mastery but keep searching for fidelity, knowing we will be hoodwinked" ("Cyborg" 34). What is needed is "diffraction," "the production of different patterns" ("Cyborg" 34). I see *metis* as an answer to this need. Detienne and Vernant suggest that in the ancient context, there was a sense that the world was *tuche*—like the wind, subject to chance. *Metis,* then, was the best means of response, a 'production of different patterns' and an ability to move differently. *Metis* is a situated knowledge and a re-casting of the situatedness of knowledges. Certeau adds to this 'body' of thinking about *metis* by suggesting, as I interpret him, that we see norms and structures as place, and that space is constituted by and constitutive of embodiment, which always exceeds, even as it is conditioned by, the norms and structures of place. *Metis*, for Certeau, is the tactical negotiation of space and place through this 'production of different patterns,' and might better respond to the change and uncertainty of this world of chance.

In step with this concept, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson argues that disability can be "a way of describing the inherent instability of the embodied self" ("Politics of Staring" 74). In this way disability is not just one situated knowledge, but is rather central to the very idea of situated knowledges, insofar as "all groups, based on physical traits or markings, are selected for disablement by a larger system of regulation and signification" (Davis, <u>Bending</u>, 29). Due to this bodily subjugation, "the oppression of disabled people is the oppression of everyone's real body," to quote Susan Wendell (274). The experience of the limits of embodiment are universal, even while this experience is never identical. I would add that the experience of disability, then, allows for a more 'real' (inherently unstable) perspective on embodiment, and through embodiment, a more 'real' perspective on rhetoric and our cunning world. Rhetorics of disability can allow for the kind of partial, situated knowledge that is the only kind of knowing we can hope for. Also, once we recognize that, as Lennard Davis writes, "difference is what all of us have in common…identity is not fixed but malleable…technology is not separate but part of the body…dependence, not individual independence is the rule," then situated knowledges and partial perspectives are not all we can hope for, but are everything we should dream of (<u>Bending</u> 26).

I hope that my stories from rhetorical history, in the context of my exploration of embodiment, inflect and alter these theories, as I hope multiple perspectives on embodiment alter our thinking about rhetorical history and thus embodied rhetoric. As I more fully interrogate the

context of our current rhetorical practices, concentrating on the ethics of representations and creations of bodies and spaces, I hope that all of this information continues to circulate *affected* by its elaborations, prostheses and extensions—extensions that I mean to reach into you.

Also, understanding disability through shifting cultural/biological frameworks is a way to unite the cultural and biological, the embodied importance of disability as an aspect of *metissage*—as a cultural logic capable of critiquing normalcy in all of its many, connected and contingent manifestations. This is rhetoric as *pleasure* in the confusion of boundaries and *responsibility* in their construction (Haraway, "How Like a Leaf" 33).

And finally, thinking through embodiment gives us new ways to think about and to embody writing. A disembodied scheme or model of writing asserts itself in much of composition theory. This model is neither totalizing, nor ever totally absent whenever we write. If a connection—say a loop—to/through our body and to/through loops of embodied others were nearly as insistent a model for writing as the suggestion of the evaporation of the body and these others every time we set out to compose, writing would surely change. So would we.

CHAPTER FOUR: RE-MAKING SPACE

My hope is that in wandering through some of the models, metaphors and movements that we might use to conceptualize embodiment, I persuasively showed that we must think about the body, that we must recognize all knowing as embodied, and that this awareness not only includes a disability perspective, but needs it. My hope, for this entire project, is to help the scholar of composition and rhetoric to better recognize the learning that we do—situated as this learning is within competing histories and epistemologies, insistent bodies, and changing spaces. It is towards this third locus, changing spaces, which I want to now turn my attention.

In this chapter, I want to interrogate and re-map the spaces and interfaces of the North American university from the critical perspective of *metissage*, analyzing the ways that educational institutions have "limit[ed] public access and interaction in such a way as to avoid the chance encounter of diverse populations, creating a series of protected interior and isolated spaces" (Multitude, Hardt and Negri 188), as well as the ways that we might more actively, inclusively design composition in response to, and with an awareness of, this architecture. I will both map a particular spatial history and forge a set of tactics that might allow us to reform and revise and re-embody our situation. These tactics, importantly, come as the product of the eruption of *metis* into composition, as I continue to look for ways to re-cast the rhetoric of disability, and therefore to re-shape our relationships with our own embodiment, with others, and with our critical differences, in concert with our responsiveness to normativity. Also, this is a way to more deeply investigate embodied learning as it happens in our discipline, by examining the way space and embodiment interact.

I put forward three images: *steep steps*, the *retro-fit*, and *universal design*. These three images represent spatial metaphors that come from within the field of disability studies and nicely articulate the ways space excludes, the ways space can be redesigned, and the ways space can be more inclusively conceived. My criteria for selecting these metaphors is simple: I want them to be readily recognizable. You might 'see' these spaces every day as you come to work—in the approach to your classroom or studio, its layout, in classroom texts, in your response to student writing, in your paper prompts, your workshop design, your class message board, WIKI or website. The metaphors are also spaces that are produced, ideologically, in the world in which you move. First of all, the university erects *steep steps* to keep certain bodies and minds out. Secondly, to *retro-fit* our structures for access, we add ramps at the sides of buildings and accommodations to the standard curriculum—still, disability can never come in the front.

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But finally, in theory and practice, we can recognize the ways that teaching composition can be *universally designed*—how we might create an enabling space for writing and a way to think broadly and inclusively about ability.

With my words, I want to try and create a new map of composition, a map that recognizes the ways students with disabilities have been excluded, the ways the academy has accommodated them, as well as the ways that disability, as an identity and an epistemology, has and will continue to push us to see teaching and learning in new, broader and more empowering ways.

The work of scholars like Tom Fox, Linda Brodkey and others has shown us that writing teachers must consider access, and that there is much work to do in order to open the doors of the university, to understand and combat exclusion. This essay is an extension of such work, linking questions of physical access with questions of political-cultural-economic access, making out of my maps and metaphors a practical heuristic, a socio-spatial machine for the interrogation of access.

The first premise of this chapter is that we need to care about space. To begin with, we do 'think' spatially—we readily see the world in terms of physical space and spatial relations. Thus, spaces already convey information, and reconstructing or re-imagining these spaces is an act of persuasion. As David Harvey and others have argued, "representations of places have material consequences insofar as fantasies, desires, fears and longings are expressed in actual behavior" (22). Spaces, and how we write about them, think about them and move through them, suggest and delimit attitudes. As Porter, Sullivan, Blythe, Grabill and Meyers wrote in a <u>CCC</u> article on the methodology of institutional critique, "the materiality of institutions is *constructed* with the participation of rhetoric" (625, italics mine). Clearly, there is some recognition that we *build* composition as we imagine its spaces. It follows that we can also "change disciplinary practices through the reform of institutional structures" (619). Thus I suggest that my own metaphors re-write, re-cast and renovate the spaces of composition.

"Disabled people in Western societies have been oppressed by the production of space…due in part to their exclusion from the discourses and practices that shape the physical layout of societies," Brendan Gleeson writes (2). As Tanya Titchkosky argues, "the mapping of disability is an imparting of some version of what disability is and, thus, contains implicit directions for how to move around, through or with it…disability has a long history of being

mapped as if it is a foreign land, and a distanced curiosity remains one of the most repetitive, debilitating, yet 'normal' ways of regarding the life and work of disabled people" ("Cultural Maps" 101, 109). In the modern university, students with disabilities are kept far away from the discussions within which their input could be most illuminating, most challenging. This exclusion extends from dialogue to infrastructure: as David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder wrote, "the built environment also includes the mythologies, images and characterizations about disability that comprise the majority of interactions in our imaginary lives" (<u>Narrative</u> xiv). Yet Mitchell and Snyder wrote that "we cannot know a culture until we ask its disabled citizens to assess it" (<u>Narrative</u> 178). As I will show, disability is a reality—in the lives of those who claim this identity and in the lives of those who believe themselves 'immune.' Disability is also produced, sometimes most powerfully, by our uses of space. If the composition teacher wants to, above all, treat students ethically and respectfully, she must consider the spaces where she teaches in terms of disciplinary attitudes, but also in terms of bricks and mortar, walls and steps and pixels and bits that exclude bodies. The disciplinary and the institutional, the discursive and the physical, must be considered always in interaction.

STEEP STEPS

The steep steps metaphor puts forward the idea that access to the university is a movement upwards—only the truly 'fit' survive this climb. The steep steps, physically and figuratively, lead to the ivory tower. The tower is built upon standards—historically, this is an identity that the university has embraced. I want to suggest that we have mapped the university in this way—as a climb up the stairs of the Ivory Tower—for particular reasons. Often, maps are created not to reveal exclusion, but to *create* it. Mapping is traditionally a mode of closing-off, of containment—of, as Kathleen Kirby writes, structuring a dominant subjectivity "through the delimitation of the external environment" (46). David Sibley, the cultural geographer who has perhaps most extensively theorized the exclusionary potential of spatialization, extends this idea of 'structuring subjectivity.' He writes that "space and society are implicated in the construction of the boundaries of the self but…the self is also *projected* onto society and onto space" (86). Simply, how we want to see ourselves affects how we construct and experience space. As a discipline, the way we see ourselves is *projected* onto our classroom space. The steep steps metaphor sums up the ways the university constructs spaces that exclude. The 'self' or 'selves' that have been projected upon the space of the university are not just able-bodied and 'normal,'

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but exceptional, *elite*. The university is the place for the very *able*. This projection unites the many discourses of normativity that I delineated in the last chapter: whiteness, hetero-normativity, Empire, masculinity. In connected ways, these discourses push down and mark some bodies while insisting on the 'natural,' unmarked place of the privileged at the top of the steps. The same thing happens, often concurrently, with the marking of minds. I want to take a generalized look at some of the ways that composition has figured into this multi-valent projection—sometimes as a bottom stair, sometimes as a ramp-builder.

In composition's history as a remedial space (see Shaughnessy), or as a sorting gate (see Shor, Wallace), from Harvard in the 1870s to CUNY in the 1970s, composition grew as diversity grew, as the space for writing and writers expanded. At the same time, composition grew at a time when issues of ability were framed according to a deficit model. As notions of literacy developed from the idea of illiteracy, so too has ability been developed only as disability has been (often arbitrarily) marked out. I allude here to the fact that the concept of 'literacy' in its contemporary sense only came into use in the late nineteenth century. Previously, to be literate meant to be familiar with literature. Original definitions of literacy were based on one's ability to read the bible or sign one's name. In this way, literacy only came about as a result of the judgement of *il*literacy (see Kendall). As Marx and Foucault can be seen to point out, and as disability geographer Brendan Gleeson also reminds us, the factory "produced physical disability on an industrial scale" (109). Pre-industrialization, though there were ideas of ability and disability, society did not comprehensively 'sort' its citizens using disability as criteria. Concurrently, and consequently, illiteracy has been a way to 'sort' society, determining the strata of the labor force in a similar manner, then to decide who can vote, and so on. Like literacy, ability is defined by its inverse, it gains shape only when a negative prefix is appended, and without this prefix it has little to no social power. The concepts of *dis*ability and *il*literacy might be seen to have developed in similar ways, at similar times, in the Western world, the prefixes being used with particular, and similar (perhaps connected) ends in mind. The enterprise of writing instruction has been an agent for this confluence, as well as a space for resistance.

Composition has been, from the very beginning, concerned with approaching a changing institutional space in an egalitarian manner, while responding critically to the demand for ever more narrow interpretations of the bodies within it. Tom Fox critiques these narrow interpretations, which he identifies as standards, writing that "when access threatens change,

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standards are always the tools used to resist that change" (8), standards here being seen as quantifiable, measurable indices of writing ability and inability—always retaining and perpetuating cultural biases. These standards can come in the form of a restrictive grammar and usage rules that allow "correct" and "incorrect" writing to be added-up. As Mike Rose suggests, one of the most damaging assumptions about writing is that ability can be quantified via counting errors ("Language of Exclusion" 347). Tom Fox concurs that there has been a historical pressure to "reduce writing to a set of discrete skills to be learned, especially the countable ones" (52). As Patricia Dunn points out, it is now the case that many "students who make the most surface errors end up on the lowest track" ("Talking" 103). Ira Shor ties this to the discipline's history as a "curricular cop and sorting machine" at Harvard, and he defines this as "composition for containment, control and capital growth" (92). He adds that, following the advent of open admissions and the remediation of students, "basic writing has added an extra sorting-out gate in front of the composition gate" (92), to "slow the output of college graduates" and "manage some disturbing economic and political conditions on campus and off" (93). The history reaches back much further. For instance, in 1874 at Harvard, a test in English writing was instituted to "ensure that the new open University would not become too open, allowing new immigrants, for example, to earn degrees in science or math without demonstrating by their use of language that they belonged in the middle class" (Berlin, Rhetoric and Reality 23).

This sorting is more than just a managing of space; it is a discursive marking that reaches into bodies. As Mike Rose notes, "to be remedial is to be substandard, inadequate and, because of the origins of the term, the inadequacy is metaphorically connected to disease and mental defect" ("Language of Exclusion" 349). Lennard Davis points out that "language usage, which is as much a physical function as any other somatic activity, has become subject to an enforcement of normalcy" (Enforcing 100). This focus on standardization, Fox argues, also "mak[es] writing much more suited to the business of class and cultural discrimination" (26). Crowley and Hawhee point out that "usage rules are the conventions of written language that allow Americans to discriminate against one another. Questions of usage are tied to social attitudes about who is intelligent and well-educated, and who is not" (Crowley and Hawhee, qtd. in Dunn, Talking). The result might be that we now teach "courses in coercive socialization" (Fox 28). Yet I would argue that our ongoing awareness of and challenge to this spatial—and concurrently embodied—boundary-drawing is also our legacy.

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Fox's book <u>Defending Access</u> identifies the ways that writing teachers have been forced to negotiate the call for strict standards in the face of a changing educational system. In chorus with Fox, the discipline has responded with a concentrated critique of these standards, as shown above. This critique is evidence of the discipline's respect for student diversity and difference as well as our facility as reflective critics. I'll suggest that it would be possible to chart the *tension* caused by this double orientation of access and standards as *the* major force driving research in composition studies. This chapter hopes to augment this tension by suggesting that composition engage in a tactical negotiation with its own spatial history, acknowledging that composition is a place with a particular architecture, and a practice with certain available means.

Making disability seem inimical to the university has been a strategy used to shore up the identity of those invested in higher education: if those who do not 'qualify' can be vilified, marked out, and kept away, then those who make it up the stairs must deserve to. In this way, the university disavows disability—the steep steps create an environment in which disability cannot be seen, in which students with disabilities must fall to the bottom. This occurs because, over time, those invested in higher education have refused to believe that the body traversing the steps could be disabled, that the elite mind could be imperfect. At the same time, their legitimate fears, grown from the realization of their own weaknesses, their own vulnerability, led to the *creation* of disability as a kind of counter-image. Of course, the reality is that disability is always present—there is no perfect body or mind. There is no normal body or mind. The U.S is a country within which one fifth of the population is affected by disability. 'Even' in the Western World, we live in an age when, despite physical/medical efforts to avoid it and psychological/medical efforts to disavow and pathologize it, we will all become disabled at some point in our lives. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in 1996, 6-9% of undergraduate students reported having a disability (iii). Learning disabilities comprised 35% of these disabilities (iii). We might also assume that many students with less visible disabilities (like learning disabilities) 'pass,' hiding their disability or attempting to overcome it (see Brueggeman). As teachers of composition, we recognize the diversity of the students we teach. But we must also recognize our roles within institutions, disciplines, and perhaps even personal pedagogical agendas, in which we may seek to avoid and disavow the very idea of disability—to give it no place. This avoidance and disavowal brings with it its own spatial metaphors—I use the steep steps to express this negative force. That these steps are 'real' in the lives of people

with disabilities adds to the power of the metaphor. The steps have a strong connotation in the disability community, and not just for people who use wheelchairs and crutches. The following image, of the March 1990 ADAPT[40] protest calling for passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act shows the perspective of those crawling up the steps, the gravity of the metaphor, and the power of people's reaction to it. Here, looking at a political protest enacted over a physical (and highly symbolic) space nicely articulates my point about the alloy of architecture and ideology, the union of bodies and discourses.

Image 4.1: Olin, Tom. "Day in Court for Americans with Disabilities Protests Planned Over Supreme Court's ADA Rulings." March 1990.

When I say that the academy *erects* steep steps, I hope that this verb entails many things—most of all, I want to show that the steep steps are constructed for a reason. It could be said that the academy is a primary enforcer of cultural norms, not just in composition, but as part of a much larger cultural trend. As James W. Trent and others have shown, the history of eugenic research, testing, and promotion at Western institutions such as Stanford and Harvard shows us that universities have been the arbiter of ability in the United States. American academics have delineated and disciplined the border between able and disabled, 'us' and 'them.' These line-drawers were able to solidify their own positions as they closed the doors upon others. The disabled, in this history, were more than left out: disabled people have been sterilized, imprisoned and killed. As Trent and others have pointed out, American academics systematically developed the means to segregate society based upon arbitrary ideas of ability—the university was the place for the most able, the mental institution the space for the 'least.' Charles Benedict Davenport, a Harvard Ph.D and instructor and David Starr Jordan, president of Stanford University, are recognized as the fathers of the American eugenics movement. Here is a quote from Jordan that nicely sums up his views: "It is not the strength of the strong, but the weakness of the weak which engenders exploitation and tyranny. The slums are at once symptom, effect, and cause of evil. Every vice stands in this same threefold relation" (qtd. in Quigley, 2). Starr

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[40] ADAPT is an activist organization that started as American Disabled for Accessible Public Transit <www.adapt.org>. Following successful protests for the right to public transportation, and following a perceived shift towards greater access, the group has come to focus on the right to personal support services, and has renamed itself American Disabled for Attendant Programs Today, "fighting so people with disabilities can live in the community with real supports instead of being locked away in nursing homes" (ADAPT).

Jordan and Davenport worked to apply these ideas to bodies they deemed weak. Margaret Quigley charts the outcome of these ideas, an outcome made possible by the privileged position of these men within North America's 'finest institutions.' Quigley writes that,

> By 1936, when expert medical panels in both England and the US finally condemned compulsory eugenical sterilization, more than 20,000 forced sterilizations had been performed, mostly on poor people (and disproportionately on black people) confined to state-run mental hospitals and residential facilities for the mentally retarded. Almost 500 men and women had died from the surgery. The American Eugenics Society had hoped, in time, to sterilize one-tenth of the US population, or millions of Americans. Based on the American eugenical sterilization experience, Hitler's sterilization program managed to sterilize 225,000 people in less than three years (3).

As Welsome, Trent, Sharav, Smith and others have argued, institutional basements were labs for the social and biological experimentation of scholars from the Ivory Towers. Paul Yakovlev, a Harvard scientist and resident at several institutions, built a collection of nearly 1000 brains, turning instituion morgues into labs and making some inmates dissect these specimens (Welsome 233). His collection was later donated to Harvard, where they are still proudly displayed. Fernald School came to be known by Boston academics as 'the zoo' because of the wide range of ailments represented there, and the bodies held there for easy viewing and study. Many of the pictures used (and still found) in medical textbooks came from these schools. These phrenological and physiognomical (now re-named 'neuropathological') studies, along with the genetic studies of Goddard and others at such institutions, led to a catalogue of dysgenic deterioration, the inverse of the pursuit of perfection at the University. Yet upward academic movement was fueled by the objectified bodies and minds in these basements.

     Eugenics can be seen, at least in large part, as the invention of the American university. This eugenic program relies on the attribution of disability to society's Others and, as I argued in chapter three, is connected to scientific racism and sexism, compulsory heterosexuality, the creation a bifurcated workforce, even a global capitalist system. The legacy of this invention is still part of our identity.

Here, for example, is a diagram of the 'steps' that were created to distinguish between different grades of the 'feeble-minded' in the U.S in the heyday of the Eugenics movement before the second World War. The definitions were used to classify a group of humans according to mental age, suggesting that development had been arrested and would proceed no further past the step at which the individual was placed. The mental age was determined based upon variations of a standard test, the Binet test, which asked literally hundreds of standard 'common-knowledge' questions, of increasing difficulty. The test was also designed to 'stop' the subject once they had reached the stage or step of difficulty at which they could proceed no further.

Image 4.2: "Exhibit of Work and Educational Campaign for Juvenile Mental Defectives." American Philosophical Society. 1906.

As you can see from Image 4.2, the steps were also closely associated with forms of work, and thus 'classed' citizens and linked their value to this labor-output, but also placed almost all of the 'feeble-minded' *below* reason and judgment, not only in a space of rational vacuity, but deficit. You'll also notice that the bodily bearing of these individuals conveys a message: the different levels of animation suggest physical and cognitive correlation: the disabled mind equates with the disabled body.

One way to map the spaces of academia and disability would be to look at the ways land was parceled out in the U.S in the early to mid- 1800s. While land-grant universities were popping up in rural spaces, asylums were popping up in other rural settings—on old farms and abandoned land. From within one privileged space, academics were deciding the fate of others in similar, yet somehow now pathological, other and impure spaces. Two 'maps' make this parallel production of space readily apparent. Below is an image (circa 1909) of the Wrentham School for the Feeble-Minded in Massachusetts—a segregated and clearly isolated encampment. This school is still open—or, rather, still 'encloses.' Below this image is a picture (taken in 1927) of my own school, Miami University of Ohio—a very similar picture of a school that traces its origins to 1809, yet has a tradition of creating academic subjects, not academic objects.[41]

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[41] This said, as is the case with many North American universities, Miami shared land with an institution of connected, but inverse intentions—a sanitarium for the treatment of mental disorders. As Henry Howe wrote in 1888, "Oxford is purely a college town: and its various institutions are each in localities with pleasant outlooks.

Image 4.3: "Wrentham School for the Feeble-Minded in Massachusetts." <u>The Proceedings of the American Association for the Study of the Feeble-Minded</u>. 1924.

Image 4.4: "Miami University From The Sky." <u>Miami University Recensio</u>. 1927.

Wrentham was opened in 1906. In the 1950s, 'residents' at this and the Fernald School (founded 1854) were fed radioactive isotopes in a scientific experiment. Young boys at these schools signed up to be part of the 'science club,' a club invented up by the M.I.T faculty club, and they were given Mickey Mouse watches and armbands, and taken on special outings, in return for taking part in a 'nutritional study.' 74 boys were fed oatmeal injected with radioactive iron or calcium (Welsome 231, 235). Welsome suggests there was "nothing unique" about this study, as the school had become a "veritable laboratory" with a "captive population" for academics from Boston (231, 233).

Wrentham and Fernald were labs for the development of negative eugenics—the destruction of supposedly inferior 'stock' through isolation and sterilization. Many children from large immigrant families were shipped here, and there was a radically disproportionate number of African Americans, Eastern Europeans, and lower-class children, all expendable according to eugenic thinking. Miami, on the other hand, might be seen as an arena for positive eugenics, the propagation of (supposedly) superior 'stock.' To this day Miami maintains the robust "Miami Merger" program, sending Valentine's Day cards to every individual who met their match at Miami, boasting that "out of 151,967 living alums, 24,882 are married to each other, creating 12,441 "Miami Mergers." That's about 16.4 percent of Miami's alumni population" ("News Briefs").

Image 4.5: "Miami Merger Valentine's Card." Miami University Alumni Association. 2005.

Among them is a sanitarium, the "Oxford Retreat," a private institution for the treatment of nervous diseases and insanity. Through its ample grounds winds a little stream" (355). Beside the building were formal gardens, and in these gardens, in 1905, "the first [Miami] Junior Prom was held…the couples strolling past a flock of stately peacocks on the autumn grounds" (Havighurst Chapter XIII). The flip side of this charming outward appearance was that the Retreat was a place of secure isolation; streams and peacocks and formally dressed undergrads promenading on the outside, patients locked inside. Dr. Cook, the owner of the Retreat, built an underground tunnel from his home to the building, to enable him to travel from building to building "without being seen by his patients" (Lemon 1). At the Retreat, Dr. Cook also performed lobotomies and shock treatments.

