Inkshed

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for the Study of Language and Learning

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Inside *Inkshed*

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Inkshed provides a forum for its subscribers to explore relationships among research, theory, and practice in language acquisition and language use. Subscribers are invited to submit informative pieces such as notices, reports, and reviews of articles, journals, books, textbooks, conferences, and workshops, as well as polemical discussions of events, issues, problems, and questions of concern to teachers in Canada interested in writing and reading theory and practice.

Inkshed is published five times during the academic year. The following is a schedule of submission deadlines and approximate publication dates:

15 September, for 1 October **1 February, for 15 February**
15 November, for 1 December **1 April, for 15 April**
Post-Conference: May - June (July!?)

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Editorial Inkshedding

This issue of *Inkshed* represents the work of many people. The Inkshed 10 conference proceedings that make up the bulk of the issue are the result of close reading and careful selection by Ann Beer, Bill Boswell, Jane Ledwell-Brown, and Sharron Wall. Further editorial assistance was provided by Winston Emery. To all my co-editors I extend sincere thanks. They made the task of assembling a post-conferece, end-of-semester newletter possible.

Louise Murphy has, as usual, put in considerable time and enormous effort to bring this newsletter to life. She has laboured over pages and pages of barely comprehensible inkshedding and, in the process, has reduced her eyesight and increased her blood pressure. One day I may publish a list of the highly colourful and occasionally uncomplimentary nicknames she has invented for many of those who shed ink at Inkshed 10. Our grumblings during that conference concerning the spiritual dimensions of rhetoric may disqualify us for the honour, but I believe Louise deserves to be the Inkshed patron saint. She will find it blasphemous, I am sure, but I propose the title Saint Louise of the Bleeding Pen. She herself has refused Saint Ink, since in abbreviation it becomes St.Ink.

Deborah Metchette and Jim Harris, of our Educational Media Centre, have continued to improve the look and layout of *Inkshed*. We are now receiving submissions in every possible way: e-mail, fax, courier, surface mail, and even telephone. Somehow, Debbie and Jim manage to transform this mish-mash into an attractive and readable document. So, to them, great thanks.

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As we go to press, the Inkshed submission file is empty. This alarms me less than it used to, since we have always received excellent contributions before (or slightly after) our rather elastic deadlines. However, please try to find some time over the summer to write that short piece that you have been promising me for the past two years.

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A report on the not-quite-an-Annual-Meeting, held during Inkshed 10, will be sent out by Susan Drain, Stan Straw, and Sandy Baardman. Although a vote among newsletter subscribers indicated overwhelming support for the formation of CASLL (Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning) and for the proposed constitution, much of the administrative and procedural work of the organization cannot proceed until an executive is elected. Along with the report Susan, Stan, and Sandy send out will come a call for nominations for that executive.

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Russ Hunt has started an electronic list for inkshedders. Like other such lists, it works like this: any message sent to the list's address (CASLL@UNB.CA; you can remember it because it's the acronym of our new umbrella organization, the Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning) will be automatically sent to every subscriber to the list. We hope this will increase the possibilities for dialog among Inkshedders, and if you have an e-mail address we hope you'll join the conversation. To do that, send a one-line e-mail message to this address:

LISTSERV@UNB.CA

(Note: use this address, not the CASLL address, which will just bounce your message to everybody else). The one-line message should just say:

SUBSCRIBE CASLL Your Name

To get further information about the list electronically, drop a note to Russ at his address, hunt@StThomasU.ca. Or you can use snail mail to St. Thomas University, Fredericton E3B 5G3 if you don't care how long it takes.

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My best wishes for a healthy, relaxed, and happy summer.

Anthony Paré

Inkshed 10: Abstracts and Inksheds

[Editors' note: The following selection of texts from Inkshed 10 was culled from a number of sources. Abstracts are from pre-conference proposals, hastily scribbled, post-presentation revisions, or mailed/e-mailed versions sent in following the conference. Some session abstracts are missing. We collected and reviewed all inkshedding done during the conference and applied certain criteria while excerpting: anonymous, indecipherable, and context-dependent contributions were discarded, as were comments on sessions for which no abstract was available. Longer passages were favoured over brief comments. We have attempted to make the conference comprehensible to those who could not attend while, at the same time, allowing those who could attend to recapture some of the issues and ideas that have probably begun to fade from memory.]

Session title: Rhetorical Theories Relating to Invention

Abstract: "The Function of Criticism: No Invention in a Museless World"

English Studies in liberal arts programs in Canadian universities have historically had a profoundly arhetorical or even anti-rhetorical bias. (This history is traced in the "Foreword" in *Textual Studies in Canada*, Vol. 2.)

This privileging of reading/criticism over writing/rhetoric is grounded in 19th Century views of a liberal education as "disinterested." For Matthew Arnold, becoming politically engaged or commercially involved in ideas is the opposite of being "disinterested." Rhetoric, however, is productive in purpose: reflection ends in action, in persuasion, in an "interested" position. Rhetoric/Composition therefore runs counter to the values subsuming the study of literature in English Studies. As such, rhetoric/composition is accorded diminished status in English departments.