I feel a visceral sense of disconnection between the poetry on the card and the program of injecting isotopes. Likewise, at a school where, in my first year on campus, a cross was burned on a town lawn and a hateful email was sent to students who listed their names in the campus paper on national coming-out day, I feel uncomfortable about the message sent by the picture of a white heterosexual couple embracing (Cincinnati Enquirer). My intention is not to attack Miami, which is certainly no different in its 'legacy' than any other American school, and is a place where students and faculty have become keenly aware of such issues, and engaged as agents of change. Indeed, the University was the first school in Ohio to provide Domestic Partner Benefits and, despite a very public court case challenging this right (Brinkman vs. Miami University), has stood behind this decision (Williams, "Campus Responds to Recent Lawsuit"). What I want to do is to locate a common and insistent theme of normativity in North American academia, and claiming my own involvement within it: I do see the university as a locus and progenitor of privilege, a normative space.

We may like to believe that, today, practices of eugenics have not only been rejected, but that they've also been *corrected*. Yet the selectivity of this environment must be continually interrogated. We must all evaluate the ways in which we ourselves continue to decide which bodies and which minds will have access to the considerable resources, privileges and advantages we bestow—and as we ask this question, we must wonder whether what we 'bestow' is truly worthwhile if it translates into policies of exclusion, programs of incarceration and reductive definitions of human worth.

The best way to map the steep steps, I think, is as a line graph, like the one I've improvised here:

Image 4.6: "Graphing the Steps" Jay Dolmage. 2005.

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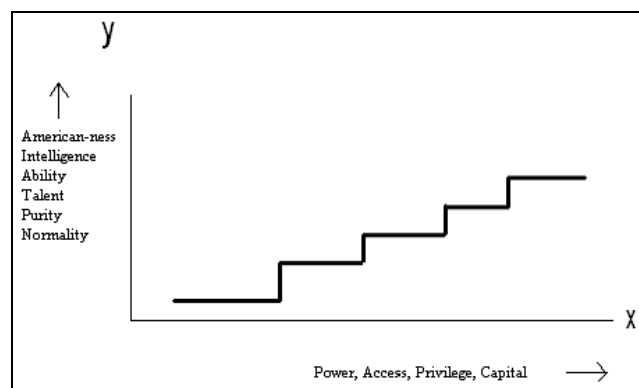
In this graph, positive attributes—the things our society most highly values—increase along x and y axes. So, figuratively, as we climb the steps, towards the academy, we think of a move towards ability; values on both axes increase. There is a 'system' at work here. Access to each of the horizontal terms is only possible if you are seen as having access to each of the vertical terms, and vice versa: you can't have power if you don't have normality, no normality without power. Those individuals who would be plotted in the bottom left sector of the graph (without purity, intelligence, capital, access), are seen as either insufficiently motivated or naturally deficient. This works with two other metaphors: one is the bootstraps metaphor (you pull yourself up the steps by your bootstraps, see Villanueva) and the second is the myth of measurable intelligence (you 'test' to the top step, you are endowed with the right IQ number, which rises along x and y axes). The fault is not located in the 'system' that the graph reveals, but within the individual who lacks what the system values. Tanya Titchkosky and Rod Michalko have argued that a person with a disability is often seen as "draw[ing] out the intentions of an environment" via the "limits it inscribes [on] their lives and bodies" (217). The graph of the steep steps, like the use of the Bell Curve, shows how disability is a constructed alterity, necessary to the myth of normalcy. Perhaps a university needs steep steps because it needs bodies at the bottom of the procession upwards, if only to justify the ascendance of the few.

Yet we must look at the graph from other angles, along other axes. For instance, we can map forces moving up and down—holding you back or boosting you up. Are there snakes, or ladders, set up to speed movement from top to bottom or bottom to top? Can we be both at the top step and at the bottom step—do we straddle steps as we climb or fall? Does our perspective as teachers of writing, having in some way climbed 'above' the students in our classes, change our view of the steps? Can we recognize the perspective from the bottom?

Interrogating the steep steps metaphor works to highlight not just how space and spatialization are exclusionary, but also the ways that the distance between the hypothetical 'us' and the 'them,' the able and the disabled, has a particular structure. In the writing classroom, when teachers try to ascertain what this structure of exclusion looks like, they search student writing. Most of the students assessed are already labeled (as BW, or LD, or ESL), yet this mode of assessment effects all students. Mina Shaughnessy's work perhaps best expresses this

search—a search for error. In her diagnosis of Basic Writing, Shaughnessy suggests that "for the Basic Writing student, academic writing is a trap, not a way of saying something" (7). She says that the Basic Writer is "paralyzed" as they move across the "territory of language" as though "being forced to make their way across a mine field" (11). Each of their errors, in this space, becomes a further "barrier" to progress (11). The jumps in my line graph, the risers on the stairs, could represent these barriers or mines. Of course, Shaughnessy goes on to say that the errors are also, perhaps only, the 'fault' of the teacher. Despite this statement, decades later our institutions continue to diagnose the problem by analyzing the student.

Kathleen Yancey writes that "as English Teachers, we may not be sufficiently and or technically educated or trained to help the LD [learning disabled] student" (341). Despite this, she seems quite comfortable saying that students with learning disabilities "do structure the world differently than the rest of *us* do" (342, italics mine). Her suggestion is that "they can mimic structures provided to them" and then "practice, practice and practice again" to hold onto "typical ways of patterning information" (342). I picture students being run up and down a set of steep stairs. The problem here is not the suggestion that people learn differently and that therefore we need to teach differently. The problem is that there is a simple binary created, by the use of completely baseless cognitive assumptions, and then there is the expectation that 'they' are lesser, and should be drilled into writing like 'we' do. The use of the language of computation also reminds me of the distinction between technicians and artisans in antiquity, a binary I argued Hephaestus breaks down. Michelle Ballif suggests that an alternative tradition of *metis*, like the one I proposed, shows us that language is not just for 'technicians' but for artisans like Hephaestus (Seduction 189). And Janet Atwill has shown how *techne* was made mechanical rather than artistic by Aristotle. Clearly, one of the ever-present means of sorting society has been the attribution of values to our creative work. Seeing students as producing patterns of information negates the possibility for *metis* and arts of cunning. The steps of 'feeble-mindedness' shown previously locate some individuals below the threshold of reason and judgment required for anything but manual and menial work. The 'drilling' of students in 'skills' rings of a similar menial and manual devaluation.

David Bartholomae's article "The Study of Error," which followed immediately on Shaughnessy's work, suggests we need to do a "large, longitudinal study" to identify a ""natural" learning sequence" for basic writers and second language learners (267). The writers could then

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be pushed through this sequence, as though up stairs. His desire is not so much to force all students to learn the same way, but it is to isolate and diagnose a single model of learning for an extremely heterogeneous group. And ironically, though Bartholomae indicates that his intention is to map how students learn, he charts only their ('they' are the re-named students that he diagnoses) errors and miscues. He is mapping how students fall down the stairs, essentially. This reveals, then, that though the intention is good—learning how to better teach all students—the effect is to establish composition's Others, to delineate a norm, what isn't in error, by arranging deviance around it. Come stand with me at the top and watch them fall.

Writing about students with Learning Disabilities, as I will later show, follows the same pattern. As Amy Vidali has argued, many of the same pedagogies, based on similar assumptions and even metaphors, have constructed basic writers and disabled students as composition's outsiders. Clearly, disability, in the college classroom is not respected—it is something to identify and then to fix. The method of 'fixing' disability focuses on patterns of the 'typical,' and the 'natural,' implying that disability is neither. Moreover, as Tom Fox reminds us, "we fall into the trap of imagining that language standards and social boundaries are one and the same" (6). Mastering writing does not ensure academic access for students. Also, as Fox points out, mastering writing does not ensure class mobility or socio-economic success. Here we might see the snakes and ladders on the graph of the steps: poor writing can get you remediated, but good writing doesn't guarantee you'll climb. In this way, 'normalizing' students with disabilities not only perpetuates the myth of typical or natural learning; it also reinforces standards that, even when mastered, don't offer access. Instead, the move to *normalize* the process of writing is used in service of exclusion—marking out the 'abnormal.' *They* are not *us*.[42]

In their critique of institutional approaches to Basic Writers, Min Zhan-Lu and Bruce Horner suggest that errors are often seen as "linguistic confusion" or as "cultural difference" (147-151). In these two models, the writer's errors are identified so that the writer (not just the error) might be placed outside of the rational order of language, or outside of the dominant mode of discourse. Kimber Barber-Fendley and Chris Hamel, creating an inventory of our disciplinary attitudes towards 'Learning Disabled' students, also suggest that learning disabilities have

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[42] I have been playing with the use of 'us'and 'we' throughout this work. My hope is that my own ambivalent relationship with the word 'us' brings its ambiguity to light. In asking the reader to confront both the boundaries around 'us' and the general invitation it offers, I want to draw attention to tension. Asking the reader to identify or dis-identify is asking the reader to recognize the ways both 'us' and 'them' are socially constructed, and how this social construction has material consequences.

always been identified with "bizarre errors" (512). These errors are characterized as having no rhyme or reason. In the case of the basic writer or the 'LD' writer, the disability belongs to the writer, not the writing, and the university thus marks them as foreign and irrational. Not surprisingly, foreign-ness and irrationality are two of the most commonly applied metaphors for people with (all types of) disabilities in the history of the Western world. Of course, the similarity between treatment of Basic Writers and treatment of students with disabilities does not adhere across contexts.[43] But the similarities suggest a common architecture—both basic writers and 'LD' writers are marked as abnormal, naturally and culturally deficient. Addressing this marking-out, Bruce Horner suggests that the "distinction between error and its social implications is false" (140). Error, in his opinion (as in Fox's), is a social achievement (141). Certainly, by labeling 'LD' errors as 'bizarre,' teachers absolve themselves of responsibility for understanding the error or the student—they give themselves permission to stop teaching. But, more remarkably, this allows the teacher to label anything 'bizarre,' or beyond their comprehension or imagination, as 'disabled.' The move is to disavow the error and dismiss the student, and their writing, as bizarre, far from 'normal.' This version of foreign and irrational, bizarre disability serves to reinforce the fiction of the writing teacher's natural, typical, rational ability, and compounds with other social prejudices.

Conceptualizing the existence of steep steps, steps built by us as teachers, between 'us' (the eminently able) and 'them' (the irrevocably disabled) might help us to understand that spatial metaphors and social attitudes are (at least) as persistent as physical structures. These persistent practices, and persistently exclusive spaces, are part of the map of composition.

As Ellen Cushman began writing about the "Rhetorician as Agent of Social Change," she first described the steep steps of "the Approach," a long set of stairs, long in disrepair, between the city of Troy, New York, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. The Approach, for her, symbolized that which "prohibit(s) scholars from Approaching people outside the University" (374). Every day, she writes "we reproduce this distance so long as a select few gain entrance to universities, so long as we differentiate between experts and novices, and so long as we value certain types of knowledge we can capitalize on through specialization" (374). Here is a postcard picture of how the steps used to look:

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[43] Yet one key similarity is the tendency to assess the writer rather than the writing.

Today, the steps in the postcard are in ruins, but the ideology of the steep steps persists, at Rensselaer and elsewhere. Indeed, even as universities have become more accepting of diversity, academics tend to stay 'inside,' as Cushman suggests. Perhaps even more distressing is the fact that as a select few stay in, disability is kept *out*, often quite literally. I myself taught composition courses in a residence hall at Miami University of Ohio. This hall has been themed the 'Diversity' dormitory for several years. Of course, the very existence of this dormitory raises key issues about space. The idea that "diversity" should be housed in one location is absurd, and offers us an opportunity to critique space from the perspective of *metissage*. How do such houses, while allowing for the creation of community within such spaces, also allow for the maintenance of an exclusive white space outside their doors? What do we mean by diversity—cultural, 'racial,' one at the expense of another? How does this kind of segregation provide opportunity for interaction, and how does it, as Hardt and Negri suggest, perpetuate the program of Empire by "limit[ing] public access and interaction in such a way as to avoid the chance encounter of diverse populations, creating a series of protected interior and isolated spaces" (Multitude188)? Such dormitories exist at nearly all American universities. Famous dormitories include Chocolate City at MIT, as well as Casa Latino, Ujamma (the Black Concentration House, since the 70s) and Okada (Asian-American House) at Stanford. When such spaces become so ethnically particularized and segregated, new problems arise, problems that also can be critiqued from the perspective of *metissage*. It is important to ask how these houses function as ideological spaces, spaces that ascribe roles, that delimit movement, or that, perhaps, create community—what do the spaces create, what do they negate?

At Miami, 'Diversity' students have begun to share space with students who have chosen the theme 'Environmental Awareness' under which to live—and I once taught both groups together. I originally saw the opportunity to teach in this dorm as a chance to meet students in *their* place. Yet the dorm remains a very institutional space in many ways. This residence, despite its claim to awareness of issues of diversity and the environment, is not physically accessible to students with disabilities. I taught in a common room in the basement. To get a television downstairs, let alone a wheelchair, one needs to give advance notice, obtain a key from a custodian, ask her to accompany you and then squeeze together into a 4x4 freight elevator.

When I took this matter up with the Office of Residence Life, I was told that, should a student with a physical disability want to enroll in the program, the entire program would shift to an accessible dorm, moving all students across campus. Such a position is terribly problematic, yet it frames the issue of access to composition almost perfectly.[44]

The story of the 'Diversity' dormitory clearly illustrates my earlier point that students with disabilities are kept far away even from the discussions within which their input could be most illuminating, most challenging. I tried to teach towards 'Diversity' and 'Environmental Awareness' in a place that won't really conscience either. Reflecting on the postcard of Rensselaer should encourage us to imagine what we would write on the back today. The steep steps down to my own classroom, and maybe up or down to your own, are not a relic, but a constant physical reminder of the ways our classes take place in a selective, exclusionary space, a space that keeps students with disabilities out. It is clear how this literally occurs. It is up to the composition teacher, as agent of social change, to interrogate the ways in which this is figuratively and then practicably true as well. How might we chart the steps of our own 'ascendance' on a graph? What are the attitudes, requirements and practices that might represent boundaries, jumps on the graph, risers on the steps? What forces move up and down, what snakes and ladders exist, effecting student progress? Should we even want to get to the top? Finally, if we want to circumvent the climb, how do we build a ramp? What does it mean to skip the steps?

THE RETROFIT

Image 4.8: "Figure 430: Retrofit the building entrance by replacing the steps with a ramp." United States Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. 2001.

To retrofit is to add a component or accessory to something that has been already manufactured or built. This retrofit does not necessarily *make* the product function, does not necessarily fix a faulty product, but it acts as a sort of correction—it adds a modernized part in place of, or in addition to, an older part. Often, the retrofit allows a product to measure up to new regulations. The retrofit is applied to automobiles, usually, and concerns the need to get them 'up to spec.'

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[44] The implication behind this pseudo-policy is that disability is static, foreseen, and that it is something one can respond to with accommodation. What happens if a student becomes ill, or injured, over Thanksgiving break, on a weekend outing, or on a Wednesday afternoon? The entire residence population will move across campus?

Automobiles are consistently retrofitted with new parts so that they can pass new emissions guidelines. A home might be retrofitted with a new furnace for similar reasons. Retrofits may be seen as mechanical, or as a matter of maintenance; thus they aren't creative. Retro-fitting is also often forced or mandated. Another entailment of the retrofit is that it is a stop-gap measure—this leads to the entailment that a retrofit can, in fact should, be given low priority. Thus, as a building is retro-fitted to accommodate disability, as per the 'specs' of the Americans with Disabilities Act, ramps are added onto the side of a building, or around back, instead of at the main entrance. The ADA calls for *reasonable accommodation*. Common reason then seems to dictate that disability is supplemental to society, that it is an after-thought or an imposition. As Henri Lefebvre wrote in The Production of Space, the production of social space results in domination; it leads to the "appropriation" and "diversion" of 'others' (167). Lefebvre calls this process "*detournement*" (167). He also argues that the body creates or produces its own space, but is also subject to this detournement—"the laws of discrimination in space" govern the body (170). A retro-fitting is both an accommodation and a diversion; a form of discrimination, relegation.

As Jeffrey Willett and Mary Jo Deegan write, many retrofits are "far too limited in number or implementation," or are simply absurd (146). Their list of examples nicely illustrates the ways that retrofitting can preserve exclusion:

> The number of [accessible] hotel rooms and parking spaces cannot meet demands…accessible rooms [are provided] in largely inaccessible buildings…the person with a disability [may have to] travel two or three times farther to enter a building than the distance needed to use the able-bodied entrance. Ramps leading to these entrances may be the last cleared of ice and snow. Elevators may be poorly situated, slow, or too small. Many large lecture halls and movie theatres force people in wheelchairs to sit at the back (146).

And in relegating disability to the margins, retrofits serve as what might be called abeyance structures—perhaps allowing for access, but disallowing the possibility of action for change. Re-tooling the gas engine, for example, might save gas, but it also might delay research into renewable fuel sources, or alternatives to the family car.

That said, the retrofit, because it reveals what might be called an essential 'supplementarity' in any culture or structure, is not wholly a bad thing. I am not, in fact, arguing

against such accommodations. Instead, I hope to show how the presence of such temporary additions—limited in their time of effectiveness and in their space of implementation—will always point up the lack, the partiality of social and architectural structures. This lack shouldn't be lamented or ignored, but rather addressed. The presence of retro-fits cannot be seen as 'completing' this lack, or filling in the holes.

Since the passage of the American's With Disabilities Act in 1990, the public has begun to see disability as an issue of space. This issue is constructed as a matter of compliance, as the dominant terminology of the act is the idea of 'reasonable accommodation.' The 'Reason' of the medical and legal establishment, then, finally decides upon which accommodations are to be made. Yet since the ADA, at the very least, people with disabilities have been given space. The construction of elevators or ramps instead of steep steps, these are well-intentioned ideas; they speak to our desire for equality. Yet, as Patricia Sullivan has written, this democratic ideal of equality, when faced with "a broad and diverse cross-section of American culture…in college classrooms" can also lead the university to respond with "a humane disregard for difference under an egalitarian ethic" (39). This egalitarian ethic might be labeled 'fairness.' As Barber-Fendley and Hamel point out however, 'fairness' is an incredibly under-defined term. They see fairness spatialized, metaphorized, as the "level playing field" (512).[45] The retrofit—in my mind the contemporary 'even playing field' response to disability—is a sort of cure, but half-hearted, and so it *begins* by negating disability and *ends up* only partially succeeding, thus leaving many people with disabilities in difficult positions. The retrofit is also a part of composition pedagogy, particularly in relation to issues of difference.

Too often, we *react* to diversity instead of planning for it. We acknowledge that our students come from different places, and that they are headed in different directions, yet this does little to alter the vectors of our own pedagogy. Most often, the only time disability is spoken or written about in class is in the final line of the syllabus, when students are referred to Disability Services should they desire assistance. The message to students is that disability is a supplementary concern—and then that it is not the teacher's concern, not really a part of the course; it's at the back door of the syllabus. The sentence about Disability Services gets the

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[45] This is a field that makes 'LD' writers invisible, the authors argue (512). In these ways, 'disability' in writing programs is made invisible most of the time, and 'bizarre' when necessary—when the paradigm needs to assert its boundaries; when teachers need to impose the visibility of 'standards'; when they need or want to define themselves and their classrooms as not-bizarre; when they want to identify their work as typical or natural; when they want to stop learning and teaching.

syllabus up to spec. Teachers 'deal with' disability via the ideological equivalent of a ramp—disability as an identity category can come in the side or the back entrance, if it is to be included at all.

Such retro-fitting is happening, on a large scale, on the institutional level as well. At the school at which I am a student and teacher, a recent push has been a program called STRIVE. This program is designed to: "Foster a University climate that would…attract students, faculty and staff from a wide range of racial, ethnic, religious, geographical, socioeconomic backgrounds and sexual orientations…that values individuals with diverse beliefs and backgrounds, fosters public debate and democratic discourse, cultivates intercultural understanding and critical reflection" (STRIVE). Such an initiative might be seen as progressive, not reactive like a retrofit. The problem is that disability was not part of the 'wide range' of diversity listed. In response, several faculty members objected to this exclusion. The result was that a new draft was printed and "different disabilities" was added on to the end of a list of diverse identities after "sexual orientations." The list then read: "Attract students, faculty and staff from a wide range of racial, ethnic, religious, geographical, socioeconomic backgrounds, sexual orientations and different disabilities" (STRIVE). Not only was this an obvious, after-the-fact retrofit, but the language used provides evidence that the old structure doesn't really invite the new addition. "Different disabilities" sounds awfully negative, as though the goal is to invite a disability of every type, a full range of abnormal bodies, not to welcome the disabled as a previously-excluded group who bring positive knowledge and culture—adding diversity. Further, in separating these 'identity groups' with commas, there is a sense of their natural division—that one can only claim difference in 'whole' and easily packaged categories. This logic runs counter to the idea of *metissage*, de-contextualizing difference and freezing it.

Interestingly, the retro-fitting of the STRIVE initiative echoes a previous addition. In 1975, the Miami "general affirmative action policy statement" had the word 'handicapped' added, at the end of a list of other 'classifiers,' so that it would extend equal opportunity "without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age or handicap" (Gump 2).[46] The terms change, but disability (or 'handicap') is still an add-on.

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[46] John Tassoni, in his intrepid archival research at Miami, recovered an inter-ffice memo between Patricia L. Gump, Affirmative Action Officer, and then-president Philip R. Shriver containing this information. Tassoni also discovered information about a "Handicapped Task Force" in the mid-70s, a group charged with investigating access on campus, and an Ohio College Association Commission on the Handicapped, investigating the issue state-

Of course, the intellectual implications of the retrofit are many. When we look at the buildings of our universities and cities, we see how thought about disability has almost always been a side-thought or an *after*thought: count the appended ramps, the painted-in parking spots, the stair-lifts. In our own scholarly history, similar oversight and after-sight is evident: in Tom Fox's ground-breaking article on "The Backlash Against Access," disability is not mentioned. Or, rather, it is a part of the ubiquitous "other marginalized groups" (1). Yet, for Fox's article, disability might have provided a crucial category for the consideration of access. Indeed, as he concentrates on the myth of standards and the problem of believing that access to skills equates with access to power, disability provides perfect examples. The retrofit is the metaphor that most clearly exposes the danger of trying to get students 'up to spec.'

Accommodations are carried out, or otherwise anchored, by the actions of university offices of Learning Assistance. These offices are, first and foremost, concerned with enforcing the 'reasonable accommodations' mandated by the ADA. The following message, used by Southern Mississippi University ODA, or Office of Disability Accommodations, describes this process:

> Students wanting to receive accommodations for a disability must complete an
> ODA application and provide documentation of the disability. Documentation
> must include a statement explaining how the disability, with or without mitigating
> circumstances, limits a major life area, thus impacting a student's participation in
> courses, programs, services, activities, and facilities. ODA does not assist students
> in obtaining appropriate documentation, nor does ODA refer students for
> eligibility evaluations. Students who do not have current documentation of a

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wide. Some members of these groups reinforced a sort of steep steps argument. Philip R. Shriver, as chairman of the Ohio College Association Commission, wrote that "because of the geographic expanse of campus here in Oxford, I do not see the potential for non-ambulatory handicapped students in any significant numbers here" (Shriver 1). Gary Andeen, executive secretary of the Ohio Commission, attached a poem by the 19th century Greek poet Constantine Cavafy to a letter to James A. Norton, Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents, explaining that the poem was the "best summary" of the "level of urgency" coupled with disorientation and panic about incoming students with disabilities at state universities, following the passage of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Andeen). Section 504 stated that "no qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity that either receives Federal financial assistance or is conducted by any Executive agency," and basically opened the doors of the public university, even if these were often the back doors (US Department of Justice). The poem Andeen attached was entitled "Expecting the Barbarians"—Andeen crossed out 'Barbarians' and wrote in 'Guidelines'—and this poem describes a state of panic as citizens wait for the arrival of the Barbarians, who do not come. The suggestion of both Shriver and Andeen is that the geographical and historical profile of the University would not and should not bend to accommodate, and that this rigidity would indeed solve the 'problem,' by discouraging change.

disability and who request referrals for such evaluations will be provided a

resource directory of appropriate community agencies and professionals. All fees

associated with procuring documentation are the responsibility of the student

(University of Southern Mississippi).

Clearly, another entailment of the accommodation model is the idea that it is the student him or herself who must prove that they need accommodations, and argue for them 'reasonably.' There is a clear rhetoric in this accommodation discourse as well, an attitude of indifference towards the individual, and a refusal to provide support until this support is legally mandated. Following this process, the accommodations offered still demand that the student must accommodate him or herself to the dominant logic of classroom pedagogy.

Disability studies scholarship can show just how reliant composition is on an *accommodation* model for diversity, demanding an examination of the politics of the mentioned push for 'voice' and agency. In writing classrooms and in all of academia, disability is seen as something that can be 'reasonably accommodated.' Following the ADA, and as a product of the backlash to it, these accommodations are portioned out minimally and grudgingly.

Linda Feldmeier-White exposed the possibility that accommodations in the writing classroom can actually be used to *further* exclude students with disabilities in writing classes ("Becoming Visible". The accommodations model seeks to get the classroom up to spec. Making accommodations for students with disabilities is a way to ensure that the classroom environment and culture remain the same, absorbing difference only via temporary changes to the status quo for specific individuals. Accommodating disability encourages the idea of its Otherness. As Feldmeier-White wrote, "Learning-Disabled students will remain vulnerable as long as schools are organized less to educate than to sort…in order to make some [students] Others" ("Becoming Visible" 375). While standardized tests sort students at the K-12 level, tests and diagnoses, often at personal expense, are also required to receive accommodation at the post-secondary level, superimposing a medical model of disability onto every student, and every 'accommodating' pedagogy, alternatives which often focus mainly on lectures and exams, or on drilling skills. Incorporating discussion of accommodations into a discursive field relying on the language of testing and diagnosis also leads some students to choose to 'pass,' to avoid being identified as 'disabled' at all costs. The cost of this passing is discussed at length by Brenda Brueggeman, Debra Moddelmog, Mark Mossman and Georgina Kleege, among others. As Brueggemann and

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Kleege argue, a classroom culture that doesn't make space for disability often forces students (like Kleege and Brueggeman, in their experience) to wish for a remarkable teacher, or to self-accommodate ("Gently" 178).

Another response comes from teachers who, as Patricia Dunn wrote, "[find] or, if necessary [invent] an extreme example of [a disabled] student's "demands"" ("Becoming Visible" 378). The validity or veracity of a student's claim to 'disability' is debated by the teacher, rather than defined by the student or even by the legal and medical paradigm. Students with learning disabilities come to be seen as, "jumping the queue, cutting the line, pushing patient, suffering 'average' kids out of the way and into the shadows while they, waving their LD label, rush to the front to grab an oversized piece of the shrinking pie" ("Becoming Visible" 378). On the other extreme, accommodation is often seen as an act of charity. Really *good* teachers and administrators, who really *care* about 'them,' *help* them to overcome themselves.

A student becomes the object of the medical gaze, and hence the object of therapeutic and corrective pedagogy. Or the student evades this process and remains 'invisible.' Or the student is seen as flouting disability instead of pulling herself up by the bootstraps. Or the academy makes accommodation its moral mission, making students with disabilities objects of pity. With only these possibilities, and with these possibilities reinforcing one another, students with disabilities face a difficult terrain.

Barber-Fendley and Hamel's 2004 essay in CCC explored the rhetoric of accommodation at length. Their work is of interest as it sorts through a history of disciplinary attitudes towards learning disability. They advocate, however, for what they call 'underground' accommodations, through a program of Alternative Assistance. Such a program allows students to access accommodations somewhat secretly, in concert with teachers and disability services offices, and this mitigates some of the stigma an individual student might face in coming out in class. The program also extends across a student's university career, so that accommodations aren't just temporary patches over pedagogy. But, of course, nothing is done to confront stigmatization as a cultural problem. The message is that disability *should* be secret—disability must sink below the mainstream; surface pedagogy-as-usual is not disturbed. Disability is alternative to classroom culture. What the authors don't mention in their article is that the program they refer to and advocate for, through the Strategic Alternative Learning Technologies (SALT) center at the University of Arizona, costs students $2100 per semester, on top of the cost of securing

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documentation of their disability, and of course normal tuition (SALT). This reveals another problem: being non-normal *costs* the individual. Across North America, the cost of disability is a controversial issue—many schools want to dissuade students with disabilities from applying and enrolling, because it is believed that their needs cost more. As Titchkosky and Michalko point out, "the presence of disabled students at a university represents, for some, the requirement of additional expense…a drain upon university resources" ("Putting Disability in Its Place" 219). Illegal and unconscionable as it is, this market is allowed to discipline the student body, effecting restraints and implanting normative self-regulations in student, teacher and institution, concurrently implementing and/or sustaining same in society.

Composition pedagogy, as a technology of normalcy, imagines that disabled students aren't in our classes, and thus demands that we all perform ability. I look at normativity as an insistent absurdity, a comical but compelling repeated performance. Despite the fact that while normality and ideality have been conflated, making neither truly attainable, conversely we will all become disabled at some point in our lives, and "we are all non-standard," in many contexts (Davis, Bending 32). Dunn wrote that our systems of writing instruction need to change "not because some people are labeled Learning Disabled…[but because] those called 'normal' also learn along a continuum of difference" ("Becoming Visible" 381). Johnson Cheu furthered this line of thought as he critiqued the demand for the invisibility of physical and cognitive difference, suggesting that "the effects of isolation, or invisibility, are felt not only by the disabled, the bearers of "negative stigma," but also the non-disabled student as well" (390). That is, the demand for the performance of normalcy, because it builds into a fantastic impossibility, exacts a toll on us all. Dunn argued that, in actively countering the exclusion of students with learning disabilities from classrooms, and in actively criticizing teaching-as-usual, a normative practice, we "problematize our assumptions, tilt our perspectives, and recast our metaphors…this discomfiture will invigorate the teaching, learning and writing in our classrooms and in our lives" ("Becoming Visible" 381).

A disability studies perspective on normativity and accommodation reframes use and design of pedagogy, and allows us to think differently about inclusion. The normative demand in academia is that disability must disappear. Accommodation rhetoric echoes this demand in slightly less loud, but equally insistent tones. A disability studies perspective asks us to think about how what we do enables and disables, once we allow that disability exists. Inclusion

should mean the presence of significant difference—difference that rhetorically reconstructs—though often people with disabilities have such change-agency qualified or revoked. Christopher Newell and Gerard Goggin interrogate the rhetoric of inclusion as it frames technological issues for people with disabilities:

> People with disabilities are expected to cut their cloth to fit the temporarily able-bodied world, and its new media technologies. Paradoxically, in its desire for the same, inclusion always requires the "other" to stay in its niche as it is pressed into the mold of the normal, rather than engaging with the real alterity and difference in an "us" relationship (149).

Inclusion can be used as a panacea, a word that might register the presence of difference, while keeping its participation in abeyance. Patricia Dunn has also argued that, "total immersion in the mainstream [for students with disabilities], while not altering the mainstream, will not work" ("Learning Re-Abled" 115). Cindy Lewiecki-Wilson has suggested that people with disabilities often find themselves "arguing, or being pushed towards the argument, 'we just want to be treated like everyone else,' thereby diluting the transformative potential of their participation in the public forum" ("Re-Thinking" 159). The perspective of disability, then, shouldn't just be *included* in the writing class, shouldn't just be reflected in the design of our teaching practices and technologies; it must change what we do.

I want to suggest that, in some cases, a retro-fitting can be useful, can aid students in their navigation of this space—just as an elevator or a ramp might enable mobility. It is important, however, to recognize that the retrofit is often only an 'after-the-fact' move because 'the facts' refuse to recognize disability as a reality, or 'the factors' cast disability as a strategy, or 'the benefactors' claim accessibility not as everyone's right, but as their opportunity to provide charity.

We need a more sophisticated form of negotiation in order to retro-fit structures and practices in the best possible way. We need an ideology of *metissage* to think through the academic spaces that we erect and the bodies that are written and ruled by—and that rewrite—these spaces. With the above-mentioned attitudes towards disability, negotiation is rarely evident. Instead, people with and (supposedly) without disabilities are forced to work around an inaccessible environment, never co-operating because too often their concerns are perceived as divergent (or in competition). I want to say that the violence of literacy, in our

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classes, will continue until such negotiation becomes common practice (see Stuckey). We need to allow for an environment in which students can claim difference without fear of discrimination. This environment *must* include disability—currently, it rarely does. Further, disability cannot be seen as something one person diagnoses in another. Disability must be seen as socially negotiated; people with disabilities must be seen as the moderators, the agents of this negotiation.

In "Disability Geography," Deborah Metzel and Pamela Walker emphasize the importance of negotiative roles for people with disabilities. The authors write that "in deliberate contrast to traditional service models [*for* people with disabilities]…individualized approaches are designed to enhance community presence and participation" (127). This individualized negotiation would expand "social-spatial lives of people with developmental disabilities and [promote] increased control and spatial choice" (127). John Dewey, in Experience and Education, quite clearly emphasizes the importance of negotiation. He writes that, "the principle of interaction makes it clear that failure of adaptation of material to needs and capacities of individuals may cause an experience to be non-educative quite as much as a failure of an individual to adapt himself to the material" (47). For Dewey, this represents "a failure in education, a failure to learn one of the most important lessons of life, that of mutual accommodation and adaptation" (68). For Dewey, this adaptation was to be ongoing—he united *interaction* and *situation* as his key concepts of education (41). Simply, there could be no set materials and methods—instead of viewing set approaches to set groups of students as intentional and rational, he fore-grounded the role of changing environments, the context of a community, the wide diversity of learners, and argued that "lack of mutual accommodation [makes] the process of teaching and learning accidental" (45). This is a difficult position to argue for in an era of standardized testing and 'no child left behind' curriculum: the position that intentional, clinical, standardized education would be only accidentally successful, and that only co-intentional and situated education could be malleable enough for success.

In the field of composition studies, perhaps Horner and Lu write most extensively about the importance of negotiation, of working *with* students rather than on, at or around them (see Representing the Other). What we have learned in the field of Composition, after Dewey and following theorists like Fox, Horner and Lu, and Joe Harris, is that the inclusion of each individual in the discussion forever changes that discussion. Further, each conversant has a stake.

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It is in this way, only, that writers with disabilities can be allowed to 'evolve'—not towards cure, but towards an identity through negotiation, a negotiation in which all abilities and disabilities have a means of communication. As Horner writes (echoing Dewey), error, in this conversation, would be "a failure on both the part of the writer and reader to negotiate an agreement" (141). The teacher, in this scenario, has no need, and no right, to define a student's disabilities. Nor is the responsibility for retro-fitting the classroom solely hers. Instead, all students and teachers, coming to the conversation with varying abilities, must redefine what they are able to do together. The contact zone may be a metaphor that cannot fully recognize the complexity of this work. Instead we should see the 'zone' as, in the words of Joseph Harris, "more like a process or event than a physical space…a local and shifting series of interactions among perspectives and individuals" (122). In my lexicon, what is needed in this process is *metis*. And Patricia Dunn, one of the only scholars in composition and rhetoric to have done extensive qualitative research into student perspectives on learning disabilities, finds that 'LD' students have a sophisticated meta-cognitive awareness of themselves as learners (<u>Learning Re-Abled</u> 152). She concludes that they themselves are experts on learning, and have much to offer to the 'mainstream'—in my terms, these 'LD' students have *metis*. Yet she warns that "total immersion in the mainstream, without altering the mainstream, will not work" (<u>Learning Re-Abled</u> 132). This is, of course, a further way to think about *metissage,* or about Certeau's definition of *metis* as concepts that call for the contingent re-modeling of spaces rather than movement within the rigid hierarchization of place. Changing the spaces in which we teach is necessary if we want to teach and learn from all students—and students who identify as having disabilities (as well as students who *don't* identify, but have been thus labeled) have a right and an insight that should allow them to re-map, re-create and re-write the world in which they learn. Such work is difficult, particularly when we as teachers feel the constrictions of space and politics so palpably. So here I want to do more than just critique; I want to offer some ideas for change.

I'll offer an activity that asks us to enter into negotiation, in the mode of a retro-fit, albeit a retro-fit that addresses the exclusionary physical and discursive spaces of our teaching. David Sibley writes that, in response to geographies of exclusion, "the *experience* of difference and mixing in social and spatial terms contributes to variations in the response to difference" (87). "People are active agents," he writes. "There is always the possibility of springing the trap" (87). On the next page, I have included an example of an 'Accommodation Letter.' These letters are

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designed to negotiate accommodations for students—in most cases they are brought from the Office of Learning Assistance to the classroom teacher by the student.[47] The teacher then fills out the form, deciding (hopefully with the student) on which accommodations would be reasonable. Conducting a somewhat random search of thirty public, private and public-private institutions, I found that all of the schools had some form of accommodation letter. This definition of the letter is from the website of Emporia State University in Kansas, and approximates the statements of the other schools I researched:

> The Accommodation Letter serves as the primary source of communication between students with disabilities and those who are providing accommodations and services at Emporia State University. The Accommodation Letter lists accommodations and services that have been deemed reasonable and appropriate to level the playing field. Accommodations do not reduce academic standards. After review and verification has occurred, the Accommodation Letter is issued and given to the student. Although it is the student's choice whether to request accommodations in a class or for an event, students are encouraged to share their original Accommodation Letter with those who they are seeking accommodations from as early in the semester as possible. Accommodations cannot be provided until the Accommodation Letter is shared with the appropriate person (Emporia).

In the example accommodation letter which I have supplied on the next page—a mean approximation or a template of the letters I found—you'll see that there is little space to consider the kind of pedagogy that is most highly valued by composition instructors. We don't often give exams; we rarely test or lecture. The document itself sets boundaries: there is a limited, two-line space in which you could write in 'other' accommodations. Challenging this exclusionary space, we might see the margins as what David Sibley calls a 'zone of ambiguity,' a space for *metis,* for allowing "social and spatial boundaries…[to] become charged and energized" (46). Responding to the closing-off of the space on the letter by mandating expansion, we could work with students to fill these margins. The assignment might be for teacher and class to write *at least* 500 words about how the

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[47] That said, in many cases, though thankfully not the majority, offices of learning assistance or disability services will decide on accommodations without bringing the classroom teacher into the conversation. In these cases, the letter is brought to the teacher already filled out. The teacher's signature is all that is asked for.

classroom space could accommodate. Teachers and students could then meet together in small groups or one-on-one conferences to discuss this writing. Here is a miniature version of the letter and the marginal space—try to fill it with ideas for more inclusive teaching, and then consider the tensions that keeps these ideas on the edges of our spaces and practices, and also at the margins of our awareness.

Image 4.9: "Retro-Fitting the Accommodation Letter" Jay Dolmage. 2005.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

In examining the steep steps and the retro-fit, one thing becomes clear—we can recognize these metaphors as physical structures. Yet we also need to recognize these as temporal metaphors.

The steps are steep, and they are also 'steeped' in tradition. Many universities make the argument that steep steps are stylistically desirable, that they fit with the template, the architectural 'fingerprint' of the school: all the buildings are the same color, with the same size

ionic columns, maybe even the same number of stairs. These counter-arguments show the ways that in the construction and maintenance of the steep steps there is also a latent argument about aesthetics, one that spills over to the classroom, into ideology and into pedagogy, where teachers are also sometimes concerned about pattern, clarity, propriety—and these things are seen to be 'beautiful' (see Hunter, "Out of Sight, Out of Mind: Disability and the Aesthetics of Landscape Architecture"). Change, then, is framed as a deformation, and a transgression of not only space but time. The Rensselaer approach, built of marble and in a Greek style, was not really a *new* construction in any way. (The crumbling of these steps, over time, reveals the tenuousness of any boundary—it also shows us that as boundaries fall, they can be replaced by an even more insurmountable landscape.) Other campuses, many of them built around churches, similarly rely on steps not just as architectural details, but as symbolic social center-pieces of university life. *Traditional* university life. For example, think of Amory Blaine in Fitzgerald's <u>This Side of Paradise</u>. He develops a "deep and reverent devotion to the gray walls and Gothic peaks [of Princeton] and all they symbolized as warehouses of dead ages…he liked knowing that Gothic architecture, with its upward trend, was peculiarly appropriate" to his elite University (62). This same 'upward trend' builds stairs, as well as some 'peculiar' attitudes about who can come within the walls, and who can ascend the heights.

My point is that students with disabilities are excluded not just from campus space, but from the entirety of collegiate history and lore. The retro-fit is, as I said, an after-the-fact construction. It is always *supplemental*—always not-originary. The retro-fit is additional. But as a supplement, to retro-fit is to *fix* in some way. Unfortunately, this 'fixing' provides little opportunity for continued re-fitting, for process. In this way, the retro-fit is prosthetic, but not in the sense in which I have used the term in earlier chapters.

As Vivian Sobchack has written, there is something "problematic about the tropology of the prosthetic" when "its vagueness, if not inaccuracy, as a metaphor" and its "objectifying and often stultifying tendency to privilege and essentialize metonymic and oppositional relations that separate body and prosthetic" lead to a disavowal of the connection between body and prosthetic in lived experience—the lived experience of all of us tools users, but specifically the lived experience of those who, like Sobchack, use prostheses (215). The possibilities for understanding our practical uses of prostheses, and for tracing out the metaphorical meanings of prosthesis both 'suffer.' David Serlin suggests that there is more than one way to define

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prosthesis. Firstly, we might see prostheses as *objects*, as artificial additions and appendages (25). Retro-fits, as ramps and as disability 'policies' at the end of a syllabus, are objects, in this sense. Prosthesis, however, is also a *science* (27). That is, after WW2, prosthesis also became a "biomedical and engineering subdiscipline" of biocybernetics (25). Prosthesis became ideological: in the history that he recounts in <u>Replaceable You</u>, prostheses became "powerful anthropomorphic tools that reflect contemporary fantasies about ability and employment, heterosexual masculinity and American citizenship" (27). I would suggest that, as powerful anthropomorphic tools, prostheses are also used by those who 'weild' them to subvert these fantasies. Looking at prosthesis from the perspective of *metis* should be instructive here. Hephaestus utilized prostheses—his tools in the forge, a donkey or a wheelchair to get around—as objects. Yet these objects are also ideologically charged, as the images that celebrate him also celebrate the integration of his prostheses into his identity as innovator and worker.

Image 4.10: "Hephaestus" Ambrosios Painter, c. 525 B.C.E

Hephaestus was also a biocybernetic engineer, creating robots to help him in his forge, inventing traps to trick the other gods. He utilized *metis* to create a contingent but practical *techne*; he was tactical. But looking at the possible meanings of his stories, we also come to understand the ideological divergences of prostheses, and particularly the difference between seeing prosthesis as a retro-fit and seeing prosthesis as an integral part of the embodied process of human creativity, as I believe Wills or Hayles would suggest we do. If we come to see Hephaestus's tools as negating his disability, then they are retro-fits and, like accommodations, lose the biopolitical power to challenge norms. Yet, seen as part of any person's embodied being-in-the-world, we might rescue prosthesis from being anthropomorphic tools used upon disability to negate it while othering it, and cast disability as an essential phenomenological aspect of our experience.

Universal Design is a philosophy which, I hope to show, can embrace *metis* and *prosthesis* by providing a heuristic framework that makes disability essential to embodiment. Also, I want to show that *metis* can be used to transform spaces and ideologies, as they are wrapped so tightly together. As Certeau wrote, *metis* allows for change. *Metis* creates the space

of possibility, as opposed to the place of order—the "foreignness [of *metis*] makes possible a transgression of the law of the place" (85).

In the last chapter, I wrote about the ways that many of the negative effects of disability can be created by cultural and even spatial constructions—the world is built to accommodate the normal body and mind, and we all experience some disagree of discomfort due to these limits. These limits also function to make the world totally inaccessible to people with disabilities. Or to make them come in the back door. I also asked whether we couldn't change the environment to minimize the constraining and impairing effects of intellectual and architectural structures, but also to emphasize and enable embodied differences to *thrive*. Is there a way to increase access without negating the presence of disability? In a sense, this is what Universal Design does—it allows us to claim disability as we limit the normalizing and segregating effects of cultural geographies. For Universal Design to be truly successful, it must do so without claiming to erase embodied difference.

In developing my third metaphor, I want to emphasize the importance of the *priority* of Universal Design. Universal Design might sound like the name of a rocket ship, or an alternative account of creationism—we might instantly think that U.D is just a constant hopeful extrapolation, or a deification of the teacher. The word 'Universal' is problematic for many. I hope to show the ways we can respond to this trouble productively.

This problem of 'universality' is of course connected to normativity. We might suggest that most claims to universality also subsume the possibilities of rich and meaningful particularity. For instance, as Robyn Wiegman suggested, "critical race theorists have assumed that the power of whiteness arises from its appropriation of the universal…the universal [as] opposed to and hence devoid of the particular" ("Whiteness Studies" 117). Yet she argued that, insofar as this assumption is made, "we have failed to interpret the tension between particularity and universality" ("Whiteness Studies" 117). Wiegman argues that normative and unexamined structures must be rendered particular so that we might understand their power. Likewise, I would argue that we can look for the universal possibilities of particularity. I choose to write about Universal Design mainly because of the verb—Design. This suggests that UD is a way to plan, to foresee, to imagine the future. The 'Universal' of UD also suggests that disability is something that is *always* a part of our world-view. Thus, when UD is successful, it is hopeful *and* realistic—allowing teachers to structure space in the most inclusive possible manner. One of

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the central tenets of UD is that it helps all students, regardless of ability. In this way, I think that UD shows us that access cannot be an after-thought. Universal Design offers composition a way to locate itself not in response to changing, hostile geographies, but as a proactive architect of future possibilities. While this may seem optimistic and impractical, Universal Design is also *already* a part of what we do, as I hope to show.

There is some danger here of falling into what critical race theorists would call *interest convergence*—the idea that conditions for the minority group improve only once the effort can be justified as helping the majority as well (see Bell). As Georgina Kleege and Brenda Brueggeman point out, for instance "much of what has always disturbed us about the rhetoric around mainstreaming has to do with the way it is presented as something that is valuable for the *majority* culture…culturally enriching non-disabled students" ("Gently" 183 italics mine). In arguing for Universal Design instead of accommodations, many have suggested that UD is of greater benefit to more students—UD can take adaptations and use them to help everyone. Yet such an argument can lead to a situation in which the needs of the majority once again trump the needs of those who have been traditionally excluded—people with disabilities. For instance, here's a statement from the Ohio State FAME website, introducing the concept of UD:

> A key feature of Universal Design is that when you have both ramps and elevators, and even stairs, then you have alternatives even if you don't have a disability. If you're pulling a baby carriage or a shopping cart, you're really glad there's a ramp there, or a curb cut. Or if you've had a large breakfast, you tend not to take the elevator and you decide, 'I'll take the stairs today,' but when you're tired, you want the elevator. Options are good for all of us (http://telr.osu.edu/fame/modules.cfm).