As a result, the teaching of writing is being pushed out of English departments – where writing, Doug Brent suggests (TSC 2), is often taught badly. Writing and reading are therefore being

split from each other. So where is writing being taught? And who, if anyone, takes responsibility for advancing research and knowledge in the field of writing? Who teaches the teachers of writing in non-education faculties?

Henry Hubert

Abstract: "A Sophistic View of Invention"

The Sophists were the first rhetoricians to celebrate the inventive capabilities of human beings. They stood at the centre of the Greek world's shift from mythological concerns to philosophical ones, and challenged both tradition and theology with the idea that "Man is the measure of all things" (or a more modern translation: "Of all things the measure remains humanity"). My presentation addressed some of the following questions: What can the Sophists tell us about the philosophical ground of our theories of invention? Why did the Sophists accept, transform, reject, and challenge theories of divine inspiration? How might their ideas inform our current discussion?

Anne Hungerford

Inkshedding

Isn't there a Romantic and naive assumption related to every teacher being a teacher of writing? Isn't it, perhaps, even dangerous? I have colleagues who believe that they teach writing in their courses (e.g., Sociology of Education, Post-Secondary Studies). But these instructors, no matter how well-intentioned they are or sincere their intentions, base their instruction in (1) an assumption that students are, in general, poor writers and (2) an assumption that writing problems can be prescriptively cured. I was sitting next to one of these professors at a presentation recently. He had taped on the inside of his notebook a set of rules about the use of "who," "which," and "that" when used in restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses. Though the rules were elegant, they were — that is, they didn't reflect good writing. When I pointed out that the rules were problematic, I was ignored.

These are the instructors who, under a banner of caring about writing, mark all the errors in their students' papers, because that appears to be all they know about good writing — avoidance of error. They do not appear to know that writing can be taught, or if they do, they have no reasonable pedagogy through which their content and instruction in composition can be taught. And, more importantly perhaps, when given the opportunities to learn about reasonable pedagogical techniques in writing and integration, they do not take advantage of it. (They are, after all Ph.D's and experts in their fields).

So... do we require all graduate programs to have a significant rhetorical component — or, perhaps, before we offer someone a job in, say an Engineering faculty, we require him/her to take courses in teaching writing?

Since it is really idealistic to expect every teacher to be a teacher of writing, then we need to locate writing somewhere.

Stan Straw

Session title: Invention and the Spiritual

Abstract: "Invention: Ethical and Spiritual Dimensions"

I would like to address the ethical dimension of invention: the traditional link between the speaker's goodness or trustworthiness and his or her choice of topics in an effective discourse. I would like to explore whether it makes sense, any more, to say that invention has an ethical dimension. Finally, I would like to explore the link between this ethical aspect of invention (centering on the speaker's nature) and a spiritual aspect — a link, that is, between the writer's moral nature and the "numinous," the realm of divine truths, as the source of his or her words.

I will begin with a remark by Pierre de Ronsard, in his "Brief on the Art of French Poetry" (1565), in which he approaches poetry as a branch of rhetoric: he advises a young poet that "the principal thing is invention, which comes as much from goodness of nature as from the lessons of the good ancient authors. If you attempt a great work, you should show yourself religious and God-fearing.... [N]othing can be good or perfect, if the beginning not come of God." This view of invention, or "beginning[s]," conflates the ethical and the spiritual; ideally, invention taps into divine truths as well as the speaker's goodness. Starting with this view, I will look at the views of invention put forward by recent theorists like Donald Murray, Peter Elbow, and Rick Coe, and as found in recent textbooks on writing and rhetoric, to see a) whether invention is still given an ethical dimension; and b) whether this dimension can still be conflated with the spiritual (the latter, perhaps, still at work in recent accounts of invention that stress the "creative process").

Hilary Clark

Abstract: "Musing about Invention: Reason, Rhetoric and the Muse"

I believe that some of the threads and tenets of modernism that have made epistemology anxious and "inadequate" (cf. John Gage, 1984) have also made invention theoretically problematic. In the wake of Descartes, humans have become "sovereign," Mark C. Taylor (1987) tells us, and "attributes predicated of the divine subject [have been] gradually transferred to the human subject. The creator God dies and is resurrected as the creative human subject. As God created the world through His Word (the "logos" or reason), so [we create] a world through [our] conscious activities and unconscious projections." One result of this process of displacement is solipsism: the "sovereign subject relates only to what it constructs and it is, therefore, unaffected by anything that is finally other than, or radically different from, itself. What seems to be a relationship to something other — be that God, nature, culture, history, objects or other subjects — always turns out to be a dimension of the subject's relationship to itself" (Taylor). We are stuck in what Robert Jay Lifton calls the "echoing psychic chamber of self." Asseverated from the transcendent, and perhaps from our own souls, invention is constrained to the realm of reason and rhetoric.

My paper is a personal response to this reading of our condition. It seems to me that the recent focus on community and reasoning in composition studies is in part a secular response to a spiritual dilemma. I propose that composition theory needs to supplement a rhetorical approach to invention — an approach based on audience, community, and reasoning — with an acknowledgement of the personal, inscrutable and (I dare say) spiritual forms that invention can take. A reacquaintance with what previous generations have called "the Muse" has, perhaps, a role to play here. Seen as a personal creative force by which we mediate memory and desire, the Muse expands the

phenomenal horizons of invention to include the noumenal and the spiritual. My paper proposes a "performative" (i.e., non-"constative") view of the Muse. In essence, I am making a plea for an acknowledgement that writing should not be (and indeed cannot be) reduced to a purely empirical-phenomenal, or social-rhetorical, process.

Jamie MacKinnon

Inkshedding

I'll use this to try to get a handle on what Jamie said. As I understand him, Jamie is saying that writing studies has bought a wholly social-rhetorical view of invention; this is "naively secular." In doing that, we have shut ourselves off from an important perspective, which acknowledges the and of invention. And this soul-ful part of writing shouldn't be equated merely with creative writing; the muse can visit all parts of discourse. Now this is one point I really agree with Jamie on (although I'm not sure I'm buying the overall agreement): I agree that there are [no] clear-cut borders between so-called creative and so-called technical writing. Now, as to the overall argument): an important question is what difference might it make in writing if one accepts Jamie's arguments? I need to think and write this through at greater length, but my off-the-top of the head reaction is, this is what students think already (that writing is a mystery), and it's not helping them.

Douglas Vipond

In his presentation, Jamie (quoting someone) said, "In cultivating the muse, we recognize that words fail us, because we fail words." The notion that we "fail words" suggests that there is a disjunction between our selves and our words, language; that language pre-exists us, we are born into it, and that we try to inhabit it as best we can. To dwell in this house comfortably is (Jamie has argued) to "cultivate the Muse." But the Muse is not a ghost/spirit — it is that which (language itself).

Hilary Clark

KILL THE MUSE!!! The problem with both the positions that Hilary discussed is that they treat the writer as an individual self. They divide the world between self and community rather than seeing every writer as a part of and as a *result* of the communities to which s/he belongs. For me, the closest we ever get to creativity is the ability to amalgamate or integrate the multitude of communities to which we belong. Each of us is unique only in the sense that we are parts of and the results of a multitude of communities.

Stan Straw

I must say...that I feel strongly that the *refusal* to allow spiritual levels of discussion in the teaching of writing is a real shortcoming of much recent work, so I'm very glad we are discussing it today. I was also at a 4Cs panel on this very subject, where Ann Berthoff and James Moffett spoke very movingly. They commended themselves that they's expected "about six people" to attend that session — but in fact the large room was filled to overflowing. As Moffett said, perhaps that response suggests that a lot of writing teachers have begun to feel there is space for the spiritual — more directly — in their work.

Ann Beer

Conceptions of the Muse as a source of inspiration are rarely neutral; they are usually part of a larger system, a repressive (I would suggest) system. And there are other problems. When inspiration is the source of ideas in writing, then writing cannot be taught. (In fact, as I understand it this problem is the reason English Departments teach literature as a means of teaching writing.) Finally, it honours only a select few and turns most writers into urchins. All they can do is sit and wait.

Anne Hungerford

I'm not comfortable with the idea of the Muse as an inner solitary knowing. Although each of us has constructed a view of reality, a view of ourselves — perhaps this is what we are remembering — I don't believe that that view pre-existed. Our knowing is inextricably part of our cultural life, of our relationships, of our experiences. In that sense it is social. Reflective people — those prone to ponder — may think the Muse comes from within because they can spend much time in introspection, in solitude, in order to "discover" what they know. That doesn't mean that the ultimate source is inner, however, Language is social. If we think in language, we're already using the ideas of others. I see some "truth" in the Platonic view *as well as* the Aristotelian view. They both describe a perception of what "seems" to be the source of ideas. But language and social context are *always* part of the equation -whether we're aware of them or not. So invention isn't *only* an inner Muse. But that's not to say there's nothing within the individual, within the individual's self-construction, that's not unique.