While there is nothing inherently wrong with this argument, it does need to be problematized. It is the introduction to UD provided by the section of the site devoted to UD—a section of the site separate from the pages devoted to accommodations. The suggestion is that accommodations may be about students with disabilities, while UD is for everyone. Again, no problem, except that this opens a sort of hole: we can fall into a habit of eliding considerations of disability—the power of normativity would pull us towards this elision. Clearly, having a big breakfast is not the same as having a disability—because most big breakfasts don't lead directly to systemic discrimination. We must retain some degree of skepticism towards the explosion of Universal

Design for Learning programs at universities in North America. Yet, developing a pedagogy of Universal Design also might be a way to utilize Universal Design initiatives as frameworks for *metissage*, as screens for critiques of mixture, of the rhetorical interestedness of boundary-drawing *and* removal, and of the power in language. Catherine Prendergast writes that to overcome normativity, especially masculinity and whiteness, "it will not be simply enough to add women and people of color and stir. Without significant changes to the profession and pedagogy, women and people of color will continue to wind up on the bottom" (50). Such effects can be readily seen in the STRIVE initiative that I spoke about earlier: adding disability to the 'list' as a retro-fit does nothing, and it might in fact assure that nothing changes so long as disability is only seen as an additional object, outside of the mainstream. Like the retro-fit, Universal Design might function to keep radical change in abeyance.

On the other hand, Patrick Bruch writes about the way in which Universal Design can become a means of "operationalizing multi-cultural universality": instead of just adding diversity, and "instead of creating a system that applies to any situation, multicultural universality as an ideal encourages working within concrete contexts to enable more people to participate more fully in defining inequities and better alternatives" (3). The key to this agenda is the demand that the norm change, not just be augmented or accessorized. And that universality lead to greater particularity—multiple pathways instead of a single stream.

Universal Design is defined as "the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design" (Center for Universal Design). Principles for Universal Design, developed by a team of researchers at North Carolina State University, and now widely accepted as (at least somewhat) definitive of the concept, include:

Equitable Use: The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

Flexibility in Use: The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Simple and Intuitive Use: Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

Perceptible Information: The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory

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abilities.

Tolerance for Error: The design minimizes hazards and the adverse
consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Low Physical Effort: The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and
with a minimum of fatigue.

Size and Space for Approach and Use: Appropriate size and space is provided
for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture,
or mobility (Center for Universal Design).

I want to point out that Universal Design, as a list, and as applied solely to the physical
environment, as in this example, looks a lot like a set of specifications. Indeed, UD is often
interpreted in this way. But institutions like Ohio State University (FAME "Faculty and
Administrator Modules—Universal Design for Learning") and the University of Washington
(DO-IT "Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking and Technology" center) have used these
criteria to design pedagogy. They too provide lists, suggesting that teachers encourage
collaboration and cooperative learning; that they fluctuate teaching methods and diversify media;
that they allow students to show their knowledge in a variety of ways. Most importantly,
however, in documents like Ohio State's "Fast Facts for Faculty" on UD, teachers are
encouraged to "permit," "listen," "update," "guide," "clarify," "review," and "allow" (3). These
are the verbs of Universal Design, and even though they may ring of paternalism, they are useful
because they function as much more than specifications. I would add the verbs "negotiate,"
"respect," and "assume ability" to emphasize the co-constructive relationship between teacher
and student, one premised upon a respect for student intelligences and for the possibility of
creating change through a collaboration that respects differences instead of erasing them.

UD, registered as action, is a way to move. In some ways, it is also a world-view.
Universal Design is not a tailoring of the environment to marginal groups; it is a form of hope, a
manner of trying. The verbs listed above could all be read as reacting to another set of verbs
which are used to impose standards: limit, write, repeat, direct, test, produce, ration. I would
suggest (and hope) that composition can methodically and philosophically challenge these
standard verbs.

Universal Design is a means of thinking through multiple sites, while also acknowledging
that fixed locations, like the steep steps to RPI, fade, fall and disintegrate. The push towards 'the

Universal' is a push towards seeing space as open to multiple possibilities, as in-process. The emphasis on 'design' allows us to recognize that we are involved in the continued production of space. Universal Design, then, is a way of responding to compression and to decay not with panic but with planning.

Universal Design as epistemology also seems to entail new theories of subjectivity and agency. Universal Design responds to the idea, here expressed by Lennard Davis, that "what is universal in life, if there are universals, is the experience of the limitations of the body" (Bending 32). Difference, Davis asserts, "is what we all have in common" (Bending 26). This is not to say that we are all disabled, but to show that "we are all non-standard," disabled by oppression and injustice (Bending 32). In response to this, we can either disavow our difference and project it upon others, or we can join in an "ethic of liberation" (Bending 29). Davis suggests that disability epistemology, or 'dismodernism,' to borrow his phrase, shows us that identity is not fixed but malleable, that technology is not separate but part of the body, that dependence, not individual independence, is the rule (Bending 26). Negotiation gains importance.

The main argument underlying this push towards a more accessible composition pedagogy—and a different epistemology—is, simply, that normal and normate pedagogy are ineffective, and specifically out of touch with embodied knowing, mediated by technology, fragmented, intercorporeal. In my first chapter, I wrote about Cicero's statement that the best oration has a "middle quality"; its "form" and "complexion" has "fullness" but is "free from tumor" (De Oratore 251). The voice is plain but not without nerve and vigor. A good speech/speaker has the "complexion of beauty…diffused throughout the system of the blood" (De Oratore 251). I noted that within the field of composition, our very bodily ideas about 'flow,' 'cohesion' and 'voice' carry similar bodily metaphors, and also construct a normal and normate embodiment for rhetoric. Expanding on this idea, D. Diane Davis writes, "we [have] become pushers of hypotactic linking/thinking strategies; we push not simply a writing style but a value system that privileges hierarchy, mastery and (final) closure…and we validate it as if it were thinking itself" (12). Robert McRuer also argues that "composing is defined as the production of order" yet it is "experienced as the opposite" (50). That is, composition demands the performance of able-bodiedness which, like the demand for heteronormativity, results only ever in comedic performances. Lester Faigley concurs that "while composition studies has professed to value process, it is not process for its own sake but rather the process of teleological

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development toward a product" (14). This teleology relies on the "fiction of textual coherence," the idea that we experience (read/write) a text as complete and non-contradictory, we reify the author as an autonomous individual (225). McRuer argues that composition is "focused on a fetishized final product" that is straight—certainly, the inventory of approaches to Basic Writers and 'LD' writers shows that compositionists have tried to straighten those who produce writing too (57). But he argues that we should in fact strive to focus on the messiness of writing and writing bodies, to "keep attention on disruptive, inappropriate, composing bodies—bodies that invoke a future horizon beyond straight composition" (57). Similar to Lennard Davis, he argues that the *moments* in which we are all queer/disabled are desirable (59). Picking through the dangerous rhetoric of the we-are-all-disabled claim, he pushes as I have for a "temporary or contingent universalization of queerness/disability" instead of a "banal, humanistic universalization" of same (59). This then shows us the ways that Universal Design can generate a new kind of agency for students with disabilities and for disability 'itself,' as a positive and useful role, offering us the ability to perform differently, subverting the rote and didactic choreography of traditional writing instruction.[48]

In an academy, a classroom, and a conversation that is truly accessible, that strives to acknowledge (and create) place for our different bodies and minds, that has the power to lay bare the workings of normativity, and to affirm identity, Universal Design is disability praxis. We are not set free into an undifferentiated universe, but we begin to look for the elastic spaces in which we can all learn and move differently. Most importantly, making space for others does not deny their difference; it does affirm a shared connection based upon negotiating the politics, the turbulence of this difference, and the turbulent experience of composing.

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[48] Homi Bhabha's conceptualization of the postcolonial and the postmodern might offer a way to more specifically explore this tension between universality and difference. This is also a way to recognize the colonial legacy of normativity. Bhabha writes that "postcolonial critical discourses require forms of dialectical thinking that do not disavow or sublate the otherness that constitutes the symbolic domain of psychic and social identifications" (192). In the same way a 'dismodernist' epistemology asks us to see otherness and difference as allowing for the creation of meaning—we identify not in a "consensual and collusive 'liberal' sense of cultural community," a kind of happy universe of commonality, but in a complex, enactive process of negotiating difference (193). Bhabha writes that the postmodern, postcolonial movement from seeing culture as an object to seeing culture as "an enactive, enunciatory site" allows for "other 'times' of cultural meaning (retroactive, prefigurative) and other narrative spaces" (195). I think that this shift is nicely metaphorized by Universal Design. In this chapter I am working specifically with the retroactive (retro-fitting) and prefigurative (design), as I am also developing 'other narrative spaces.' It may be helpful to say that Universal Design, following Bhabha, is a postcolonial, postmodern epistemological process, and this also fits nicely into what Hardt and Negri envision as the basis for *metissage* in the face of the logic of Empire—a way to circumvent traditional binaries of resistance by recognizing and weakening the *negative* distinction between self and other, between ethnicities, across borders and oceans. To reveal the fallacy of any normative logos, and to do so not with one universal answer, but with tactical multiplicity.

Universal Design as praxis is still a matter of social justice. If composition is asked to take part in its own design, if we see this as a possibility, then we can also recognize the priority of negotiation—the importance of including everyone in the discussions that create space. For UD to be a transformative agenda, we are reminded that our work must be change-enhancing, interactive, contextualized, *social*; must allow individuals to rewrite institutions through rhetorical action (see Porter, Sullivan et. al.) and must push us all to think broadly and generously. Universal Design, as a metaphor and as a rubric, does seem to include, and embrace, such possibilities, in ways other metaphors cannot.

On the other hand, of course, there is the possibility that this embrace is too large, too broad. Unfortunately, the idea of the 'universality' of this metaphor also leads to its nearly universal dismissal. We see ourselves as teaching in highly localized contexts. For this reason, our skepticism about the universe of Universal Design is well-founded. Whose Universe will this be? Yet, UD does offer ways to move, theoretically, that have everything to do with the universal—not as a means of homogenization, but as a way to complicate divisive notions of difference with new models of cooperation. The Ohio State document insists that "Universal Design does not remove academic challenges; it removes barriers to access. Simply stated, Universal Design is just good teaching" (Ohio State University). It is telling that this defense is necessary. Many object that 'just good teaching' could lead to the same old neglect of and the same old invisibility for disabled students. I have written that accommodation, as a retro-fit, can close off the possibility of continuous classroom change, thus closing off the possibility of institutional change. With accommodation, the danger is not that disability will disappear, but that when disability is (supposedly) not present, pedagogy can go 'back-to-normal.' Without a somewhat global means of conceptualizing this process as proactive and negotiative instead of reactive and hierarchical, without any reason to believe that all students will be given voice, accommodation will continue to figure into pedagogy too late, and from the wrong places. As Gregory Clark writes, and as I concur, there can be ways to conceptualize a discourse which "renders the process of expertise in a community secondary to a relational and epistemological practice of confronting differences so that its participants can come to understand how the beliefs and purposes of others can call their own into question" (73). UD allows us to teach and challenge everyone in the classroom, not just students with disabilities, so long as those students with disabilities are recognized, first and foremost, as equal participants in the process—a

process to plan for difference. In this way, finally, Universal Design allows for the possibility not of teaching others, but of other teachings.

These other teachings, in my mind, are what we need to be attentive to as researchers and practitioners in the field of composition. This is what we excel at, and what we must continue to hold as a priority. In our classrooms, across the campus and outside of it, there are many, many more means by which our work can be Universally Designed. Following UD principles leads not just to an environment that will be accessible for students with disabilities; it leads to a better environment. This is what postmodern geographer Edward Soja meant when he rewrote 'the difference geography makes' to emphasize the 'geography difference makes.' I would suggest we need to see both the 'disability geography makes' (via steep steps and retro-fitting) and the 'geography disability makes' (when people with disabilities design the physical and ideological world). As Nedra Reynolds argues, "bodies and places impact upon each other: a body becomes marked with the residue of a place, but places are also changed by the presence of bodies" (143).

As Cynthia and Richard Selfe, Adam Banks and others argue, the technologies and interfaces which structure discursive interactions in our discipline also privilege social hierarchies, even while they pose as transparent and benign. Christopher Goggin and Christopher Newell have extended such arguments to the study of disability, while reframing such hierarchization as a form of disable*ment*. This argument is charged—we are asked to see that ability is rhetorically constructed by design, and yet that difference cannot ever be disappeared by design. Newell and Goggin wrote that "notions of neutral and autonomous technology are particularly important in defining and regulating disability (as is the doctrine of technological determinism)" (9).[49] In this way, technology both actually disables and yet does not ultimately determine disability. Technology both mitigates disability or 'alleviates' its cost (be it physical or political) and yet does not offer a cure. Operant in these paradoxes are rhetorical currents around the meaning of cost and cure, overcoming and passing, determinism—biological, technological and cultural. Social and political contexts toggle these relationships. I hope I have drawn your attention to the ways disability is constructed by spaces and interfaces. But I urge you to think about redesign not with the intention of vanishing disability, but rather to affirm its ever-presence and mitigate the negatives of its social existence.

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[49] A similar argument is found it Titchkosky and Michalko's suggestion that disability serves a function only to delimit the range of acceptable access—so long as everyone *but* the disabled can utilize a space or technology, it checks out.

Steve Jacobs, writing about the "Electronic Curb-Cut Effect," suggests that many of the things we now take for granted, technologies that improve everyone's quality of life, were originally designed for people with disabilities. If disability hadn't broadened our conception of access to technology, made it more Universal, we wouldn't have the typewriter, the stereo recorder, the transistor radio, the flat-bed scanner, the p.d.a, the pager, watch alarms, e-mail (n.p). Universal Design has already changed our world. Concurrently, we are already using Universal Design—if not as an intentional method, then as an effect of the critical thinking we do about ability and access in the field of composition.

Already, in our classrooms, we gain insight into the complicated nature of collaborative work, we build understanding of rhetoric's many (and moving) situations, we push beyond singular conceptions of genre, audience and voice, we come to conceptualize writing as product, process and post-process, we develop a sensitivity to authority and audience that brings social and individual forces to light. When we move out of the classroom and teach and write in other places, like a Writing Center or Studio, the dynamic between spaces can give energy to both. Our integration of technologies (from a WIKI to a pair of scissors) is often truly prosthetic, incorporating tools and media that generate new possibilities instead of erasing differences. When we write 'in the disciplines,' 'across the curriculum' and outside of both, our ideas get globalized, somewhat, and we learn from others as well. In this way, the metaphor of Universal Design is ours.

Frank G. Bowe, author of the only book-length study of Universal Design pedagogy, conveys a generalized UD message when he writes that "educators need to consider ways to make education more convenient for time-pressed students, more comfortable for people from diverse backgrounds, and more flexible for persons having different learning styles" (4). Recently, the New London Group has put forward a critical and pedagogical philosophy based upon the concept of multiliteracies—and their suggestions align with the arguments Bowe makes. In many ways, Universal Design also addresses the main foci of this group: the "multiplicity of communication channels and media," and the "increasing salience of cultural and linguistic diversity" (5). The way that the New London Group situates "language and other modes of meaning [as] dynamic representational resources, constantly being remade by their users as they work to achieve their various cultural purposes" comfortably places the philosophy of Universal Design within the context of writing instruction, foregrounding a respect for

differences of learning and of communication (5). Indeed, taking the "negotiation [of] the variability of lifeworlds [as] the main game" in the classroom is a way to recognize the knowledges of all students (Kalantzis 124). Both the New London Group and practitioners of Universal Design challenge writing teachers to broaden the ways we think about 'writing.'[50]

In composition theory, very little has been written about Universal Design pedagogy, but what we have is rich and suggestive. Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson has written that "we need to design writing activities that use and affirm the many literacies our students already have mastered" ("Contact Zone" 271). She suggests that pedagogy is also the "inventive work of constructing new relations of self to multiple literacies" ("Contact Zone" 271). Patricia Dunn, in her book Talking, Sketching Moving, argues for the three concepts of her title as three modes of thought/communication that are critical alternatives to traditional literacies. She suggests that these traditional literacies are what we as writing teachers have protected and invested ourselves in, because they reflect our own particular strengths, but that we need to shake loose from these commitments. Kirstie Fleckenstein lists alternative literacies that embrace and enmesh previously divided spheres. She challenges the idea that learning is a static or predictable process, even at the level of our senses. For instance, she argues that visual rhetoric engages not just a student's visual literacy (22). In her view, "images tend to nest a range of senses" (20). Her work seeks to find pedagogical strategies that blur the boundaries between senses, experiences and bodies. She writes about *polyscopic* literacy as activity that "involves the development and deployment of multiple ways of seeing and multiple networked images" (86). *Polyscopic* literacy reinforces the partiality of perspective and the sitedness of sight, presupposing that culture is organized around how we see, and that certain ways of seeing then validate a certain form of culture. To expand our idea of 'seeing' (beyond the visual, even) is to view a wider, more universal interaction with, and composition of, the world. Other senses can also be engaged through what she calls *somatic* literacy—"how we construct and participate in the world through our bodies and how we know the world as bodies positioned in specific sites" (79).

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[50] There are key differences between multiliteracies and UD, however, and I will address these more specifically in the next chapter. While the universal design of learning could better emphasize the role of the student as designer of pedagogy in the ways that a multiliteracies agenda does (and in the ways that I will soon argue usability does), multiliteracy, because it accentuates the richness of learning that happens across senses and registers, also prioritizes multiplicity sometimes at the expense of specificity. While these thinkers understand the need for global connections as well as—not at the cost of—local diversity, the same logic does not apply to the diversity of learners. Instead, the message is that better learning happens multimodally, and the students who might be excluded by this philosophy because of their reliance on single modes, or the 'impairment' of some modes, are not considered.

Expanding on this idea of somatic literacy, Diana Gustafson argues that there are two sides to our 'knowing.' Firstly, she argues that, "the experience of living is mediated through the body" (264). Secondly, she suggests that, "how one makes meaning of that experience is mediated by concretized systems of knowledge" (264).

Therefore, in teaching writing, using and determining those 'concretized systems,' one cannot ignore the impact of embodiment, or the possibility that the experiences of the embodiment of will challenge and change the systematic means through which we ask students to make meaning. N. Katherine Hayles also writes about "remediation" as the "cycling of different media through one another" in a "medial ecology" full of constraints and enablings (Writing Machines 6). She argues that we need ways to foreground "the traffic between words and physical artifacts," including bodies (Writing Machines 22). Hayles argues that all interactions with texts and technologies, with interfaces, be they computers or books or simply pen and paper, engage us "with a range of sensory inputs that structure bodily interactions to reinforce, resist or otherwise interact with the cognitive creation of the imagined world" (Writing Machines 48). It then follows that, following the principles of Universal Design, we must have an awareness of and an engagement with the body, with our many senses, and with our ineluctable, prosthetic, mediated connections to artifacts, interfaces and machines (and one another).

In my first chapter, I waded through classical arguments about the utility, even the transcendent potential of speech or writing. I also looked at the ways these debates have been taken up by Ong, Havelock, Derrida and Neel. I want to suggest that Universal Design offers a way for me to re-iterate and further support the thesis that neither written nor spoken word is disembodied. As I have argued, at length, spaces and interfaces structure subjectivity, and reach into bodies. The same is true of texts, and of textuality. In 1985, Peter Elbow, in sorting and rehearsing many of the differential perspectives on speech and writing, weighed in on a debate which, in the 1980s, took on especial significance in light of Ong's and Havelock's work and the attendant reshaping of epistemological views of speech and writing in composition studies. Elbow lists three perspectives: a traditional view, *indelible writing, ephemeral speech*, like that offered by Plato; Barthes's view of *speech as indelible, writing as ephemeral*, speech as something that cannot be undone; and *writing as similar to speech*, as being 'speechy,' as being strong when it has the "semantic liveness of speech" (299). He poses three scenes of writing to

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match the three perspectives: a writer carefully and considerately writing, using this 'technology' for deep and abstract thinking; a scribbling writer in a frenzy of exploration and then revision, using the "mentality of discourse as play" (300); and a writer conjuring up her audience and making an effort to hear her words as she composes. He concludes by arguing for all three scenes: seeking "to celebrate the flexibility of writing as a medium" (300). He argues that there is a single best way to write, and that is to "move back and forth among [modes of writing]," and he argues that, "there is a particular mentality which the technology of writing is peculiarly suited to enhance…namely the play of mentalities" (300).

I would re-frame Elbow's argument and suggest while writing enhances a play of mentalities, and does so always by referencing speech, we can run the scenarios in reverse. Much speech is rigidly composed—think of the students who need time, in class, to speak, because they think deeply and carefully before they say something seemingly indelible. And much speech is revised and playful—with our close friends, we can try statements out, and really excellent conversation loops and re-contextualizes ideas fluidly. Much speech is also 'writingy,' as much of academic discourse is.

In addition, each of these scenes frames a body. The slow and patient writer is described as "clenched over her text" (300). My patient and sometimes silenced student is also a body woven into the spatial and temporal dynamics of the classroom. Given an extra beat, she may raise her hand and speak. The fluid and playful writer is "in a fine frenzy…she wants to go to bed but too much is going on for her to stop" (300). The fluid and playful speaker relies on an interaction with an audience that allows her to revise her positions and try on new ones, like someone delivering a freestyle rap or like Neal Cassady driving and extemporating. The 'writingy' speaker may hold her body with the same confidence and pride in which she will one day hold a diploma, or she may wear this restraint like a tight collar. The point is that we all learn and express ourselves differently, along a continuum of constraint and enablement.

I would argue that the single best way to teach composition, then, is to maximize the 'play of mentalities' between speech and writing. In so doing, we are also acknowledging the play of embodiment. Universal Design strategies in the writing classroom maximize such play. What we need is a sense of composition pedagogy that engages with the strange loops of embodiment, and Universal Design offers the means, philosophically, to pursue this teaching. Importantly, instead of simply advocating for a maxing-out of modes and senses, we must affirm

those abilities students already have, while foregrounding different and overlapping ways of interacting in the classroom via talking, sketching, moving, seeing multiply and thinking bodily.

Arguing for Universal Design is a way to change space. As I argued earlier, I think we need to find ways to imagine that we can change the environment, not to erase disability, but to minimize the constraining and impairing effects of intellectual and architectural structures. Instead of using disability to demarcate all forms of socio-cultural and 'biological' deviancy, we can work to *emphasize* embodied differences and enable them to thrive.