Mary Mar

Is "the Muse" *all* of us? Clearly we can't go back into our garrets and pretend that the primary source of inspiration/synthesis/idea-sculpting is deep within ourselves (let alone within divine sources). But we can also consider "the Muse" as a metaphor for communally approved or sanctioned sources of authority and forms of discourse. So to invoke the Muse, which *seems* epideictic, was actually a public speech act which said to the community: "I have the proper authority to say this. I have received sanction....ok?" It established the necessary ethos. Today....*the Muse* takes on different forms. In business writing, it may be the correct or appropriate format; the CEO's signature or go-ahead; the committee's approval. These are communally, socially created sources of authority. In creative writing it may be one's authority of experience, as it so often is now with the rediscovery/recovery of women's experience. Again, "experience" is socially created, shaped, reshaped, and given the force of authority by communal notions of what is good, true, or valid. I dislike the *term* "The Muse" because it invokes the image of self-absorption and inspiration that drops down on one's head! But as a concept, it encompasses all of us; the Muse is a discourse community's seal of approval. It is one of many inventional constraints which mediate between social forces and individual experience.

Amanda Goldrick-Jones

I guess I see real differences between male and female approaches to being/spiritual/Platonic — the male pattern of desiring and despising the female muse — wanting to internalize, swallow, possess the numinous (perhaps not the right word) and then parade — the muse as "arm-broad"; female as participating in the larger/spiritual/numinous dimension. As for the seeming/strategic side, male approach often means strategy in military sense, orchestrating victory and domination whereas female is perhaps more dialogic/communication. (Gross overgeneralizations, I concede.)

Susan Drain

I am not at *all* comfortable with what Amanda has called the "trope" of the Muse. When we fill the "uncharted territory" (Anne Hungerford) with conceptions of the divine and link invention to inspiration, we render ourselves powerless. At least, we pass power along to others and become (more or less) willing victims. We have recently seen the effects of a divinely-inspired rhetoric in Waco, Texas. When "truth" is channelled through humans, rather than being constructed by them, the "truth" of the dominant, the rich, the powerful will always win out.

On the other hand, I am *almost* as uncomfortable with the contemporary explanation: truth is a social construct, provisional at best, and invention as a collaborative or social phenomenon. This (provisional) view seems "true" to me, and I like the control it gives us to define and shape our knowledge, our beliefs, our goals. There is *no* higher truth or knowledge, there is only argument, only rhetoric. But the same situation prevails: truth still belongs to the powerful in a post-muse world.

However, and this is key for me, *knowing* (believing) that knowledge, truth, justice (beauty, etc.) are *all* constructs gives us a critical stance not possible under the power of a divine muse.

Anthony Paré

Surely I am not the only person here whose writing constitutes both the performance of an identity and a body of evidence for the existence of an identity. Academic writing is always, whether marked as such explicitly or not, response to the ideas of others or in (the hope of) conversation with others. It produces a self who can be imagined as capable of carrying out tasks related to the control of writing: teaching, doing research, community work etc. I've never though about writing as "muse-inspired" and I agree with Johnson that writing — even, I would argue, fictional writing — is a writing-through of a problem — naming a problem, making it visible as a problem as well as developing strategies for solving a problem, the solving of course being intimately connected with what the effects of the problem seem to be in the first place.

Alice Pitt

Session title: Invention and Computers

Abstract: "A Critique of Computer Invention Programs"

In my talk I examine computer-assisted invention programs. While there are now verbal-based and graphic-based programs (and even a few which are both), I will only look at the verbal-based programs. My argument is that these verbal-based programs (examples will be shown from the software/booklet "Strategies" written at the Computer-Assisted Writing Centre) follow the standard "invention" techniques outlined in various rhetoric textbooks, such as Linda Flower's *Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing*, and Dias, Beer, Ledwell-Brown, Paré, and Pittenger's *Writing for Ourselves, Writing for Others*, so we can well ask "do students need computers to use invention heuristics?" A further question is "how can we persuade students to use the heuristics - can we convince them that there are significant blocks that invention heuristics overcome?" By way of example, the conceptual blocks outlined by Adams in his book, *Conceptual Blockbusting* will be outlined. Would it help students to be informed of the many different blocks - perceptual, cultural,

and so on - that they may face? Or would this meta-knowledge merely overwhelm them? In short, I argue that the verbal-based invention computer programs by and large fall down because 1) they do not contextualize the need for the heuristics or 2) provide models of the ways in which students could use the heuristics. This latter point is illustrated in light of the modelling done in the "Strategies" workbook.

Mary-Louise Craven

Abstract: "Audience Awareness, Invention, and Dialectical Writing in University Students: Programmed Heuristics and their Effects on Persuasive Writing"

Results of a study on audience awareness and dialectical writing will be presented. Students working in a networked university computing environment were asked to write persuasive essays on social issues to other students who had taken an opposite position to their own. Half of the students were randomly assigned to an experimental condition where they used a program designed to facilitate dialectical and relativistic thinking (Basseches, 1984; Perry, 1970) and half were randomly assigned to the control condition. All students worked with another program that administered the assignment, assigned conditions, presented topics, retained choices, presented instruction (Flower, 1989), and stored each draft of the work done. Students were informed that their writing would be read by students doing work similar to their own, but who had selected to argue an opposite point of view, and that they would receive feedback later from them.