Appendix 4.1

Some Universal Design Suggestions for the Writing Class

o Be clear about class expectations from the very beginning, so that students aren't surprised by assessment, and so that they can discuss assessment with you before it 'happens to them'

o Have students set and assess their own goals for learning—develop rubrics with students

o Clearly communicate the fact that Universal Design is not a free pass to submit work and to participate in whatever way the student chooses—insist that students are expected to plan, consider and justify their choices, revise their work and reflect on their actions, and to develop the flexibility to succeed in multiple genres and in multiple forms of academic and professional writing

o Discuss genre conventions and their political and ideological commitments and framings, so that students understand the 'universality' and the arbitrariness, the sedimentation and the morphology of writing's many 'rules'

o Scaffold activities towards large assignments so that students understand the trajectory of their work and so that they build materials and knowledge—so that they have these materials and this knowledge with them when they compose a larger paper, and are enabled to continue the creative process rather than saddled with the responsibility to begin it—this combats procrastination and plagiarism

o Do assignments and participate in activities with students

o Meet with each student individually as much as possible, and discuss 'accommodations' with every student at the beginning of the semester

o Give students chances to comment on the class and thus to help plan it—ASK students how the class might accommodate, but also create venues for all students to negotiate for change

o Choose physically accessible locations for your classes—if you have a choice, select rooms with desks/chairs that are movable rather than with fixed seats

o Make large-print copies of all materials available, post everything online

o Foster a self-awareness of how writing fits into your lifestyle, and ask students to do the same

o Discuss the ways students might organize research products—digitally and through 'analog' means, from note-cards to search engines

o Offer credit for multiple forms of participation

o Step back and ask students to respond to one another's work, and even to assess it—this builds everyone's critical faculties—likewise, ask students to talk back to their own work and assess themselves

o Give clear assignments and make prompts available in multiple forms

o Share authority in the classroom to promote and value interdependence

o Use active or kinesthetic learning—movement

o Offer students performative options, and focus on delivery/design as part of the writing process

o Get out of the class—link learning to public events and to culture

o Allow breaks during class

o Design collaborative work in multiple constellations—pairs, small groups, large groups, online synchronously and non-synchronously, etc.—set alignments might privilege certain students and relationships

o Be willing to offer instruction, and accept student work, at a distance

o Don't be hyper-corrective—focus on content—discuss the difference between summative, constructive and critical feedback

o Consider using a tape recorder or MP3 recorder for comments on student papers—try different modes and allow students to choose modes of response

o Create accessible and perhaps 'searchable' venues for students to archive all of their work—all of the drafts of each paper, all of their informal writing, and so on—try to create opportunities to revisit work and trace patterns in their writing 'development' so that students can become reflective writers and ultimately have a 'meta' understanding of the products/processes of writing

o Plan for multiple revisions, endless revision, revision as the central activity of the class

o Ask students to help define what constitutes a 'text'

o Make some writing private

o Allow students to ask questions or share ideas in class anonymously, or without speaking 'out'—circulate note cards for students to write questions or comments, perhaps anonymously, and collect and address them

o Use Blackboard a lot—use discussion boards, post content for classes, use space for drafting and peer response

o Have students take turns taking class notes on large flipchart paper, and then post the notes around the classroom for future reference—keep them up all semester—build running answers to pertinent and revisited questions

o Translate materials into other languages—use computer software, or make translation a class activity, with students teaching one another and discussing the act of translation

o Be aware of and discuss the affects of your own culture on your teaching—and allow students to discuss their cultures and the affect of their cultures on their learning

o   Make a serious effort to understand and welcome cultural differences

o   Allow students to experiment with voice, genre, medium, delivery

o   Push students to recognize and claim the embodied and en-cultured nature of composition—how they use their bodies as writers, how they are positioned in the world, in relationships and in communities, how these connections shift and change

o   Talk about teaching with fellow teachers, and with non-teachers, so that you can develop reflexivity about your pedagogy

o   Keep a teaching journal

o   Be open to learning about disability as a political identity, and about Universal Design as a political movement, to keep the practice rooted to its origins

CHAPTER FIVE: PURSUING A PEDAGOGY OF *METIS*

In this final chapter, I want to narrate three attempts to bring *metis* to my own teaching. I offer these articulations of pedagogy to show how I've tried to bring *metis* into three different but connected contexts: institutional design, curricular design and pedagogical design. These are stories about *metis* as a rhetoric and the manner in which this rhetoric changes how we think about the embodiment, the landscape, and the politics of teaching. The narratives are driven by the belief that we could—and should—teach writing as a double and divergent orientation, a practice embedded in a world of chance and change. Connected to the teaching of writing as *metis*, using *metis*, I want to further show how *metissage* can be used as a method, in the classroom, of critical thinking, asking students to reflect on the politics of boundary-drawing as it effects their learning, and as they move between literacies, media and relationships. *Metis* contributes to composition pedagogy both an overlooked yet insistent and important embodied rhetoric, and *metissage* offers a mode of critical thinking. In this chapter, I want to show the ways both already exist, and can be further emphasized in the spaces in which we teach and learn.

CHANGING THE INSTITUTION: USABILITY AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN

In fall of 2004, I took part in a small research project (at Miami University of Ohio) to assess the use of Universal Design in three classes taught at the undergraduate level. I want to briefly recount my experience in collecting online feedback about these classes, and in facilitating focus groups to collect student responses and suggestions. I hope the short story provides some insight into the practical ways Universal Design is used in courses. But I also hope this first story shows how UDL must change and adapt, specifically by embracing usability and more actively involving students in the redefinition of what we do. Next, I want to write about the development of a first-year writing course that utilizes the principles of Universal Design, that values a student's varied literacies and that approaches in a new way what some construct as the 'problem' of students labeled BW (basic writers) or ESL writers or LD (learning-disabled)—these names that ensure non-mainstream students get abbreviated into acronyms. The approach I describe proceeds not by remediating students but by remediating teachers—an imperative passed down from Mina Shaughnessy but rarely taken seriously. Seeing divergence as a rhetoric (*metis*) and recognizing the politics of 'mixture' and separation (*metissage*) help us see that the culture of writing must change in response to diverse students, not that academic culture change students, as many compositionists, like David Bartholomae,

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have argued. Finally, I want to illustrate how alternative modes of revision and of rhetorical intervention, as part of a student's actual composing processes, can instantiate or inculcate *metis*, can validate those aspects of composition that are double and divergent, that may otherwise be edited out.

At Miami, since early 2002, a small group of faculty has been meeting regularly to discuss and plan the development of disability studies at the school. In just the last year, we have presented a White Paper on disability studies to the university community, organized a demonstration to illustrate inequities of access across campus, built a website, facilitated a debate about the Terri Schiavo case and, most recently, put together an official proposal for a disability studies minor. Central to our agenda has been a focus on disability rights. We've challenged the social, cultural and intellectual spaces of the university to broaden while concurrently developing courses and traveling down other administrative avenues to make a place for the discipline of disability studies. In this way, the group has worked for environmental, cultural and institutional change simultaneously. Our Universal Design for Learning research project was to find momentum from and build momentum towards changes in each of these areas: respecting the presence of disability in university classes and in the community; validating disability as central to university life; responding to diverse student needs by designing a pedagogy for multiple learning styles and goals. The research project, designed by Dr. Kathleen Hutchinson, Dr. Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson, and Dr. Jean Lynch, was meant to assess the efficacy of Universal Design pedagogy as these teachers utilized it in their own classrooms. As the only graduate student member of this group, I was asked to come in as an outside observer to facilitate the process of gathering feedback from students on the use of Universal Design in three classes: a writing-intensive first year honors English class, a second-year Speech Pathology and Audiology class, and a Women's studies and Education course.[51]

Much of the feedback that I received from students in an initial online assessment was of a very general nature: I found that students, responding via email to a set of questions, tended to say that Universal Design was 'good' or 'useful.' Students then gave a summary of the strategies that the professors had used to design the class universally. Students generated an impressive list of teaching techniques, including multiple and 'redundant' formats of presentation (video plus power-point plus handouts plus copies of notes and handouts on course websites plus movement

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[51] I received full I.R.B approval from Miami University for this research.

around the classroom), the bridging of classroom and out-of-class contexts (class trips, cultural experiences, guest speakers and so on), the option to exhibit their knowledge in a variety of ways (tests and quizzes, but with oral options; 'notecards' used to allow students to ask questions when they didn't want to speak aloud; the repeated atomization of the class, breaking into small groups or pairs to interact and then reconvening to share ideas; posting on listservs and message boards). Students reported that, by not staying in one mode of learning, communicating, collaborating—of receiving or conveying knowledge—each student could benefit more, even as all benefit differently. The few specific details that students pointed out all concerned what might be seen as learning difficulties or disabilities—they admitted that they had difficulty in normal classrooms staying on task, concentrating, communicating. The altered pedagogy in these classrooms asked them to shift between tasks of various kinds, geared to different literacies; allowed them to concentrate by offering them information in meaningful, and varying contexts; allowed them to communicate in non-traditional ways. So, some of the pedagogy was about 'accommodating' differences. But much of the class was about *using* the moments when learning usually stops as avenues to explore learning differences. What might be seen as an accommodation for one student could instead be explored as an avenue for all students to learn. Students also made it clear that the changes in teaching did not 'slow' or 'simplify' or 'dumb down,' but rather dynamized the curriculum and empowered students.

When I met with a large group of students from all three classes mid-semester to talk about Universal Design for Learning in an informal focus group, the picture of UD pedagogy became even more clear. I brought with me a set of 'talking points' from the earlier email survey which I read aloud and projected on a large screen via power-point. We then discussed each point and I took notes in a word file that was also on-screen while repeating the main points of the discussion and asking for clarification and emphasis. In this way, the group co-composed an evaluation of the courses through a Universally-Designed process of negotiation and discussion. The notes did not aim to create a consensus, but rather paused at 'points of tension' and marked them out as such.

One of the main 'points of tension' in this discussion came about as a result of our discussion about the very purposes of the focus group. The students made it very clear to me that, if the group's work didn't lead to tangible changes in the classroom, the very philosophy of UDL was being compromised. The students were telling me they wanted a central role in the

design of the pedagogical space, as they took their place in this pedagogical interface. Together we realized that, although UDL validated their standpoint, there was nothing explicit in the principles of UDL that provided for student-feedback as part of a dynamic process of pedagogy design and revision. Though Frank G. Bowe, in his book-length study of UDL, mentions the need for interaction between teachers and students, this practice has not been strongly inscribed into the discourse. They wanted a more insistent principle of learner negotiation. Students said, repeatedly, that professors would know what 'works' and what needs to be done if they just *asked their own students*. While recounting a list of strategies that teachers used, and addressing questions about how UDL could be better-incorporated, the students continually insisted that teachers had to allow students multiple modes of course assessment—to give them some control over course design so that their abilities and needs could be adequately addressed. One of two resolutions of the focus group was that I was to take their feedback straight to their professors. The evaluation process had been designed to collect feedback on how UDL had worked and how it might be altered in future classrooms and across the Miami campus in coming years. But we realized this re-calibration had to be *immediate*. Students demanded that course evaluation, as well as all other aspects of Universal course design, work for them now; they refused the level of mediation that I represented and spoke directly and loudly as users interfacing with the administrators, their teachers.

This then led me to look into the ways that Universal Design might interact with the principles of usability to make for a more iterative design—a design of pedagogy that could be more continually responsive to students, more dynamic, that could offer students more tangible negotiative roles. Designing for usability incorporates the testing of a product on actual end-users, and this practice is used to ensure that the interaction between person and product is smooth, accessible, most use-able. An essential aspect of the production cycle is the testing and alteration of the product by its users. It follows that usability could lead to more co-intentional, democratic education. As members of the New London Group have argued, involving students in the design of education is a way to situate them as inventors and custodians of new social futures (Multiliteracies).

It is important to me to think through the question of how one teaches *metis*—from one perspective, I would say that *metis* is not taught, but rather the teacher allows the student to use the *metis* he or she possesses. Yet there also can be an approach to the teaching of

writing—indeed to all intellectual work—that is conducive to the translation of *metis* into various *techne* in the classroom. This work starts, I believe, through an analysis of the student's and the teacher's available means. When students are engaged in defining and re-defining the accessibility of the classroom—when they have the negotiative role that I've been arguing for—then they have places for their cunning intelligence to be realized, and together we can respect and recognize the possibility that context forever shifts, that rhetoric is contingent and thus that our partiality and metamorphosis, not our wholeness and perfectability, generates our knowing.

I see Universal Design and Usability as related concepts, ideas which have morphed and changed over time, but in very connected ways. In classrooms at Miami, we began creating a hybrid pedagogy that united usability and Universal Design. Here I want to briefly show how the two frameworks share a common history through disability, as well as the ways that we might build a critical hermeneutics through their combination.

People with disabilities have created products, according to their user wants and needs, as varied and important as the vibrating pager, the type-writer and the personal digital assistant (see Jacobs). We see that people with disabilities, claiming the role not of consumers but of innovators or co-creators, can circumvent medical-model thinking, confront paternal attitudes and shift entrenched roles and stereotypes. Usability-testing, when it allows for input from people with disabilities, can affirm human ingenuity and diversity, can confront mass-produced normativity. In the classroom, incorporating the usability model also allows students to evade the role of passive consumer. Yet it is important, in this relationship as in all other relationships, to ask just who is using whom?

In its history, usability, I believe, often speaks for Universal Design, and has played a crucial role in how UD has been rhetorically constructed—and vice versa. I will investigate these co-definitions, and this cross-evolution in more detail below. This overlap is notable because I suspect that usability may become a way to talk about user-centered design without always recognizing the diversity of these users—without placing disability at the center of the call for the adaptation of physical, technological, ideological, pedagogical spaces and interfaces. Usability often takes the 'dis' out of disability—by ignoring users with varied needs and goals, or by suggesting that technologies, spaces (and perhaps pedagogies) can be re-designed to make disability disappear. In the same way, Universal Design has become a way to talk about

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changing space to accommodate the broadest range of users, yet consistently overlooks the importance of continued feedback from these users. Therefore, I'd argue that usability needs Universal Design and Universal Design, specifically of instruction, needs usability.

The development of the concept of usability has been historically tied to the rights of people with disabilities. Whether in response to a more diverse (and often disabled) workforce following the second World War, or in reaction to the increasingly politicized input from people with disabilities about society's barriers, usability foregrounds the ways bodies interact with technologies and environments, and often points up the ways environments and technologies exclude and even 'disable.' Thinking through the usability of technology pushes us into the generative theoretical space where culture and biology meet. People with disabilities have been sometimes the agents, sometimes the targets and sometimes the limits of the push for user-centred production. And when people with disabilities aren't seen as users/producers, control over that space where biology and culture meet is taken away.[52] It is therefore of crucial importance to reiterate this connection between usability and disability, and the classroom is a place to start.

Universal Design does not have the same long history as usability—in some ways, UD developed *out of* the usability movement. Though Ronald Mace coined the term 'Universal Design' in a 1985 article in <u>Designer's West</u>, one of the first published articles on UD was titled "Maximizing Usability: The Principles of Universal Design" (Story). Early discourse about UD borrowed heavily from the discourse of usability, even as it de-emphasized the role of user design. Universal Design emphasized the goal of making the world more accessible for people with disabilities. While usability principles have listed people with disabilities as *one* key constituency, UD has placed individuals with disabilities at the center. Yet we often conceptualize UD through its static constructions and codified principles. Can we make it more, and more democratically, malleable?

In our experience at Miami, I saw that usability and Universal Design together interact to change the way we think about teaching. The following crude graphic might more clearly explain the differences between normal design, Universal Design, and Usability *and* Universal Design.

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[52] Many products and technologies are designed to hide disability or to model—and thus to force—'normal functioning.' People with disabilities, then, face an affront to or effacement of their identities through the use of many technological tools.

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Image 5.1: "Usability and Universal Design." Jay Dolmage. 2005.
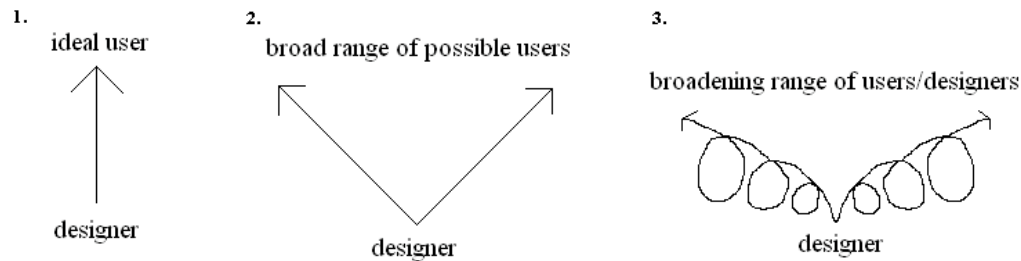
There are three images in this diagram. The first image, labeled number 1, on the far left, shows an arrow pointing from a "designer" at the bottom of the image upwards to an "ideal user," illustrating the way that pedagogy has traditionally been designed by the teacher alone, and then directed at or given to the single ideal student. The second image, labeled number 2, shows two arrows. Both of these arrows begin at the "designer" at the bottom of the image, but the arrow on the left points out diagonally upward and to the left, and the arrow on the right points out diagonally upward and to the right. The image therefore conveys a much broader way of thinking about who the user is, and the widening range that the arrows point to is labeled "broad range of possible users," illustrating the idea of Universal Design. The teacher develops a pedagogy that expands towards a more inclusive range of students. The third image, labeled number 3, also shows two arrows beginning at the "designer." These arrows, however, become spirals that move up towards the "broad range of possible users" and then return back to the "designer" as they also expand outwards. The image illustrates the idea that the designer and user communicate and co-create as the range expands—this is how usability and Universal Design work together. As represented in Image 5.1, in combination with continued feedback, Universal Design expands as it responds to changing user needs. The third diagram communicates the result of *more* users becoming *more* involved in design—shifting away from the teacher-centred approach. Teachers can't be the sole designers of pedagogy, and students must direct the re-engineering of the classroom. The result is that teachers and students work together to develop a pedagogy that is broad and responsive—not a teaching catch-all, but a considered and flexible pedagogy, localized as it is globalized.

As Robert R. Johnson argued in his book <u>User-centered Technology: A Rhetorical Theory for Computers and Other Mundane Artifacts</u>, usability lacks a coherent theory of use or

usefulness. Though usability foregrounds the importance of collaboration between users and producers, the ethical foundation of this relationship is under-developed. Johnson also, interestingly, writes about *metis* in his influential book. He suggests that there is a cunning intelligence involved with the practice of using tools or technologies (46). He sees users as practitioners, using tools; users as producers, "also involved with the knowledge that constructs the technological artifact or system" (46); and users as citizens, serving "as active participants in the larger technological order…[invested] in the social fabric of technology" (46). This richer conceptualization of use brings together embodiment and prosthesis—the prosthesis as a powerful anthropomorphic tool that reflects and possibly subverts the social order, even the act of meaning-making. Johnson then suggests that seeing the user in this way allows us to "also get a glimpse of what is probably the most unexplored, yet possibly the most powerful, aspect of user knowledge—the concept of *metis*" (53). He writes that "practical knowledge, especially knowledge of making aimed at some end, was seen as being very important to the ancient Greek mind. We seem to have lost this same value for knowledge of action and making" (54). He calls for new respect for the practices of the everyday, as well as respect for the knowledge of those who function in this context, their ethical awareness and their seamless involvement in the act of practice and production (56-58). As Selfe and Selfe argue, focusing on the technology of the computer, students must be given the opportunity to "become technology critics as well as technology users," to "contribute to technology design" and to "[address] the interested map of reality offered by computer interfaces [by becoming] involved…in an ongoing project to revise interfaces as *texts*" (494-496). To see usability this way, within the context of Universal Design, is firstly to use *metis* to recognize gaps in the manner in which we conceptualize the practice and production of space, and then also to recognize that it is *metis* that allows us all to intervene, within these gaps, these opportunities, to practically revise and critically re-design spaces and interfaces. Hephaestus was famous for his inventions, specifically for the invention of metallurgy—he harnessed fire and wind in order to create, utilizing the very principle of mutability in order to invent. In this way, his "double and divergent orientation" was his strength. My belief is that all students, and perhaps particularly those who have traditionally been remediated in the university because their learning styles don't fall in line with the dominant paradigm, with the norm, can become the inventors of the future of academia. It is their right to

communicate their goals, needs, and preferences, and our responsibility to listen and teach accordingly. They have the right to re-invent the university.

The development of a pedagogy of Universal Design and usability at Miami, because it has been such an important and foundational part of our developing disability studies program, has been both a means of validating our proposal of a disability studies minor by rooting our work in the classroom, but also of allowing the classroom experience, and specifically the needs and insights of the students, to shape not just the pedagogy in their own class, but the direction of the nascent disability studies program and, we hope, through its implementation, the culture of teaching and learning across the university. Creating this program, making our work visible, clarifying our goals, communicating them to the larger university community as well as its power-brokers—deans and presidents and department-heads—is a form of argument, a manner of persuasion. Take, for instance, this excerpt from our disability studies minor proposal:

> The modification and creation of UDL courses allows for teaching strategies aimed at maximizing student usability and learning for all types of learners. The design is an exception to most approaches to disability inclusion, because of its assumption that all students, temporarily able bodied or not, learn differently. Thus, teachers should address diversity in learning and teaching through adopting multimodal, diverse styles and strategies to create an inclusion based not on accommodation of those identified as (dis)abled but on identifying all students as unique learners. Nowhere is this approach more necessary than in classes focused on disability. Students in our Universally Designed classes last semester provided us with valuable feedback about pedagogy, applicable in all classrooms across the University…

In the proposal, we go on to show the ways that students pushed us to recognize their role as designers of a more 'usable' pedagogy. Our belief, as communicated through this proposal, then, is that not only has disability studies already taught us something eminently important about pedagogy, but that the entire university would be enriched by the pedagogical work we are doing in collaboration with students in DS courses. As I explained in chapter 4, the principles of UDL are distinctly important to the development of composition pedagogy as well. Most recently, the link between the design approach that usability promotes, demanding that students be seen as "inheritors and designers of meaning and therefore social futures" (19), and the call for multiple

channels of communication and media, as well as multiple cultures, languages and learning styles that UDL promotes, have been advanced by the work of the New London Group. Their work promoting multiliteracies, and anchoring this pedagogy in a philosophy of global diversity and local responsibility should change all that we do as teachers of writing, as should our work connecting UDL and usability. These lessons lead me to propose that composition pedagogy and disability studies pedagogy must work together, perhaps first-of-all through the use and development of the principles of Universal Design and usability, to expand our definitions of literacy. We must also consider differences of learning style and ability, differences that students can negotiate *from*.

DEVELOPING CURRICULUM

In the fall of 2004, I received a troubling e-mail in my in-box. Miami's composition instructors share a listserv, and this forum is often used to discuss pedagogical issues, and often to air grievances and negotiate crises—a network is created, and instructors can receive and give very useful advice. A fellow instructor was complaining that she had an 'ESL' student in her class, and asking what she could do to get this student *out* of her class. I was struck by the exclusiveness of this approach—I wondered what could be done to support this student and this teacher. I was also reminded of Mina Shaughnessy's message that teachers must remediate *themselves*. It was my feeling that the teacher could have asked what she needed to do to ensure that *she* was capable of teaching all of the students who walked through the door of her classroom. I realized that at Miami, a school which has historically denied that there could be 'basic writers' in its composition classes (see Tassoni and Lewiecki-Wilson)[53], something had to be done to address the needs of a wider range of students, without removing them from the classroom OR denying that students have different literacies, come from different backgrounds, and have different writing goals. When we refuse to speak the name 'basic writing,' we might find more positive ways to think about our students. But we also may avoid talking about 'basic writers,' or 'learning disabled' students, or 'ESL students' in order to make challenges to normate pedagogy go away. Instead, as Tassoni and Lewiecki-Wilson write, there need to be

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[53] John Tassoni and Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson write about the "invisibility" of basic writing at Miami, and make an argument about the vanishing of such writers from the imagination of academia, linking this to a fear of stigma for both student and teacher involved with 'basic writing.' This then pushes many writers underground, and buries consideration of pedagogy for students who might be under-prepared or even disabled by normal classes—creating remedial classes housed in offices of learning assistance, or on regional campuses, or in the lowest digits of the course numbering system and thus out of the calendar.

ways to "redress the education of our students, who [have] been inadequately prepared for college writing through policies of tracking, remediation and unequal funding of public schools" (76). And we also need to redress the *current* miseducation of university students whose diversity might be recognized in campus population statistics and feel-good website photographs, but is not reflected in writing pedagogy. As Paul Matsuda writes, "the vast majority of composition teachers continue to be unprepared to work with ESL writers in their classrooms" (75). Patricia Dunn shows that there are accommodations available for students labeled 'learning disabled,' but that these students "have to sneak off to a "special" (read "remedial") place in order to [access them]" (117). I suggested, at the next departmental composition meeting, that a committee be formed to investigate the issue and develop a responsive curriculum—starting not with the assumption that students need to be sorted, but that teachers need to think more expansively and respectfully. We need to prepare ourselves and one another to teach all students.