Students in the experimental condition also worked with a dialectical question-and-answer tutorial program that simulated a dialogue to promote critical thinking and awareness of perspective. This program stored all of the interchange in a file in transcript form. The effectiveness of the program was tested by comparing the experimental and control conditions on a number of dependent variables derived from a primary trait scoring of the essays. Specific hypotheses include: whether the effective use of the program is related to age, educational level, and a measure of intellectual development (M.E.R. assessing Perry scheme). Results indicate that the experimental group scored significantly higher on a primary trait scoring of the essays and that work on the program and the essays was more related to the M.E.R. than either age or educational level.

Ronald A. Irwin

Inkshedding

Someone (Britton? Moffett?) suggested that the problem with a "product" approach to writing instruction is that you cannot write writing - you cannot write outside of a rhetorical context, simply to create a written antifact for evaluation, without producing what Russ Hunt calls "textoids": artificial texts that simulate real discourse.

And I wonder if invention strategies make students think thinking - *do* contextless thinking *about* some topic but *for* no reason and in expectation of no response. Do "heuristics" lead to "thinkoids": thoughts, ideas, arguments, views that exist outside of any location, discussion, dialogue?

When we look at genre theory and research, we see how people are describing the link between discourse and knowledge/thinking. Genres promote particular ways of thinking. (Genres are complex social actions, not just formats.) The thinking that heuristics promote are usually genre-less — they are introduced as transportable, adaptable to different genres. I wonder about this.

Anthony Paré

I used to teach a number of heuristic procedures (e.g. Pentad, tagmemics, etc.). I found some students used/liked/needed them to be taught. Others didn't. Charles Kay Smith, who attended Inkshed V in St. John's in '88, has a textbook *Styles and Structures* (pub. about '77), in which he presents a whole section on what he calls "cross-structuring," based on the idea of combining previously unrelated structures to come up with something "original" or "creative." I used that text and approach for years.

Now, however, I find myself happier with inviting students to connect things through their own experiences. I've virtually abandoned all other heuristics — they just don't seem necessary any longer. It seems more exciting for them (and me) to relate "previously unrelated structures" through personal experience than through a set of exercises.

Phyllis Artiss

The real question for me is the application of "constraining" programs. I don't believe computers need to be seen as being necessarily in the service of left-brain rational approaches. If they are flexible tools for extending the powers of the human mind, as I think they are, then their range is precisely the range of invention we have already talked about — from "the divine" to the aesthetic to the scientific.....

Ann Beer

Computer prompts may well be relentless but I see that as exactly their limitation. Personally, I think human interaction is far better for the purposes of invention. A human being may well forget something or get tired but at least a person *responds* to the other person in a real way — or can. I'm for human interaction anytime when it comes to human though processes that are not strictly "paint-by-number" tasks.

Mary Mar

Session title: Personal Responses to Invention

Abstract: "Teaching as Disinvention, Learning as Reinvention: The Emancipatory Agenda in Feminist Pedagogy and Literature Education"

This paper addresses some contradictions between the commitment to and the implementing of an emancipatory pedagogical agenda. The author reflects upon her own experiences teaching graduate students in feminist literary criticism seminars and in "mainstream" philosophy of literature courses, illustrating how moving from a centered to decentered classroom and from a tightly structured curriculum content to one which is co-created by students poses difficulties even as it promises rich rewards. Put forward is the anomaly that the very heightening of consciousness threatens to break down into solipsistic individual worldviews and group alienation. These transformations require not only academic rigor and the search for some common frame of reference, but the willingness to accept the knowledge of the other on the other's own terms. This principle is seen to be a crucial link between the ethical goals of critical/feminist pedagogy and literature education. The neologisms on invention signal the tension between what an instructor perceives to be happening and what may in fact be happening with respect to the kind of learning taking place. Throughout, invention is used as a trope for the sense of congruence or coherence deemed necessary for learning; teaching as "disinvention" connotes the instructor's undoing or unlearning of this coherence as key to student learning; and the students' "reinvention" is seen as the loss of coherence and subsequent remaking of knowledge which takes place in the wake of pedagogical plans that go awry.

Deanne Bogdan

Abstract: "Fess Up: Where Does Your 'Ah Ha' Come From?"

This session invited people to reflect on their own invention processes. I asked people to record on supplied index cards what they REALLY did for inspiration while composing academic papers, and then to draw themselves in pursuit of/while awaiting inspiration.

The results were interesting, even inspirational, and often very funny. Approximately two hundred cards were submitted (a minimum of 4 per person requested). Activities fell equally into task- focused activities and those that some might term avoidance — but I prefer to call making space for ideas to come. Some from the first group:

- mak[ing] book-piles on the floor, with post-it notes sticking out of all the pages;
- trying to find a pattern in my ideas and feeling anxious;
- hav[ing] an imaginary talk with the readers - tak[ing] notes;
- mapping; graphing;
- tak[ing] a sentence from a previous paper I wrote (or from someone else's text) and use its structure to create a new sentence for the new paper;
- the most embarrassing one - but the one I always resort to when I hit a real block: get down on the floor on all fours: (2 knees + 2 elbows) + scribble on scrap paper till I get through the barrier.