Over the course of the year, working together with several other Miami professors and graduate students, we developed a proposal which connected a graduate course to a new writing-intensive undergraduate course. We paired the first-year course and the grad course believing that a diverse group of students would have much to teach, as well as to learn. We foresaw that this course could 'service' so-called second-language learners and basic writers, as well as similarly nebulous and overlapping 'categories' like generation 1.5 students, students labeled 'learning disabled' and so on. These labels share an interestedness as well, one that we want to critique. The word 'basic,' like mean or norm suggests a certain algebra—as a base from which other kinds of writing and writers can be measured, setting up the idea of super-writers and sub-writers, but also setting up the terms of a normative abjection, defining 'real' writing as adorned, developed and complex by marking out that which isn't. This, interestingly, flips the normative imperative to mark out that which is excessive, setting up the connotation of a cognitive vacuity instead. The idea of 'second language learners' and 'generation 1.5' are also quite colonial and similarly table a reductive mathematics, suggesting that if English isn't the first language, and that if one hasn't quite made it to second generation status, one doesn't measure up. The label LD, on the other hand, seems to command a certain medical authority, yet there is constant and perhaps even "increasing diagnostic and clinical disagreement" about what such a label even means (Rose, Boundary 126). As Mike Rose suggests, a label such as this "reveal[s] more about a teacher's need to reduce the complexity" of a student's learning needs than about the

difficulties it tries to locate, all the while "wreak[ing] profound harm" as students "gradually internalize the definitions the school delivers to them, incorporat[ing] a stratifying regulator as powerful as the overt institutional gatekeepers" (Boundary 127-128). The reliance each of these labels places upon the metaphor of cognitive development also entails powerful metaphors about the speed of thought, about 'retardation,' and despite the impossibility of measuring thought or development, these metaphors become embodied not just in a teacher's attitude, but in student self-perception and *habitus*. Patricia Dunn has shown that although the label LD may help students access accommodations, the label singles students out and can cause considerable pain (Learning 130). All of these labels interact with the metaphor of remediation which, as Mike Rose and others have argued, connotes disease and mental defectiveness (Boundary 211). As Rose argued many years ago, "the semantic net of [the concept of] remedial [is] expanding and expanding" ("Language of Exclusion" 351). Remediation is not just a practice; it has become a rhetoric. Further, as Amy Vidali has suggested, students with disabilities and 'basic writers' have often been defined against one another—and we can easily extrapolate that the same things happen with all of composition's abjected others (16). So the marking out of students, and the ideological practice of remediation—through moving students physically into other classes, but also moving students connotatively into inferiority—remove important considerations from our discussions about pedagogy, and from the design of first-year writing classes.

Metaphors have material commitments and imperatives. Think, for instance, of the words we use to describe good writing: it has voice, cohesion, flow, structure. Or, in opposition, it has awkwardness, modifiers are dangling, prose is constipated, turgid, convoluted. It is not fully developed. We ask our students to adjust cosmetically and calisthenically through their writing. In these ways, attitudes about the ability and disability of students effect placement, as shown above. But they also reach right into student texts and therefore into student minds and bodies. It may be a stretch to say that we perform discursive surgery. But there can be no clear scission between the textual form and our material bearing, and we do reach into texts correctively. Understanding the ways perceptions of disability figure into this 'marking' and 'streaming' helps us to reveal some of the biases of composition.

I am arguing from the perspective that Paul Kei Matsuda introduces in his landmark essay "Basic Writing and Second Language Writers: Toward an Inclusive Definition." Matsuda writes that "the term "basic writer" has often been used in referring to diverse groups of students,

without regard to their backgrounds—linguistic, cultural or educational" (68). Despite this blanket 'diagnosis,' few teachers have ever been trained to teach these students. He argues that "the general definition of basic writers needs to include all students who are subject to the disciplinary and pedagogical practices of basic writing" (84). Further, as Patricia Dunn writes, "there is no typical LD student" either—not just because students labeled LD are variously disabled by normative teaching practices, but also because, as in any group of students, there are huge learning differences between students that need to be accentuated, not drilled out (152). Dunn shows how LD students have a sophisticated, meta-cognitive awareness of their strengths and weaknesses—she does so by listening to them and giving them voice in her writing. This is one alternative to the homogenization of broken and remediable groups. It also shows that perhaps what we need to 'do' about Basic Writing, and the 'semantic net' of Learning Disability as well, should be focused on fixing the disciplinary practices of labeling and sorting, rather than simply focusing on fixing students.

At Miami, some of the machinery of sorting and labeling was pushed underground—like Fight Club, the first rule of basic writing at the Oxford Campus was that no one was to talk about it (see Tassoni)—and what surfaced instead was a broadly applied fear of students who might write or learn differently, as they represented the need for a different kind of teaching that professors felt unprepared, or unwilling, to provide, and that the university image had been groomed to disguise. This was in evidence in the listserv email, just as it surfaced in a much earlier class discussion in which a colleague suggested that all students on athletic and opportunity scholarships were bad writers, unteachable in our core composition courses.[54] I would suggest that such policies of double-erasure are prevalent at most schools, that Miami is far from an isolated example. This double-erasure, of course, demands both that students with different literacies and writing needs, or otherwise stigmatized students, disappear from

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[54] I would actually argue that this was a racist argument—the teacher was referring to students in the Diversity dormitory in which I teach, the majority of whom, in that year, were African-American. She had no way to know whether these students were on scholarship, or what kind of scholarships these might have been—so her opening assumption was that African American students could only get into school through athletics or affirmative action. I think this assumptive racism is symptomatic of a greater problem in all of composition—there is an insistent link between racism and remediation, be it in the attitudes she expressed, linked to the assumption that these students couldn't write, or in the internalized assumptions that led two different Asian-American students to tell me, on the first day of class, that they didn't think they could handle my first-year writing class. It is possible that composition is so *white* that both teachers and students assume that writing ability is facilitated by cultural homogeneity. The two young Asian-American students who assumed that they would be at a disadvantage in my class both wrote essays that won the Composition program's highest prizes.

'mainstream' classes, and that the remedial classes where they are seemingly supposed to go also not exist, or be hidden. In these classes, we are to believe that students texts/bodies be massaged into a better flow, more cohesion, less dangling.

I would expand Matsuda's definition to suggest that *all* students are subject to the disciplinary and pedagogical practices of Basic Writing. That is, in a Foucauldian sense, this discipline "proceeds from the distribution of individuals in space," even if this space itself cannot be seen (Discipline 141). The object, instead, is to "render visible those who are inside it," or even to "fabricate" a "disciplinary individual" (Discipline 172; 308). So, even when (perhaps especially when) we have no 'special classes,' we are still sorting and marking the bodies in our classes according to the fabrications and invisible tensions of the idea of basic writing, of the basic writer, united to metaphors of cognitive deficit and bodily broken-ness. So long as we continue to assume that some students don't belong, we are teaching *around* the *idea* of Basic Writing; we are teaching what might be called *not-basic-writing*, a ghostly thing that is illuminated only by marking out its others—it is a normativity, allowing composition to invent itself as the reverse image of those it fails.

We may be foolish to believe that there is an alternative. This course has yet to be piloted. But we've tried to suggest that student learning differences are desirable, and that 'mixing' students of different abilities and backgrounds leads to a better writing class. Admittedly, cultural and linguistic differences can be ambiguous, particular, knotted, divisive; a pedagogy that engages them will be politically fraught. Our motivations may therefore seem too innocent. But we believed that by creating a class based on student's multiple literacies, and proposing this as a writing-intensive course, we could create an emphasis on student difference not as a deficit to be fixed, but as the basis for alternative abilities in an environment that engages these differences deeply through composing. We believed it would lead to more learning, better teaching, and social transformation—perhaps through struggle, but towards something better than a straight, white, normate pedagogy of *not-basic-writing*.

In Errors and Expectations, Mina Shaughnessy wrote that students "are urging us, in short, through their needs and capabilities, to become better teachers" and to become critics of our own profession (292). Linda Brodkey has also written that the traditional attitude of teachers towards students—to sort them according to ability—has led to the marginalization of the whole field of composition. To travel in the other direction, Bordkey argues that what is needed is a

new subjectivity for students, a role as agents of change (198). Our move was to interpret the potential for students to teach us, to 'urge' us to become better teachers and to create a better profession, as a call to relinquish some of our own control over the definition of what a composition class should look like. The graduate syllabus we developed, as well as the syllabus for our new course, emphasized the student-teacher co-construction of the curriculum.

In our description of the course, we emphasize that, as a writing-intensive course, this would also be an attractive option for students who want a different kind of instruction not because of a perceived 'lack' of skills, but because they foresee a career in communication, media, teaching—or simply because they want to write more. We believe that, through a more Universally Designed approach to student writing, we could allow those students who wanted more intensive writing instruction to find what they need, and for the entire composition program to more actively engage with, even to value, the ways that student differences demand more dynamic approaches to the teaching of writing—not different levels of instruction, but new critical alliances of teachers and students; mixture, not hierarchy. The course philosophy borrows heavily from the principles of usability and Universal Design, and also from the concepts of multi-modality and multi-literacy, as put forward by the New London Group. In short, this means encouraging a multiplicity of communication channels and media—as a necessity of modern literacies—and arguing for the increased importance of promoting and developing cultural and linguistic diversity (5). The idea of 'writing' is remediated—immersed in multiple media—and pedagogy is remediated—challenged to transform. This brings together Bolter and Grusin's definition of remediation as the constant connections between media and mediums (50), as it plays with the idea of streaming ourselves back to the basics. The suggestion is that part of our pedagogical re-learning is a move away from the hegemony of writing. As Dunn argues, "writing and its role in thinking does not have to be thought of as a binary. We can still believe in the primacy of language even as we hold it suspect" (Talking 29).

Our use of Universal Design is also intended to "operationalize" what Patrick Bruch calls multicultural universality. This becomes a way to "explain the need for multiple and perhaps seemingly contradictory remedies for injustice," and "encourages working within concrete contexts to enable more people to participate more fully in defining inequities and better alternatives" (n.p). As Bruch argues, the Universal in UD "names an ideal and a process" of teaching "more than just the ability to produce 'correct' prose…[focusing instead on] the ability

to use communication to build relationships" (n.p). More than just facing obstacles to learning, all students need to "raise and contend with cultural obstacles to equitable access as well," so we need "a context for beginning to grapple with the cultural work that writing does…increasing student awareness of how different ways of understanding writing might relate to common goals" (n.p). Bruch then suggests that such "curricular transformations shift the emphasis from simple assimilation of conventions to a participatory recognition of the contingency of these conditions and their effects" (n.p).

Below is the course description that was developed—by myself, Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson, John Tassoni, Jen Cellio, Moira Casey and John Heyda:

English xxx offers an intensive first-year writing experience. This class is designed for students who want to gain confidence in their writing skills, who realize that writing will be an integral part of their careers, or who otherwise want to devote greater attention to the writing process. xxx students may have unique writing needs and goals and would therefore benefit from greater individual attention, more time to write, and an emphasis on their own multiple literacies.

English xxx stresses the centrality of writing to intellectual life, as well as the centrality of the intellectual community in the classroom to the writing process: xxx emphasizes student-directed learning, continually incorporating student feedback and input into the course design. This class is Universally Designed in order to accommodate and value a wide range of learning styles. The class is also linked to 714, a graduate course with which the students will form a learning community, and with which the students will engage in an ongoing exchange.

This class will be capped at 16, and will be designed for maximum interaction between teacher and student, among students, and with graduate students. Because the class incorporates a one-hour workshop each week, students will be able to spend more time in small group workshops, in computer classrooms and other media-enhanced and collaborative sites for composition.

Universal Design will be used to engage students in multiple modes of composition, moving towards a more contextualized, flexible yet connected set of assignments and activities. The class begins by respecting the complex knowledge of the modern student: often tech-savvy, multi-lingual, and culturally astute. English xxx also

allows students to vary methods of composition, as teachers vary their modes of presentation in order to accommodate diverse learning styles, while also enhancing student understanding of audience, genre, mediation, and the social aspects of writing.

The course is recommended for students who may want to become teachers, or seek writing-related careers. Students who have been unable to complete English 111 are also encouraged to enroll in this class, as are students who worry that their writing goals and needs may not be met in a regular classroom.

It is our belief that this course could in fact become a flagship course for the entire department; that because we have created the means for students to co-create curriculum and to 'train' future professors in the graduate class through the learning community, xxx could change the culture of writing at Miami. Though the course may strike some as being dangerously 'experimental,' our hope is not to experiment *on* the students, but rather to approach the teaching of composition with greater modesty and a heightened awareness of the fact that literacy has changed, and continues to change, and therefore composition must change too.

The principles of usability are incorporated into the course design through the creation of a learning community of undergraduate and graduate students and teachers. The philosophy of the course is that every member of a diverse group has much to learn and much to teach. It takes a certain modesty to admit that, as Lee Odell writes, "what seem like natural or logical ways of presenting information or evaluating knowledge no longer stand alone as the only possible alternatives, or even the most expedient ones" once we "acknowledge difference, examine it, and find creative ways to build upon it" (178). This connects directly to the idea that students must be given a negotiative role in the classroom, that they must be critics and creators of composition, that what I do as a teacher must affirm rather than 'correct' their embodied differences. John Dewey wrote that "the failure of adaptation of material to needs and capacities of individuals may cause an experience to be non-educative quite as much as failure of an individual to adapt himself to the material" (<u>Education</u> 47). He emphasizes that this "represents a failure in education, a failure to learn one of the most important lessons of life, that of *mutual* accommodation and adaptation" (<u>Education</u> 68). Only *with* students can we change the spaces of composition into more inclusive environments.

Mark C. Taylor argues that "to be an effective writer today, one must be an iconophilic who always plays on multiple registers" (809). Lawrence Lessig writes that plasticity—"the ability of a system to evolve easily and in a number of ways"—is optimal in our world of uncertainty, particularly as we develop new technologies of writing (20). A current trend both within composition and within education more broadly is this emphasis on change—sometimes undercut with a sense of panic, often overshot by its emphasis on digital literacy. English xxx is not specifically organized around a computer classroom, but we want to acknowledge that, "the class begins by respecting the complex knowledge of the modern student: often tech-savvy, multi-lingual, and culturally astute." In this way, we hope to ground our use of *any* technology of communication in a respect for the student's commitments to their own literacies and their critical development of new capabilities. The idea of multiple literacies—incorporating multiple senses, but also multiple interfaces, multiple technologies—is at the core of the course's curriculum. But this is not a push for "multi-literacy" so much as it is a Universal Design principle, emphasizing that we all learn differently, not that we all must master *all* modes of learning and of expression. That our literacies overlap and rely upon one another doesn't necessarily mean we need to engage them all, all the time. Instead, students need to use *metissage* upon their own literacy—being conscious of, and making critical choices about what to use, when, and how; developing a sense of the politics of mixture and transformation, even in their own learning and expression. To truly respect the student's multiple literacies, and to create a curriculum relevant to their writing goals, means seeking out, and seeking to critically develop new learning environments—many of which may be technologically mediated, but which don't *have* to reside in computer classrooms. There are ways to emphasize a student's many literacies outside of digital environments—or, as I'll show below, using computers as just one part of a larger movement through media, mediums, collaborations, communications. If we see the learning environment as made up of 'loops' of embodied learners, connected to one another, and to and through their prostheses, then much can be done—even in an 'analog' pedagogy—to foreground our partiality, thus also valuing interdependence and constant movement between environments and cultures.

There are good reasons to incorporate new technologies into the writing classroom—because it is true that, as Nicholas Negroponte suggests, "we may be a society of far fewer learning-disabled [students] and far more teaching-disabled environments than currently

perceived," and this may be because we don't connect with the digital and multimedia literacy students have developed or may have the potential to engage with (198). Yet the xxx course and the pedagogy I am trying to develop in this chapter both recognize that the benefit may come not from the technology itself, but from the ways it encourages new interactions between its users: often, moving into a new learning environment *requires* us to learn from one another, as we *all* change through our incorporation of the 'tools' of writing as prostheses. In this way, *remediation* gathers its many meanings: re-learning, cycling through media, cultivating a critical sense for the physicality of communication.

The New London group argues that all learning happens multimodally—as Gunther Kress writes, our sense interaction "guarantees the multimodality of our semiotic world" ("Multimodality" 184). Yet, "the selection and concentration by a culture on one or several modes (and the non-selection of others) opens up and facilitates [our] bodily engagement with the world in specific ways" while closing down others (187). In his book Literacy in the New Media Age, as I mentioned in the third chapter, Kress argues that we *transform* through the processes of reading and writing rather than *acquire* (46). We transform knowledge, information, media, and literate 'skills'—we don't just withdraw them and then possess them. This happens not just in the ways we incorporate one mode of learning into another, or in how we translate between senses and cultures, but also as a *critical* practice, an exercise of selection and choice. Universal Design for Learning, in my scheme, encourages the crossover of modes, but also asserts the right of the individual learner to develop preferences—and for the teacher to respect this right. The syllabus of our course begins by asking students to reflect on their own preferences, to link these preferences to their experiences, and then to generate writing goals and revisions out of the connections they make between their own learning styles and cultures, those of others, and the desire to communicate across differences, and in so doing to develop and change. Therefore, the desired learning outcomes match those of the London Group—as Mary Kalantzis and Bill Cope write, such a pedagogy must transform the mainstream, "by way of extension of one's repertoire, boundary-crossing and expanding horizons, rather than having to leave old selves behind" (148).

This argument would not go unchallenged by composition theorists such as David Bartholomae, whose essay "Inventing the University" canonized the idea that, as Patricia Bizzell writes, "initiation into academic discourse is the college writing course's goal" ("Mixed" 197).

In Bartholomae's classroom, the student must learn "to speak our language, to speak as we do," and this will occur when the student "mimics the language and interpretive systems of the privileged community" ("Inventing" 134, 157). As Richard Boyd has pointed out, the imperative in such a class is "imitate me!" even though there is a second imperative, "don't imitate me!" in what becomes a double-bind (n.p). As he explains, "the teacher does not ultimately wish for a perfect act of emulation by the student because the end result would be the absolute interchangeability of model and subject and thus the loss of the former's original position of superiority. The summons to imitation always carries with it the caveat, "Don't imitate me so well that you can seize my prestige and power"" (n.p). This double-bind plays perfectly into the logic of normativity that I've been arguing exists in academia—students are forced to climb 'steep steps,' and this process is designed to make some students fail, but always to reinforce the position of the teacher (at the top of the steps), whether they fail or not. This is because the students who fail simply prove that the ground the teacher occupies is privileged, rarefied, and that the students couldn't 'do' academic discourse as well. And the students who ascend must do so in a way that validates the teacher's own ascension without becoming threatening. This process is normative because of how it reifies, in composition, straight ascension up the steps, the primacy of writing, and writing with a particular shape, voice (color, sex, sexuality). It is also normative because the imperative is never stated outright, but rather creeps and skulks into our theories and pedagogies, our research and attitudes and assessments and assignments. Sure, there are reasons why students might want to uncover and channel this ghostly thing called 'academic discourse.' But my suggestion is that we shouldn't primarily or singly teach this discourse; instead we should teach students to have an awareness of their available means—the ones we are comfortable with teaching, and the ones they bring with them, and the ones they might learn from other students or generate out of collaboration. Boyd's critique of Bartholomae, and of the assimilation model of teaching Bartholomae seems to advocate for, urges us to see the power inherent in the demand that students write like professors—it assumes that we write best, leaves our own inabilities unquestioned as it locates deficit in those discourses we haven't mastered. He argues that dismantling this power imbalance "would not only mean a heightened awareness on the student's part of the double bind which we so often impose on them, but perhaps also their radical questioning of our authority over their texts and the multiplicity of their voices" (n.p).

I would also argue that there is not a huge difference between Bartholomae's suggestion that we assimilate students into academic culture, and the arguments of the New London Group and others, including the Sydney Genre School, that we teach students multiple genres or multi-literacies. At first the two perspectives seem shockingly divergent, but it is their approach which is alarmingly similar. From both perspectives, the belief is that the teacher knows best what the student needs to know, and must pursue a hard-headed pedagogical program to transfer these skills. Focusing on genre, but defining genre quite broadly, the Sydney school views generic forms as relatively stable and, therefore, teachable. Teaching these 'fixed' forms of communication is seen as a means of empowering students socially and politically (Freedman and Medway 9). The New London Group veils much of its pedagogical strictness behind their philosophy about the co-creation of the content of learning—students are to be the designers of new social futures. But *how* students learn will not be their choice—they will be taught multi-modally. The problem with much of the rhetoric of the New London Group is the implicit argument that, in each individual learner, the more modes engaged, the better—and this is rooted in much of the under-examined cognitivist emphasis of the group's work. I would argue that we do not all have the same proclivity, desire, or ability to develop all of our sensory engagements—nor do the forms of sensory engagement necessarily align with single senses. It seems important to encourage the multiple engagement of senses and learning pathways, but not to map them and add them up towards a multimodal IQ. There is a difference between engaging multiple modes and offering students choices of modes. While an argument that more senses equals more learning could be used to impose unwarranted assessments of ability upon learners, there is little proof—and little to be gained from arguing—that one organization or utilization of these pathways is better than another, or that learning happens best when they are all 'maxed out.' This said, Kress also argues that, because a culture selects and privileges certain forms of embodied engagement, some will be "affectively and cognitively at an advantage over those whose preferred sensory modes are not valued or are suppressed in their culture" ("Multimodality"187). Kress sees how this cultural exclusion works, and wouldn't fail to recognize that there is a short jump from this attribution of cultural exclusion—a disadvantage only when the social practice disadvantages—to the attribution of a cognitive, even a biological deficiency. I would argue that this may lead us to attribute disabilities to learners who don't have access to whatever comes to be defined as the full range of connected modes. So we must remain

critical not just of which literacies a culture privileges, but also which combinations of literacies and which interactions between literacies come to represent advanced cognition.

What's more, in teaching fixed genres or maxing out modes, we may misrecognize the fluidity of discourses, mediums, audiences as fixity—we may misrecognize the flexibiulity of the body and its abilities as staticity as well. In a world of *tuche*, of chance and change, flexibility is power. Multi-modal pedagogies can successfully teach this flexibility, can help students implement what Bakhtin called the "free-speech plan" (Speech Genres 80). As he suggests, "the better our command of genres [and, I would say, modes], the more freely we employ them, the more fully and clearly we reveal our own individuality in them, the more flexibly and precisely we reflect the unrepeatable situation of communication—in a word, the more perfectly we implement our free speech plan" (Speech Genres 80). He argues that we are *given* speech genres, and that they are partly normative. However, in our use of language we gain power not from rotely and rigidly exchanging meanings with others, but by individualizing an utterance and adapting to the 'unrepeatable situation of communication.' What we need is *metis*, and an understanding that the world of communication is *tuche.* Thus a focus on the atypicality and ever-changing nature of modes and genres is useful, and a valorization of adaptive rather than rigid uses is instructive. My argument, then, is that we would do well to pay attenton not to the moments of rhetorical 'brute strength' in the classroom, but rather the inventive ways students "master [their] art through all its range," as the students of Hephaestus would (Murray, Odyssey 6.233).

Just as people with disabilities have developed many of the technological innovations that we now take for granted, many of the important innovations in the field of composition have come from 'remedial classrooms,' as John Trimbur points out. In agreement, Kenneth Bruffee argues that our current emphasis on collaborative learning developed out of the changes initiated by open admissions and the need to teach more students, using fewer resources, in 'remedial' classes, and to utilize students as teachers of one another ("Collaborative" 637). I would argue that this history, as Bruffee narrates it, illustrates how vital student differences of so-called ability are to a dynamic writing class. The classroom should respect and emphasize the development of divergent literacies among students, as well as the sharing of these abilities through the co-construction of knowledge. When looked at from this perspective, it could be argued that normal composition, or composition-as-usual, in a classroom of supposedly similarly

'abled' students, with the goal of giving these students a uniform set of skills, equates to a stagnation that further distances each of us from our potential and from one another. Such homogeneity snips the loop of embodied learning. The alternative is to teach towards the student's *metis*, in a context which, conscious of the politics of *metissage*, preserves space for differentiation, for metamorphoses and for wandering, as it encourages the strange connections we develop within communities and environments. The landmark CCC "Student's Right to Their Own Language" argued that varieties of language use do not derive from "supposed differences in intelligence or physiology" and that the "variety of dialects enriches the language" (717). For the same reasons, students must have the right to their own literacies and learning styles, literacies and learning styles which it is our job to recognize, validate and make space for, therefore enriching our cultures, ourselves, our classrooms and our discipline.