And the second:

- several people play the piano;
- lots of people eat: peanut butter with chocolate chips is the most specific entry. People drink, too, tea, coffee (Starbucks figures highly in west coast invention) and beer were specifically mentioned;
- wear[ing] the same clothes for as long as it takes to write the first draft. Conversely, others do laundry;
- one person plays computer solitaire (to shut up or shut down intellectual analysis); another turns the computer on and listens to it hum;
- lots of housekeeping gets done, weeding as well.

And the one that brought down the house:

- masturbate and have a nap.

About the images: taped on the wall the next morning, they were quite moving. The session had ended late, people were tired. Lots of folks said they enjoyed the session, but we didn't do any inkshedding. I wish we had.

Leslie Sanders

Inkshedding

Dissonance, decentering, personal transformation, emotional breakdown: I'm not sure where the pale of presumption, the limit of reach is for a teacher. Ironically, perhaps, the greater the reach, or the greater the transformation in the student, then the *greater* the power of authority in the teacher and the greater the weakness in the student. For people are very disarmed, very vulnerable in moments of stress, dissonance and challenge, at least in the short term.

Jamie MacKinnon

The main tones which resonate for me are those concerned with class dynamics. (Alice is going to have to help me reforge the link to invention.) I agree that in attempting to decentre the class by trying (and of course ultimately failing) to divest yourself of your power, it's important not to pull the rug out from under the students. I think the "game" does go more smoothly when students know from the outset where you are (finally) going to claim to be coming from.

James Brown

While I was listening to Deanne I was reminded of Ibsen's *The Wild Duck* in which the characters survived only because they were living in ignorance of the truth. The truth, when they found out about it, destroyed them.

Do we teachers have the right to try and "force" our students to become more aware. (Ideas from "The Dead Poets' Society" also applicable here).

I am also reminded of a student I had recently who seemed to "lose control" after I prodded him about what appeared to be the superficiality of his writing. We need to be very careful about challenging our students' assumption.

Bill Boswell

But *must* our teaching, anyone's teaching, get caught up in some kinds of curing processes?

Not because teachers aren't caring, sympathetic therapists. But it seems to me that education should be a more public thing, that students should to be given more trust.

Is there an assumption that we *write* students, as though they were scripts? And that then we can *un*-write them?

Lynn Holmes

I was intrigued by the question of how, in pedagogy for liberation, one measures success. Do we consider our class's songs tuneful when we detect a few isolated notes from the only song we ever hum? Might not some of us be deaf to certain frequencies — the highest and lowest pitches, perhaps. Or might we find sweetest those notes which genuinely resonate with our own? — to the point where we honour *those* most fully? Teaching is "impossible." What a glorious challenge!

Pat Sadowy

The classroom as an instrument of subvention. When I was a student, the aims were these of the new left. Now they are those of feminism. What will they be twenty years from now? Both then and now I have felt uncomfortable with making students re-examine their lives and their selves according to a particular ideology espoused by the teacher. Perhaps I am more conservative than I've realized.

Mieke Koppen Tucker

Session Title: What Counts as "New"?

Abstract: "Invention Beyond the Act of Writing"

Writing theory frames the process of writing temporally: it spans the time from receiving to completing a writing task. This type of boundary enables us to define and focus our research and discussion. But in some ways, it may also constrain both the power of our theory and the effectiveness of our pedagogy. Consequently, I'd like to focus on the sources of the knowledge and experience we bring to writing tasks by turning toward theories of learning and social construction.

Current learning theories emphasize the long complex process and dialogic character of learning (Vygotsky, 1986). James Gee elaborates: literacies and their underlying discourses are learned "by enculturation ('apprenticeship') into social practices through scaffolded and supported interaction with people who have already mastered the Discourse" (1992, p. 33). Writing, from this

perspective, is not an artifact, but a constituent of social context both historically and synchronically (e.g., Cooper, 1989). The value of this view is apparent in many settings. For example, students visiting writing centres often do not realize they are blocked because they have been only able to relate assignments to courses topically but not conceptually, structurally, or purposefully. They need to draw on this broader knowledge of their courses and to engage in critical discussion throughout the course in order to begin their writing tasks.

Many of our pedagogical practices partially address this need — writing to learn, writing across the curriculum, demystification of genres — but ideally dialogue, learning, and writing would occur in a continuous flow, each informing the other, much like at this conference. Additionally, we would clarify the social context and goals of our subject matter and the institutional roles of the writing we teach.

Opening up our notions of invention in this way seems more consistent with the contribution of rhetoric to a participatory democracy, a relationship brought out in Anne Hungerford's paper. Our next challenge, as Deanne Bogdan poignantly illustrated, is in examining the values that underlie our definitions of democracy, of power and equality, and in considering how else our classrooms should reflect and critique the beliefs we espouse.

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Judy Hunter

Abstract: "Co-authoring as a Mode of Invention: Reflections on Collaborative Writing"

The purpose of this session is to explore co-authoring as a mode of invention, through an examination of the collaborative writing experiences of members of a graduate seminar who were required to co-author papers for a course in research in written composition.

Collaborative writing as a method of invention requires a reconceptualization of the notion that invention is an individual process. Students in the course accepted or rejected this reconceptulaization to varying degrees, but in our examination of these students' experiences we noted that, when the collaboration was successful, a redefinition of what it means to invent was central to the process of co-authorship.

The first speaker, the course instructor, will outline the rationale for using a collaborative writing pedagogy in a graduate seminar. Three observations will be made: first, students were unaccustomed to working collaboratively and were reluctant to attempt it even though they required students in their own classes to write collaboratively; second, the acts of negotiation

required of collaborating authors were, in many ways, outside the experience of these students and they encountered many difficulties as a result; and third, the students reported that the learning that resulted from the collaboration was "significantly greater" than the learning that would have taken place had they worked on these projects individually.

The second and third speakers are students in the seminar who have conducted retrospective interviews with their fellow students and analyzed the material as it relates to issues of rhetorical invention and collaborative processes. Through these analyses, as well as through reflections on their own experiences, these students have identified a number of issues, particularly: the lack of a model for collaboration; unexpected relations between interpersonal conflict and compositional processes; and challenges to long-held positions/attitudes regarding course material and ownership of written text.

Stan Straw, Sandy Baardman, and Laura Atkinson

Inkshedding

Quelle contraste! I found the juxtapositioning of the more traditional, Romantic notion of an individual "reading obliquely," and the rich descriptions of collaborative invention, to be very fruitful. My question is — can we build a conceptual bridge between these two paradigms?

Can we link the individual's oblique reading/researching with the group's sharing of ideas, negotiation of differences, and taking of many "inventional turns"? I suspect we can, and probably many of us do, as teachers, even if we don't realize it. One theory I have is that the individual's processes of establishing "a new idea" are always dialectically engaged with group processes of shaping and revising. Pedagogically, one technique might be to allow/require group members to keep *individual* records of idea-generation, research, work done on behalf of the group — and to be graded or credited for this individual work *as well as* graded for the group project. An uneasy but possibly workable balancing act!

Amanda Goldrick-Jones

Do men and women have different collaborative styles? The case of the male and female partners Sandy cited rang warning bells in my mind, as I am thinking of collaborating on an article with a male colleague (in another university and province). What are the gender dynamics involved here? Are women better collaborators because they tend to be less assertive; do they tend to concede expertise and authority to their writing partners? Do they give up even more of their voice if their partner is a man used to asserting his authority? Are they "content to learn" — or are they determined to *teach* as well? Is the equality and co-operation and mutual learning we saw in the two-woman collaboration cited by Laura possible in a man-woman collaboration — or will traditional gender dynamics come into play (even if the partners struggle against this)?

If we are not careful, collaboration can become a process of *coercion* (subtle or not), and its aims are defeated.

Hilary Clark

For me, the issue in collaboration is always "control" — who has it? I find it hard to think of a product without one final controlling intelligence.

I *have* written collaboratively (and successfully in that the products were published) with two different people, but in each case a strong personal relationship preceded the collaboration.

Betty Holmes

I have been curious (and resistant or at least very cautious) about using collaborations in the classroom, but after listening to Stan, Laura, and Sandy as well as others at the Learneds — I am now determined to try it.

I've used collaborative teaching/writing for several years now; I have to admit it's most successful at the more "advanced" level but is always worth pursuing/adapting at more basic levels. Negatives = enervating, personal; teacher gives up centrality yet must be ready to act as mediator and "mother"; unpredictable — messy! Positives = empowering, personal (!); teacher learns a tremendous amount about how people write...and *students* are usually left more opened up to others' views and help. *Important*: have strategies/techniques ready *ahead* of time to prepare students for group work; don't "throw them together."

Mieke Koppen Tucker

I find the idea of collaborative writing very exciting. I would like to introduce it gently to my students, and find ways to stress the benefits of dialogue about key ideas (the *process* of improving the ideas) and the process of group revision of the text, so the words and sentences express more and more precisely what the individuals want to say. I need to *resolve* to use collaborative writing — that are always lots of reasons not to try something new, lots of resistance — in my students and in myself.

Stephen Bonnycastle

I think Judy is absolutely right. We need to pay a great deal more attention to thinking about who we are as the writers of particular pieces and helping our students discover (?) establish (?) who *they* are.

Strange — no one that I can recall has spoken of invention as making up things that are not true.

Bill Boswell

Collaborative writing: I've had problems using my down experience in collaborative writing (positive) as a model for my students, because the procedures have always been so task-specific.