DEVELOPING PEDAGOGY

In my first-year composition classroom, I had been struggling to come up with alternative means of engaging students in the process of revising their writing. In my very short teaching career, I have hoped to de-emphasize the focus on error-free writing, and to recognize instead that, as Robert McRuer argues, "composing is defined as the production of order" yet it is "experienced as the opposite" (50). To rehearse his argument once more, I see McRuer suggesting that composition is "focused on a fetishized final product" that is "straight" and that communicates mainstream competency, ability, sexuality, culture (50). But he argues that we should in fact strive to focus on the messiness of writing, and embodied composition, to "keep attention on disruptive, inappropriate, composing bodies—bodies that invoke a future horizon beyond straight composition" (57). I think that, in many ways, in composition both the focus on the product and the focus on the process push students towards something clean, and straight, and cohesive. My argument is that student's expression, their very learning itself, can happen in the gaps, in the sidesteps and the mistakes. As George Hillocks writes, paraphrasing Derrida, we compose in polysemous chains of meaning: "every text is divided and fissured," and thus our experience of creating and interacting with texts is messy (7). The desire to elide this messiness is the desire to ignore the body, its attachments, enablements and limitations—all of the considerations which I hope I have persuasively argued are crucial to understanding rhetoric and communication. Peter Elbow argues that "we think of the mind's natural capacity for chaos and

disorganization as the problem in writing…but what a relief it is to realize that this capacity for ephermeral incoherence can be harnessed for insight and growth" (288).[55]

As I argued about the educational theories of Aristotle, Plato, Cicero and Quintilian in my opening chapters, there has always been a debate about who can learn, about what the rhetorical body looks like, what it is or is not—and this debate about normalcy is charged by the doubt we all carry about our own abilities. Like Socrates, we are aware of our desires and our limitations even—and perhaps especially—as we deny them. I suggested then that there has been an insistent, lingering impact of these men's theories of rhetorical normalcy on the ways we currently think about learning, about what 'makes' a good person, and how he (sic) comes to speak well. I believe it is therefore the job of the contemporary rhetorician to amplify the tensions that rock their rigid formulations of rhetorical facility. Likewise, to truly strive for an *embodied* pedagogy, and for embodied learning, we have to challenge normativity while also recognizing its ever-presence. My philosophy in teaching is not about overcoming difference, or training the body, the mind, our habits into normalized form. As I argued in chapter three, we need more complex ways to think about our embodiment. Therefore I've tried to find or to create a learning/teaching environment that embodies the strange loops, the recursive, connected, constraining/enabling, prosthetic and unpredictable relationships that we all form as embodied learners and writers in relation to our environments and each other. It is useful for me to look at technologies of writing here, because this may advance some of my discussion of prosthesis and embodiment. As Vivian Sobchack argues, "our carnal use of particular and material writing instruments informs and contributes to the structure of our thought and its concrete expression" (111). Also, as N. Katherine Hayles writes, there are "complex interactions between bodies and texts as well as between different forms of media" (My Mother 7). Materiality, then, is an "emergent property created through dynamic interactions between physical characteristics and signifying strategies" (My Mother 3).

My belief is that, as Mark C. Taylor argues, to *be* is to *be connected*, and therefore we need a "new architecture[…]that simultaneously embodies and articulates the incarnational logic of networking" (230). We learn not in isolation, but in complex networks. And, as Gail Weiss

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[55] For instance, Elbow suggests that "good teachers, in commenting on student papers, have learned to see contradictions in the text as positive opportunities for mental action and growth, not just as problems" (288). He also advocates for the "ephemeral underside of writing…the mentality of wildness with words—the mentality of discourse as play," to push students to use writing to explore ideas (300).

writes, embodiment is "always-already mediated by our continual interaction with other human and non-human bodies"—the relationships we form are filtered through culture (5). Hayles would call this "intermediation" (7). And just as our embodied selves are never disconnected from culture, from our 'Others,' we are never separate from technology. No relationship goes unmediated by prostheses. As Mark Hansen suggests, technology is never exterior or alterior to thought—therefore we must "refuse to collapse the technological real" and instead connect it to embodiment, to "make sense of technology's diffuse, amorphous, corporeal impact" (263). So I've been looking for ways to engage with students in the classroom in a manner that calls attention to our connections to one another, to culture, and through (many) technologies of writing. In this way, foregrounding the dialogism of discourse, we connect to one another as we write.

All of this said, in my own writing, and in my experience as a teacher and student, I have come to see the process of revision as both a site of possibility, and as a fraught, dangerous exchange. In revision we can approach a greater awareness of our connection to others through peer review and discussion, and we can come to recognize our own rhetorical choices, their connection to our environment, our embodiments, their translation across relationships, cultures and interfaces. But in revision we also perform a drama of normativity, accommodating ourselves towards elusive concepts like 'coherence,' 'flow' and 'voice' that of course have bodily complications and entailments. Revision is also a locus of cultural and physical forces that sometimes remove writing from its situation, its context. So, first of all, revision can be a way to remove the *metis*—the doubleness and divergence—from writing. Revision can be strictly about correctness, or about accommodating one's views uncritically to the audience—this could be a cultural and corporeal assimilation, a cosmetic surgery on the text and its author; it can also take writing out of the moment. The post-process critique of composition pedagogy seems, here, entirely valid. That is, we can't truly describe the writing process and then try to re-apply it to another context . To do so is to rip the 'loop' from its bodies and minds. Indeed, because composing is a *strange* loop, as I've argued, the cycle never repeats exactly—this strangeness is what allows for creative regeneration. In revision we can set aside, rather than revisit, the evolving 'mixture' of the many overlapping positions of the personal, the cultural, the embodied and the technological that go into writing. Recognizing this critique, what I've tried to create, in designing environments and movements for revision, are multiple approaches to composition and

critical thinking, allowing students to recognize within the 'products' of writing the interplay of their own voice with others,' of their words with the means of communicating them, of the politics of each and every writerly choice they make.

As I explained in the fourth chapter, I advocate for a pedagogy of Universal Design, and I argue that much of the teaching we advocate for in composition fits into this agenda. In the past I've incorporated the use of speech-recognition software for oral pre-writing. I've used audiotapes to record feedback to student work that captures the tone of my questions and encouragements. I ask students to cut and paste their writing into new configurations, to manipulate and incorporate images and maps and to merge media and ideas on their own and with classmates. Many students who are shy in the classroom are effusive online, in their blogs or on message boards. Other students—myself included—want to enrich their compositions with visual media, and need images to understand difficult concepts. However, my use of a WIKI for revision of student work is one example of UDL pedagogy that stands out from the others, and I think best reveals the ways that revision and re-mediation—as a cycling through different media—can push beyond the traditional text and towards a network that would incorporate analog pedagogies into evolving digital media, students into one another's work, learning styles into accessible environments, developing a UD pedagogy that offers not only literacy options that move between modalities, but that allies them and foregrounds their interaction. Most importantly, part of the 'process' of composition is the evaluation of the means and the mediation of that composition, situating students as creators of the process as well as its products. That is, as I argued above, we can teach students to have a critical awareness of their available means—the ones we are comfortable with teaching, and the ones they bring with them, as well as the ones they might learn from other students or generate out of collaboration. Students can then come to understand and exercise control over the complexity of composing (verb), rather than the honoring the purity of a flawless composition (noun).

All literacy is multimodal, as Gunther Kress suggests. But our pedagogy often ignores this multiplicity, or pushes for new literacies, yet fails to foreground the politics behind this push. We need ways for students to have the freedom to expand their repertoires, yet also to make critical choices. I believe that what is needed is an expansive approach to writing as well as to textuality. If there are ways to use revision not just to create a better product, but to lay bare, to re-'see,' then we could realize the ways texts connect to one another, connect us to one another,

the way texts are embodied, and how such connections are never smooth but are rather tangled, strange, and result sometimes in noise and confusion.

In this section, I am going to undertake what N. Katherine Hayles calls media-specific analysis, a rubric which I see as responding to, and enriching the principles of usability and Universal Design. Media-specific analysis means "paying attention to the material apparatus producing the literary work as physical artifact," this apparatus always linked to—produced by and producing—embodiment (Writing Machines 29). Such analyses, I believe, can lay bare the prostheses of any written artifact, and can ask questions about the politics of production—how do prostheses and collaborations enable and disable? What embodied dispositions are created and which are negated by the technologies of writing? How can we emphasize the importance of intrusion and randomness, and of mutation and transformation, while being critical of their outcomes—in a word, how can media specific analyses foreground *metissage*?

A WIKI is a website that allows users to create content, to write into the interface and produce its message, as on a message board or forum, but a WIKI also allows any user to edit that content. The name WIKI is based on the Hawaiian term *wiki wiki*, meaning "quick" or "super-fast." WIKIs use collaborative software developed by the Portland Pattern Repository and most recently made popular and widely available by the MediaWIKI open-source software written in PHP for the Wikipedia, an online editable encyclopedia that has become a media and information phenomenon, expanded to nearly 200 different languages and claiming 1.6 million articles in August of 2005 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia). As the Wikipedia currently admits, "the status of *Wikipedia* as a reference work has been controversial, and it has been both praised for its free distribution, free editing and wide range of topics and criticized for alleged systemic biases, preference of consensus to credentials, deficiencies in some topics, and lack of accountability and authority when compared with traditional encyclopedias" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia). Of course, this self-awareness also highlights the ways that Wikipedia introduces a critical recursivity into its own revision process. Much can still be done to more universally design the Wikipedia and its interface, yet the Wikipedia also encourages a kind of ongoing usability-testing through its very form, and as communicated through much of its content, which it strives to translate, organize and design for ease of use. Of course, the interface often imposes barriers—for instance it isn't easily screen-readable, images are rarely translated through written description for those who can't see them, and so on. Yet the

Wikipedia's existence *is* revision—once redesign ends, it becomes a website, and no longer a WIKI. As Alan Liu writes, "both the temporal and spatial conditions of the Web scramble design, and the result is to destabilize the *social meaning* of design…the deep design of the web is the distribution of the authority of design…the very concept of using the Web implies a degree of designing the web" (230). On the WIKI, such re-design isn't so deep; it is more obvious. Students are designers, rather than consumers. Their writing (and authority and subjectivity) might be seen as an evolving product of a different kind of social exchange than those that predominate in 'traditional' modes of writing.

One of the most useful aspects of the Wikipedia and of the MediaWIKI design is the 'history' function. In an article on the Wikipedia, one can use the history function to see the many different versions of that article, from the time it was first defined to its most recent revision. One can choose two different versions from any point in time and compare them. Many of the changes or edits are also 'claimed'—are designated by the name of the user who made them, so one can track the interactions, collaborations, and even the conflicts between the article's writers. It might be said that this history function foregrounds the role of memory in composition, often thought to be lost from the canons of rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memory and delivery) with the shift from oral to literate culture (see Ong, Havelock). Seeing the multiple versions of a text, as it develops, and tracing rhetorical decisions back and forth through the history, and through further rewritings, one might recognize memory as something imbedded and operational in the text (or in the repeated reception or rewriting of it).

In creating a document together, we might more readily recognize that, as Bakhtin writes, "the word is interindividual" and that "the ideological becoming of a human being is the process of selectively assimilating the words of others" ("Text" 121"; Discourse" 342). In tracing the memory of this co-creation, we can also positively foreground the ways that all speech is "filled with echoes and reverberations of other utterances," and chase what Bakhtin called the "auras" of one another's meanings ("Speech Genres" 91).

In bringing together two versions of a document, the user is also shifted into a different kind of interface, and thus a different kind of embodied experience of the media. Hayles writes that "one of the insights electronic textuality makes inescapably clear is that navigational functionalities are not merely ways to access the work but part of the work's signifying structure" (My Mother 91) Viewing the movements, additions and erasures between one text

and another, with the two texts laid out vertically, in their entirety, edits marked with different colors of font, it is as though we could see our text/body yesterday beside our text/body today and could recognize the ways our tissues and our ideas have changed. The metaphor gains power when you consider that students are actually composing in a hybrid word-processing/html interface, altering the <body> of the page.[56] I'll push this bio-metaphor, as Jasper Neel does in his remix of Plato's call for a normative body-text. (Plato wrote and) Socrates said, in the Phaedrus, that "any discourse ought to be constructed like a living creature, with its own body, as it were; it must not lack either head or feet; it must have a middle and extremities so composed as to suit each other and the whole work" (Phaedrus 128). But Neel suggests that "any living creature ought to be constructed like a discourse, with its own language, as it were[…]it must have an infinite series of differences so that it can come to know itself through differing from itself and thus be whole by being part" (30). This fractured textuality responds to the critiques of Lester Faigley, D. Diane Davis, Robert McRuer and others—the idea that composition must be focused on a straight process towards finality, that writing is the production of rational order, and so on, as I rehearsed these positions in the last chapter. I'll also suggest that the WIKI foregrounds a kind of partiality that we could describe as *pseilos*, or *apate/ate*. That is, there is a kind of 'stuttering' and a sort of 'blindness' in all composition. I argued earlier that these terms are used to connote the mysterious transfer of meaning from thought to expression, and the play of signification. *Apate* means "the emotional experience between reality and language" (Jarratt 55). *Ate*, then, is the human condition that locates us within that space. Blindness and stuttering, in these conceptions, serve to remind us of the partiality of rhetorical expression. The WIKI, which can reveal to a student a kind of flickering between ideas when we layer drafts upon one another and observe their changes, is also a deconstructive technology, calling attention to the choppiness and halting, rather than the flow of invention. Importantly, there is the possibility that this experience of textuality approximates or simply validates the embodied experience of writing, the incomplete and prosthetic, intercorporeal process of being and becoming. Of course, as Hayles insists, this experience is not isolated to electronic textuality—it just makes this signifying of navigation more recognizable. As David Wills argues, "language—like the body,

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[56] The WIKI is what James Paul Gee calls a "precursor domain," a place where students might master other domains tied to digital writing (48). Like Dreamweaver and other 'precursor' interfaces, students can write in code, or use a toolbar that automatically translates their text into code—witenessing this translation is a way to learn how to do this coding yourself.

like time—is one of the technologies with which humans are most familiar. It is familiar enough not even to be experienced as technology" with the attendant enablements and constraints. So, "when the more obviously instrumental technologies…interfere with language, they are experienced as a threat" ("Techneology" 257). I hope to show that, in moving—wandering—between what we might see as 'instrumental' technologies like a word processor or a WIKI, with and through our own more transparent technologies like our bodies and languages, we might recognize every technology of discourse in its "prosthetic mutability," in our uses for it and its uses for us ("Techneology" 258).

The WIKI history function can be used to wafer a text, not in order to dissect it and perform an autopsy, but to deconstruct it so we might re-animate it, as in these images captured by Eadward Muybridge.

Image 5.2: "Animal Locomotion Plate 167." Eadward Muybridge. 1887.

How students choose to re-construct such a 'wafer' or stuttering of the text can become a matter for discussion. For instance, as I wrote in the third chapter, there are material correspondences between this exercise and a consideration of the 'movies-in-the-mind' view of cognition. Are these movies played in a continuous loop? How do we 'flow' from one frame to the next? Or do 'multiple drafts' stick around in our mind, do we call them up and re-consider them? How does an image nest other senses—how do we feel different drafts, and how do we feel the movement between them? Much can be learned about the drama of revision through this discussion. How can we juxtapose an arrangement of Muybridge's frames against their animation? How might we also compare Muybridge's through-line of motion with something like Francis Galton's composite photography? As shown below, Galton created a "pictorial statistics" to come up with the mean image of a criminal type, by gathering and then layering head-shots of criminals.

Image 5.3: "Composite Portraits, Made by Combining Those of Many Different Persons Into a Single Resultant Figure." Francis Galton. 1879.

As Mark Seltzer has written, such "pictorial statistics," sharing an origin with an unprecedented overlap between ideologies of 'human' and 'machine,' serve as "a necessary visual analogue of a social typology and of deviations from the type, merging looking and measuring in a standard,

and standardizing, schema. Combining the visual/bodily and the ideal…[the composite photo] links natural bodies and the machine process" (115). In short, a new facility with technology led to greater enforcement of normality, specifically the machinic invention of a range of deviation. I contrast Galton's use of photography with Muybridge's to show the ways that these technologies frame and filter experience, and I think both examples might be relevant to thinking about the WIKI as a writing technology: does the WIKI dynamize the writing process in useful ways, helping us see the frames and the flows of writing? Or does it push us towards standardization, ideality and the marking of deviation? Do new writing technologies advance the "typographic control" that Walter Ong suggests print foregrounds—that is, a control which "impresses by its tidiness and inevitability: the lines perfectly regular, all justification on the right side, everything coming out even visually" and thus allows for a "conjuncture of exact observation with exact verbalization" (122, 127)? Or is this writing an example of "secondary orality" and its "participatory mystique" (137)? How does exactness, discreteness and finality contrast with partiality and interaction?

Of course every Wikipedia article also pulls in a vast number of other articles through both internal links within the Wikipedia, and a vast compendium of related external links outside of it, creating an incredible network. Each article includes anywhere from one to nearly a thousand hyper-links, creating a nest from which one might fly in millions of directions, and in which those infinite connections are artfully and iteratively tangled.[57] Working on a WIKI, then, students enter into what might be called a hypertextual, cybertextual, or technotextual interaction. I'll pause here for definition.

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[57] The Wikipedia, like almost all online interfaces, relies heavily on the visual. That said, the website is relatively easy to access using a screen-reader, and content can be edited using this technology—as one user noticed, it is no harder to write in the Wikipedia than it is to write in a normal word processor. Neither is tremendously usable, of course. Options are available for embedding images as well as other 'multimedia'—but almost none of the content is audio or audio-visual, while nearly every definition comes with pictures. The possibility for greater integration of multiple formats of information presentation exists, as does the possibility that the interface could be made more usable for content-providers and 'readers' of differing abilities. The Wikipedia stresses translation; thus it is available in nearly 200 languages. Recently, visitors began seeing a pop-up dialogue box for the downloading of software that would enable the display of different characters. The Wikipedia Embassy program and the Translation Department—both made up of volunteer contributors—spearhead these efforts, ensuring that users can become contributors as translators, pushing the concept of usability even further. As the site explains, "the Wikipedia community is committed to including any and all languages for which there are Wikipedians willing to do the work. We are aware that many of the world's 6,500 languages are not well-represented on computers or the web, and we are committed to working with language speakers and computing organizations to support as many languages as possible." It would be easy to imagine that similar efforts to translate across modalities would be welcomed in this network.

Hypertext: "is non-linear, and therefore may seem an alien wrapping of language when compared to the historical path written communication has traversed…makes use of navigational tools such as links and nodes…its power derives from its flexibility and variability" (Burnett, "Towards a Theory of Hypertextual Design" n.p)

Cybertext: "the concept of cybertext focuses on the mechanical organization of the text, by positing the intricacies of the medium as an integral part of the literary exchange [and] centers attention on the consumer, or user, of the text, as a more integrated figure[...] During the cybertextual process, the user will have effectuated a semiotic sequence, and this selective movement is a work of physical construction that the various concepts of 'reading' do not account for" (Aarseth, Cybertext 1)

Technotext: "when a literary text interrogates the inscription technology that produces it…mobilizes reflexive loops between its imaginative world and the material apparatus embodying that creation as a physical presence" (Hayles, Writing Machines 25).

Mark Hansen, in the book Embodying Technesis, suggests that we should "privilege the mechanism of the text as a sort of prototype technical system" linked to embodiment (90). More simply, we sould see that the WIKI instantiates a peculiar sort of interaction; it frames and filters the writing process, as well as the rhetorical process of embodiment. Seeing a WIKI as a hyper-, cyber- or technotext gives us a vocabulary for these processes. I will revisit the above definitions at the end of this chapter, as I try to analyze my own students use of the WIKI.

In the writing classroom, WIKIs can be used for collaborative in-class writing. A WIKI can also be used to allow students to edit their own papers, and the work of other students, online. Susan Loudermilk Garza and Tommy Hern argue that students function differently in a WIKI because it is an open environment. Closed environments, like the traditional classroom, "tend to recreate the *teacher is in control of everything, I'm writing only for the teacher* mentality" (n.p, italics theirs). They note that "Wikis change the way knowledge circulates," showing students that "Writing is messy; Writing is a socially collaborative act; and WIKI technology is a tool that enables writers to get into the mess and the social nature of writing" (n.p). Students can also analyze online WIKIS—allowing them to investigate dynamic collaborative compositions, interrogate issues of intellectual property, and dissect culturally-constructed and re-negotiated meanings. Pushing students to reflect on their own use of a WIKI allows for further pedagogical possibilities. Analyzing this technology, we start to see what a

WIKI can do, but also what composition might always do: commenting on the convergences and dissonances of collaborative work; interrogating interfaces and the movement between them; creating transformative recursivities; calling attention to the ways information morphs as it circulates among bodies, subjectivities and 'machines'; instantiating within the body new patterns of movement/thought which might more closely resemble the fluid and fragmented processes of composition; laying out the many prostheses of composition by interrogating the history of an 'edited' document, disturbing fraught boundaries within and between bodies, ideas and products.

It might be suggested that all online navigation is a form of invention, albeit a form of invention that troubles our need for tangible (paper-based) output. Put simply, there are more ways to create online than through the writing of code, and *wandering* through the web can be a creative act, even if it is more often a passive act. Navigation on the WIKI invites further invention, as we receive knowledge and immediately have the option to revise it. I would argue that WIKI use can exemplify a perambulatory rhetoric. To revisit Certeau, "the paths taken by strollers consist of a series of turnings and returnings that can be likened to 'turns of phrase' or 'stylistic devices'; verbal figures and 'perambulant' figures may be homologous" (108). Strolling and wandering, one "plays with spatial organizations[…]creates of them shadow and ambiguity[…]insinuates into them[…]multifarious references and citations[…]constantly altering it into the advertisement for the other" (109). He concludes that "these different aspects establish a rhetoric; they even define it" (109). Invited to reference and cite, play with space and verbally perambulate, students invent as they navigate. Further, the WIKI is a place where, because of its 'structure,' *metis* is encouraged, is indeed necessary to composition. You must move backwards and sideways, you must adapt the machine to your purpose, you must move between tools, you will (make) change(s). And because of the development of a more self-aware politics of textuality, the WIKI is also a place where students and teachers must use *metissage* as a critical modality, interrogating the crossing and crossing-out of information in the midst of this generative process, asking us to question what is generated, how, and to what effect.

In one revision activity, I ask students to access a sheltered WIKI (programmed to ask for their university IDs before allowing them to read or edit on it) in a computer classroom. We download papers onto the WIKI, giving each student their own page, and linking the pages

together through a menu page from which they can jump to any of the other essays created by classmates. Here are my notes on the instructions I give students in the classroom:

1. Click on a fellow student's name to jump to their paper.

2. When you get to their paper, click on **edit** in the top menu to add your comments into the text. This will open up an edit window, in which you'll see the text, as well as your cursor. You can move this cursor anywhere and begin writing in response to the text.

3. You'll type your comments into the **edit** window in CAPS. When you are done you'll click **save page**. You will then see the person's essay with your changes and comments in it. Click **edit** again to comment again, and **save page** again to save those changes.

4. In today's class, please comment on as many papers as you can. Ask questions, make suggestions. Don't worry about grammar, focus on the ideas. You can 'sign' your comments by typing your name in right after them.

5. First, read the paper of the student whose name is immediately below yours on the menu and comment on it. Click **save page.** Leave that paper up on your screen.

6. Next, stand up and move around the room and then sit down at a different computer. Comment on the paper that is up on that screen. Click **save page.**

7. Move to the paper that is immediately above yours on the menu and comment on that paper. Click **save page.** Leave it up on the screen.

8. Return to your seat and comment on the paper that is onscreen at your old computer. Click **save page.**

9. Browse through and comment on other people's papers that address the same topic group (one of three) that you did in your own paper. Think about what they've written as it relates to yours, and try to comment on it with this in mind, but also look at the comments others have added to these papers and consider whether the comments might apply to your own. Over the weekend, you can do the same kind of analysis of other papers not in your 'group.'

10. Continue browsing and posting comments over the weekend. Work on your own paper yourself in the WIKI, talking back to comments, or deleting them after you've changed your paper in response, or chosen not to.

11. By dinner time Sunday, cut and paste the revised paper back into your word processor to save changes to it. But leave a finished draft online for me to comment on Sunday night.

This activity, I hope, places students into a different series of relationships with their work, with one another, with the process, and with this complex textuality. Moving between computers and classmates, between ideas, approaching all of these things in a reflexive way is the beginning of a looping, embodied, perambulant approach to the act of writing, linked inexorably as it always is to revision—of text, embodied self and society. The looping and wandering continues in the next class, when I have printed out four versions of each student's writing using the history function. I choose the very first posted draft of the paper, the draft that contained the most comments from fellow students, the 'clean' final draft each student created Sunday evening, and then this version with my own additional comments in it. These texts are taped to the walls of the classroom, and I introduce students to the environment as being like an art gallery. I encourage them to circulate around the room and observe the artifacts, and then to—unlike in a traditional art gallery—start talking about each piece and writing back on them. Now, as students comment on one another's papers, they are paying attention to the writerly choices and negotiations that they have all made.[58] Their comments invariably are positioned in reaction to my own, and I point out how this lays bare some of the politics of our relationship—their deference to, or challenging of my comments reveals a power dynamic that often remains invisible and thus unchallenged when I conference with them about their papers, or sit in on group workshops.

Now, students are literally re-positioning their bodies around these dynamic texts, looping through our shared production with an eye on the process of further revision. Taking pen or pencil or highlighter to these pages, we can challenge the idea of a chronological, straight progression forward towards a final product, as we move backwards and evaluate choices rather than simply assuming that each revision brings us closer to closure, anything excised disconnected from what lies on the page when all is said and done.

The interaction on the WIKI, which as I mentioned might highlight navigation as signification, can be reproduced in an 'analog' form in the classroom. The idea that "electronic

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[58] Of course, the *content* of these papers cannot be detached from the processes of writing and revision. I neglect to mention what we were writing about not to suggest that it doesn't matter, but rather to facilitate my 'technical' explanation of what went on. Because I'm not suggesting that you follow this example as a set of instructions, but rather see it as a technique and a technology that connects with my arguments about what composition could look like, I hope that we understand that the topics, the dispositions and the arguments of students *shape* any and all of these activities, just as the pedagogies will shape students and their ideas. What is crucially missing from my description here, but is the engine behind it, is students' engagement with *what* they are writing about and discussing and re-composing.

texts often have complex bibliographic histories that materially affect meaning" can be applied to these texts in their other non-electronic manifestations (Hayles, My <u>Mother</u> 91). We might even learn something useful about the writing process and its products—not process as a straight line towards a product, but the idea that each product is attached to lines of history and possibility that engage readers with its becoming and its reiteration.[59]

The first time that I used the WIKI was in a first-year writing about literature course, which focused on the epistolary. Students were working on intertextual papers, writing designed to analyze the interdependent and complementary ways in which texts stand in relation to each other. Their work was not (just) to 'find' relationships between brother-and-sister texts, but rather to suggest ways that reading and writing texts alongside one another, in relation to one another, creates varied perspectives on an issue. There were many amalgamations of texts, and though some students had chosen similar clusters of texts to analyze, by no means were the papers written discussing all of the same texts. The papers were also structured very differently. Several students decided to write their own intertextual papers in epistolary form, incoroprating the different voices of people exchanging letters as they also analyzed the ways that the different texts discussed spoke to one another. Other papers took on an intertextual form explicitly by incorporating poetry, fiction and elements of memoir. The hopping across genre within the papers, and the ways in which the intertextual essay assignment asked students to analyze relationships between texts seemed to fit perfectly with the structure and the goals of the WIKI environment—hopping across media and mediums, flowing between audiences, listening to different voices for guidance. Some students looked at the poetry of Sylvia Plath, her letters to her mother, Ted Hughes's <u>Birthday Letters</u>, and the movie <u>Sylvia</u>—these texts in various figurations, and often augmented with other texts of the student's choice, for instance the poetry and letters of John Berryman or research on suicide and single mothers. Other students looked at the movie <u>Last Letters Home</u>, about the letters written by soldiers who passed away in the first

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[59] This goes against Derrida's suggestion that before computerized writing "erasures and added words left a sort of scar on the paper or a visible image in the memory. There was a temporal resistance, a thickness in the duration of the erasure. But now everything negative is drowned; it evaporates immediately, sometimes from one instant to the next" (<u>Paper Machines</u> 24). While anyone who has lost a document on the computer can attest to this feeling of evaporation, or even drowning, electronic writing is not necessarily free of memory. The skeumorph that allows a keystroke to have greater or less 'thickness' recreates the temporal resistance that Derrida seems to suggest allows us to 'feel' writing. Further, a technology like the WIKI or the wayback machine makes memory of 'erasures and added words' insistently present, and actually materializes the 'image' and path of memory through its navigational flexibility.

Gulf War, excerpts from the book Jarhead, written by Anthony Swofford, a marine in Iraq, specifically sections where he writes about letters written by civilians to "Any Marine," articles about the controversy over letters published in American newspapers from soldiers currently in Iraq that were later proven to be fabricated, and Letters From Vietnam, the classic book of letters home from that war—these texts were also variously re-arranged and augmented, for instance with lyrics by the Dixie Chicks, examples of "Any Marine" letters students had written themselves, stories about friends currently serving, including a funeral eulogy written by a student, and so on. The third 'cluster' of texts was organized around the movie About Schmidt, advertisements for Childreach International, the short story "Dear Alexandros" by John Updike, and articles in the New Internationalist on the logistics and the politics of organizations which, like Childreach, allow Westerners to sponsor foreign children—these texts augmented again with outside research and with personal experiences, in one case with a correspondence between a student and her mother, who is a sponsor, and so on. Because the whole class had read, analyzed and talked about all of these texts, we all had 'access' to each of the intertextual essays that were written about them, without there being very much overlap at all in the way students wrote about them, or even those issues students focused on. In this way, the movements on the WIKI, on the walls, and in the texts weren't just about getting 'help' with a paper; they were about greatly enriching the conversations we had about these texts, respecting and developing the huge and emotional and complex ideas they conveyed, especially when put into conversation with one another. Here are some examples of the exchanges that happened on the WIKI. I've put my own editorial comments in italics. Student writing is in sentence case, while any of the comments we made within one another's work is in capitals. When I am commenting in caps, I sign my name. Students remain unnamed.[60]

1. I know you have been up late flipping through the channels and you happen to come across one of those commercials with the sickly African kids. THIS IS A POWERFUL OPENING. WILL YOU DIG INTO THE ATTITUDES THIS CREATES—PITY, PERHAPS EVEN A KIND OF RACISM? [name removed].

Later, in a revision, and in a different section of the essay, the author addressed this comment directly. He went through a comparison of the claims of different aid organizations, and critically read their websites 'off' one another, focusing on this depiction of children as an

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[60] I received full I.R.B approval of this small research project.

appeal to emotion, but also commenting on how sponsors demanded accountability. He concluded, bluntly that: If a program is using these innocent kids to make money it will come back to bite them in the ass in the end.

But perhaps just as importantly, when the paper was on the wall, this comment, and the author's decision not to focus too deeply on the attitudes that the images of "sickly African kids" creates, but rather on the efficacy of the sponsorship programs themselves—their ability to get the money to the children with whom the sponsors exchange letters—led to a larger discussion. Students talked about how the commercials actually tried to prove, visually, that the programs worked, using gratuitous images of water, showing needles actually being administered (right into a child's butt), food being eaten, and so on. What were the entailments of this visual argument?

This led to a discussion of the ways our university uses pictures of African-American students on its website—often students from the dorm in which the class was located, the 'diversity' dorm. This discussion then led to talk about how the commercials tried to show sponsors of different races, but that students, even in a class that was predominantly African-American, and in which the parents of some students actually did sponsor children, couldn't imagine a sponsor being anything but rich and white. How did this connect to Miami's use of images of diversity, in spite of the low minority population? How do institutions and organizations create their 'bodies'? How did students feel about being used as visual arguments?

Although the paper itself didn't address the loaded language of a specific image, it opened up the possibility for us all to do so in another venue.

2. *Here's an excerpt from a paper about Sylvia Plath:* Having faced death but survived like Sylvia did in her failed attempts, an unhealable scar has been placed upon the heart—such unimaginable despair and aloneness felt in those moments, and then to still be thrown to the wolves, to life, without much help is a crime against the soul. HOW ABOUT LOOKING TO USE ONE OF SYLVIA'S OWN METAPHORS FOR THIS? DO TRY AND CHANNEL SOME OF HER POETRY IN HERE, SO YOUR READER CAN READ HER [JAY]. To keep facing life, without any treatment must have felt like drowning in misery, and who could deny the want for peace? I don't think suicide is selfish because I understand the incomprehensible

pain and aloneness one must be feeling to even have those thoughts. While I don't see it as selfish, I do not support it in any way shape or form, but never will I judge someone who acts on those thoughts, never. THIS IS ALL OPINION-TRY RESEARCHING SOME OF WHAT YOU HAVE FOUND TO BE TRUE SO THAT YOUR STATEMENTS ARE MORE CREDIBLE. MAYBE YOU COULD FIND A WEBSITE THAT DEALS WITH SUICIDE AND QUOTE THEM. I THINK YOU SHOULD STILL INCLUDE SOME OF YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE AS WELL SO THAT THE READER KNOWS THAT YOU'RE NOT WRITING IGNORANTLY. ALSO, THE TITLE OF YOUR ESSAY LEADS THE READER TO BELIEVE THAT YOU WILL BE APPROACHING THE TOPIC OF SUICIDE UNBIASED, AND THAT IS NOT THE CASE. TO MAKE YOUR TITLE MORE EFFICIENT, YOUR SHOULD CHANGE THE TITLE OR THIS PARAGRAPH [name removed].

In this exchange, I'm the person who suggested incorporating some of Sylvia's poetry into the paper, and this suggestion is obviously different from the long comment provided by a student. We're both, perhaps in a veiled way, asking the author to get more intertextual. The author did choose to do more of this second kind of 'research,' and actually ended up drastically altering the paper. It began as a very personal reflection on what Sylvia Plath may have felt in her final days, to an essay with very 'credible' (and not just 'from a website') research into the psychology of suicide. But this paper shows something else too—it shows that the WIKI was a place where students could comment more freely on a topic that might be difficult to talk about face-to-face or in groups, with all of the benefits and drawbacks of this greater freedom. In a traditional peer workshop, there may have just been silence. As one student wrote on this author's paper:

I THINK THIS IS A GOOD PAPER. IT PROVIDES A LOT OF INSIGHT ON A TOPIC THAT NOT MANY ARE COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT [name removed].

3.   *In another paper about Sylvia Plath, also looking into her suicidal feelings, the author concluded that what Sylvia had was a "deep connection with herself." A student commented that:*

I AM INTERESTED IN WHETHER OR NOT YOU THINK THAT DEEP CONNECTION WITH SELF IS A GOOD THING OR NOT [name removed].

In a later revision, the author tackled this tough question:

This connection to their inner emotions could be construed as a bad thing, but without their own sacrifice, the world might never have known what profound thoughts they actually had. Their beliefs and practices led them to a different kind of immortality than what most people seek.

Again, this revision shows how some of the key, complex thinking in the paper was generated out of a dialogue between students—something we could argue is always the case, but isn't always noticeable—or traceable, as it was because of this activity, across these mediums.

4. Susan Stan and Terence Collins have written that students revise more on-screen, when given the opportunity. While I wasn't interested in asking if this was indeed true in my class, or asking if students commented on other's papers more, or asking any of the other quantitative questions we might ask of this WIKI work, it was clear to me that students wrote differently here. In a paper that looked at letters from Iraq, but that also spoke very emotionally of the author's experience at a friend's recent funeral, a student wrote these summative comments:

WOW I AM VERY GLAD YOU SHARED ABOUT YOUR LOSS, WHICH TOUCHED YOU PERSONALLY. THAT MUST HAVE TAKEN COURAGE ESPECIALLY SINCE THAT WAS SO RECENT. YOUR PAPER WAS EASY TO FOLLOW, AND THE ONLY REAL COMMENT I HAVE IS TO MAYBE INCLUDE ANOTHER EXAMPLE MAYBE OF THE WORDS OF ANOTHER PARENT WHO LOST THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER TO EMPHASIZE THAT PAIN AND HOW SPECIFICALLY ONCE AGAIN THAT LOSS HITS HOME. THE DEATHS OF SOLDIERS ARE NOT JUST CASUALTY NUMBERS...THEY ARE REAL PEOPLE LIKE YOU AND ME. GREAT JOB :) [name removed].

I think that the comments show that, in this case, the medium may have allowed for these students to exchange something important, for the commenting student to take care with his/her tone and to ensure (by encoding, by making rhetorical choices—perhaps even those things we'd see as 'mistakes,' like sentence fragments) that the message came off the way she wanted it to. What I recognize in this comment is an incredible mastery of this genre of so-called 'informal' online writing, a genre that here allows the student to communicate their suggestions gently, as though the two writers are working together as an empathetic team to show how this loss hits home—a much different way to think about revision.

Finally, several days later, after—unfortunately—much of this dynamic interaction is ended, temporarily, by my need to assess their writing, I ask students to reflect on the entire process.[61] Below are just a few of the questions that I asked, pushing students towards what could be termed a media-specific analysis, a la Hayles, and also a usability assessment of the pedagogy itself. Gail Weiss writes that "one way of assessing the promise of new technology and the new bodies and body images produced by them should be the extent to which they promote and preserve the space for differentiation that makes our intercorporeal exchange possible" (128). If these are the criteria for assessing our mediated learning environments, these need to be criteria that students are also empowered to consider. As I interrogated the physical structures of the university in terms of their contingent ideological geographies, students can survey the spaces of their writing like cultural geographers—paying attention to the erection and crossing of boundaries, the ways spaces interpellate them. And, as I modeled in my first chapter, students can practice 'listening' to compositions with a trans-gendered ear (Ballif) and 'looking' at writing with a trans-normative 'eye' if we also involve them in debate about the motivations and the (perhaps ableist, perhaps heteronormative) agendas behind re-writings, something that is facilitated when some of the 'evolution' of their work is made differently tangible—is on the walls, in a computer interface, in front of them and beside itself in multiple manifestations. These questions show my effort to engage students in some of these considerations:

1. We compared drafts of your paper in the in-class gallery. What thoughts have you had since then about the implied space, and work, and change, in between drafts of your paper? How did you feel seeing them alongside one another? What were your feelings about the typed comments on the essay, seen after you'd revised, and about those comments written on the papers during that class session?

2. In the computer classroom, online and then in the gallery, how did you feel about the connections between you and your fellow students? Was your sense of ownership of the paper challenged? Did you feel a sense of collaboration?

3. Some students were frustrated by the format of the WIKI, others seemed to have no complaints. How did you feel about using the technology? What could be improved? How did the WIKI compare to working in Microsoft Word or another word processor? How did it compare to printing your paper out and bringing it in to class to workshop? What were the

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[61] One could 'assess' their reflection in addition to, or even in place of the paper itself.

problems that arose as you tried to move around—in Word, in the WIKI, in the gallery, between them all? What boundaries are there, what pathways? How might you have created or avoided them?

4.   How do you now plan to revise your paper—or any of your work? Also, how would you revise the design of our class's use of the WIKI, or of the WIKI itself? Are there parallels between these revisions?

5.   As I ask these questions, I am particularly interested in your physical feeling for the spaces in which we worked—how did you navigate around in the WIKI, in your word processor, in the 'gallery'—how did this affect your ability to write, to read, to think, to concentrate? Did you have a sense of your peers—where they were, what they were doing and thinking, as they read your work and wrote in your document?

6.   Did moving around these spaces enable you to re-see or re-think your positions in the paper?

The first time I asked students these questions, many of the responses were generic and evaluative—the WIKI was good, or it was bad, and little explanation was offered. But students also mentioned that they thought they could 'see' their thought process between drafts, when they brought different versions side-by-side, and that they could understand how peer comments led directly to re-writing. One student said that she felt "more connected to her peers and freer to more honestly critique their papers" because she could "really see [her] growth and the growth prompted by peer comments" between drafts. While some students felt dissociated from one another, felt alienated by problems with the technology, at least a few felt a connection through the WIKI, and I think this means its use was justified. But it also suggests that even an activity as seemingly structured as this one is not repeatable, must be changed and altered according to context—would it work as well, or better, had the students been writing something other than an intertextual analysis? The point, I suppose, is not to prescribe a process, but to find ways to emphasize the situatedness and partiality of communication, to draw attention to relationships and choices and the feeling for moving across ideas, genres and mediums. My suggestion is that in paying attention to these things, we develop a feeling for our embodied composition.

As I mentioned above, I mean for there to be some echo of the 'movie-in-the-mind' concept in my explanation of how the WIKI works, and how the WIKI works to encourage embodied composition. As Damasio explained, in the movies-in-the-mind concept of cognition, we are seen to flip through images to create a narrative (see chapter three). But unlike (most)

film, Damasio writes that there is an irregular 'flow' of such images as we experience them and utilize them. Images are "sometimes concurrent, sometimes convergent and divergent, sometimes they are superposed" (318). In this way, the movie is unlike a conventional narrative, is more like hypertext, or an interactive flash narrative, in that the progression is not dominated by continuity. If we see versions of a piece of writing as being somewhat like Muybridge's sequential pictures, then we can also trouble the idea of their recombination into a linear movie, and think about the way that Galton uses images to gather deviant characteristics—a warning about the normativity of revision. Further, just like the images Damasio writes about, 'images' of a paper are not just visual; they instead incorporate all senses, including the somato-sensory (touch, muscular feeling, temperature, pain, visceral and vestibular sense) (318). This offers a rich way to conceptualize the many 'frames' of writing that the WIKI sequences, how we move through in a sometimes random manner, our movement richly embodied and interactive. Dennett's multiple drafts model of cognition, and Hayles idea of a "flickering" interaction with a text are also useful for considering the habits-of-mind/body that the WIKI foregrounds. This medium vividly "restores and heightens the sense of the word as image…as I work with the text-as-flickering-image, I instantiate within my body the habitual patterns of movement that make pattern and randomness more real and more powerful" (26). On the WIKI, we *feel* that we are writing into a "medium as fluid and changeable as water" and we "know kinesthetically as well as conceptually that the text can be manipulated" (Writing Machines 26). This manipulation, as with our Multiple Drafts of reality, suggests that "understanding [is] a property that emerges from lots of distributed quasi-understanding in a large system" (Consciousness 439). In the multiple drafts model of consciousness, as through our writing and re-writing on the WIKI "enough information may often be available to fuel more than one version of reality" (810). Drafts then "compete in Pandemonium-like rivalry and the rivalry is resolved in favor of one over the rest (the one that "makes most ecological sense")--but not for good. The competition is never- ending. There is no [one] definitive or archival draft" (810). This rivalry is the drama of revision, but it is also the drama played out on the stage of embodiment, a drama rich with affect, rhetorically motivated, embodied.

The WIKI functions as a hypertext, a cybertext and a technotext. This can be accomplished via the incorporation of hypertext and sampling: As Paul D. Miller writes, in a culture of sampling, there is a "shift in the traffic of information [creating] not only new

thoughts, but new ways of thinking" (86). A WIKI is a hypertext and a cybertext in that students can construct a less 'linear' narrative through linking. They are all, for instance, hyperlinked to one another through the main page of the WIKI. This connection/articulation can be explored also where there aren't obvious, coded hyperlinks: exploring how they move through one another's work, write into one another's texts, how this influence asserts itself through revision; exploring how they cite common sources and one another to create a referential narrative, what issues of 'privacy' and 'property' this raises; exploring how their multiple drafts connect to one another in a linear or non-linear way. The WIKI is a technotext because it draws students to do this exploring—to, through rereading and revising essays, "interrogate the inscription technology that produces" the work (Hayles, Writing Machines 25). Even in the frustration of recognizing that their writing doesn't cleanly translate across mediums, they come to see "the material apparatus embodying that creation as a physical presence" (Hayles, Writing Machines 25). This apparatus is too often transparent, and too often we fail to see that the apparati or technologies of writing extend from, and also reach into us.

In these ways, the WIKI is a technology that holds great potential for connecting students to one another, and each to embodiment through writing. Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin argue that a "linear perspective [on writing and the composition of texts] enacts a heterosexual male gaze" (84). In their analysis of the politics of 'seeing' text, this straightness, as in Robert McRuer's essay, is opposed to the multiplicity and excessiveness of 'other' bodies and desires. So Bolter and Grusin actually suggest that the emphasis on linearity is a normativity, motivated to denounce and derogate that which is excessive, bodily. Hypermediacy, in their view, is constructed as an "unnatural" way of looking at the world (84). They suggest that intertextuality and hypertextuality are ways to challenge normativity. Perhaps, on the WIKI, in scrambling the reading and writing process, we might also scramble norms. It is also possible, however, that the WIKI would come to be used as a mechanism for more closely surveilling the writing process as well as peer feedback, and using this heightened observatory power to push students towards a more normative composition: as Galton's composite photography married photography and statistics for normalizing purposes, specifically to mark out deviation and promote eugenical thinking. It's possible that the WIKI works both ways. My point is that, once we undertake a critical, media-specific analysis, paying attention to the ways that technologies enable and

constrain, we can ask important questions about the ways the WIKI (like any other technology for composition) functions socially, politically and epistemologically.

For instance, how are feedback loops realized in this space? I refer here not just to the mobius strip model, but also to the model of a 'phantom limb' or a cane—what sense do we have for our writing as a material extension of our body? How does the touch of an 'other' affect us? How does writing as prosthesis enable us?[62] How do we control and spin the loops of embodiment through writing and revision? How does the WIKI allow us to sample and loop other people's writing into our own? What do we abject from this process? How are we pushed to embrace or reject the completeness of a document or process?

Obviously, there are many other questions that could be asked about my use of the WIKI—many of them critical of the limited ways I've used the technology. Clearly, students need to be involved in the continued re-design of this space. One suggestion for collecting usability analyses and media-specific analyses would be to post the entire lesson plan in the WIKI itself, and to ask students to comment on it and to change it. An entire course syllabus, or a teacher's pedagogical philosophy could be posted on a WIKI, and then amended by the students as the semester proceeds. Course notes could be posted by a teacher or a designated student each day, and then students could amend these notes based on what they believe the class was all about, and how they saw the day. These collaborative writings and rewritings could also be incorporated into every stage of composition, not just revision—students can easily freewrite, invent, and (more intensively) co-write on the WIKI. I would hope, as well, that students and teachers could find ways to utilize the options, within the MediaWiki interface, to embed dynamic and multimedia content, and to create internal and external hyperlinks (the writing my students did was certainly limited by my an emphasis on linear text). Indeed, part of the process of revision could be to add and link to such content—or students could begin with such content and then compose around and through it. Students could also be encouraged to use public WIKIs, like the Wikipedia, and to insert their own voices into the development and mutation of ideas in this much larger forum. And it follows that students can do complex, media-specific and

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[62] For instance, what does it mean to say, as Peter Elbow has, that "writing can function as prosthesis for the mind…thus writing provides us with two organisms for thinking instead of just one, two containers instead of just one; the thoughts can go back and forth, richen and grow" (289). Clearly, the WIKI is also an 'organism or container.' The key to rhetorical interrogation of writing then seems to be an understanding of the differences and commonalities (the *metissage*) of prostheses, as they shape and are shaped by our composition.

rhetorical analyses of articles in something like the Wikipedia, a (hyper/cyber/techno)text that could serve as both a course reader and the site of much of a course's writing.

In each of the developments I've charted here, from the development of a disability studies minor and its connection to the pedagogy and the philosophy of the entire university, to the creation of a new curriculum based on the strength of student differences, to the development of teaching strategies and environments that more clearly instantiate and interrogate our embodied learning and each student's multiple literacies, I've tried to honor the tradition of *metis*, as I develop a pedagogy of *metis*.

Each of us can affirm our partiality, the turbulence of our embodiment, our need for prostheses and for connection. The history and future of rhetoric and composition emerges in the space such affirmation creates.

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