More and more, though, I want to segregate the negotiating process (almost always verbal) from the actual *drafting*, so that the writing has a naturally evolving coherence (first-draft-finished, in most cases).

Lynn Holmes

Session title: The Processes and Aesthetics of Invention

Our "talk" focuses on the processes through which readers and writers become aesthetically and "inventively" engaged in their pursuits.

We focus on two particular projects that have involved teen-aged students in explorations of (1) self-selected novels, including *The Stand* and other works by Stephen King; *Invisible Man* by Ellison; *Native Son* by Wright and other selections of Afro-American literature; as well as works by romance writers (e.g., Danielle Steele); (2) "advertising projects," whereby students have prepared a detailed advertising portfolio that assembles a "package" designed to promote a particular product by enticing a target audience.

The first segment of the presentation will (A) contextualize a research project designed to investigate the processes and classroom structures through which students respond aesthetically to self-selected literature; (B) briefly present a range of such explorations captured by audio and video-tape of both individual and small-group responses to the literature and projects involving artistic, dramatic, and musical interpretations that synthesize individual's and groups' engaged responses and, in fact, creations of the literature they read; and then (C) briefly situate such explorations in the context of research and theory of aesthetics.

The second segment of our presentation will (A) present the rationale and structures for a project that engaged post-secondary students in a college course on advertising; (B) briefly present a range of the projects students created in their efforts to creatively explore and "live through" the theoretical and practical "tools" of advertising; and (C) situate the students' creative engagements and projects in the theory of post-modern culture and advertising.

In both segments of this presentation, emphasis will be on how the students' verbal responses and explorations, and their various projects, reflect their virtual ***creation*** or ***invention*** of the literary texts **and** the tenets, structures, and theory of advertising. Their aesthetic involvement features as one of the key variables in such invention, and this phenomenon will be visited with appropriate brevity, depth, and relevance to the presentations.

Alayne Sullivan and John Ruttner

Inkshedding

This was a fascinating presentation and I'm in sympathy with your project, which is **huge**. Aligning processes of invention with **both** aesthetic absorption (unselfconsciousness) and awareness of the elements of narrative structure through media construction (hyper-selfconsciousness, especially within a parodic mode) through the unifying notion of creativity as play is some theoretical undertaking. There's a lot in this. I guess my primary question was foregrounded in the final audiotape. Where do you draw the line(s) between the general fascination with any subject relevant to one's subjectivity that is operating in just about any *conversation* one is extremely interested in and the major elements of aesthetic experience and creative production? I would say that making these distinctions without necessarily making separations in the actual phenomenology of the activities

of the activities would be something I would feel has to be addressed. In any case, it sure raises questions about the false binaries among rhetoric, poetry, and the everyday.

Deanne Bogdan

Alayne and John move *beyond* aesthetic engagement in that their students are living not only the texts but their own recreations of them. Alayne's students are doing much more than reading: they are thinking and questioning *as* they read (rather than after). They are active readers.

The presentations made by John's students indicate they understand the genre they have examined. A far more interesting and revealing activity than analyzing it because, as he said, many of them are not particularly articulate. They might not be able to explain their understanding but they certainly illustrate it.

I like too what John said about invention taking place over time and consisting of many elements.

Bill Boswell

Interesting to see how well the students knew the form of the infomercials. I wonder how many of us could have produced a collaborative effort that would parody the electronic medium as well as they did. Obviously their exposure to these genres has given them a vocabulary of images that stacks up against our verbal abilities. When the medium is print, the students also have to find their own language reflected before there can be any engagement.

Question: how does their ability to manipulate the genres they are familiar with cross over into the writing/learning they will need in situations with which they are not familiar?

Sharron Wall

Session title: Feminist Inventions

Abstract: "Designing Women: Vision, Performance and Masquerade"

Design. 1. a drawing, plan, or sketch made to serve as a pattern from which to work. 2. in painting, weaving, building, etc., arrangement of detail, form, and colour. 3. the art of making designs. 4. a piece of artistic work. 5. a plan in the mind to be carried out. 6. a scheme of attack; evil plan. 7. a purpose; aim; intention. 8. the underlying plan or conception; organization of parts in relation to the whole and its purpose. 9. on purpose; by intention.

In recent years educators have started to abandon the traditional model of the classroom as a site of power and imposition, what Michel Foucault calls "the tense theatre of knowledge." In "Feminist Inventions," we dream of a different Academy, a kind of late twentieth-century City of Women that welcomes an imaginary course modelled on collaborative practice (reading, writing, teaching). Collaborative practice emphasizes the notion of the class as a community, a place where

dialogues and collectives contribute to what Judy Hunter referred to as a "continuous conversation." In our dream course, which is titled "Designing Women: Vision, Performance and Masquerade," we hope to initiate such a conversation. The title indicates our own designs or intentions: to examine the wedding of woman and text. One possible area of exploration is the role of the woman writer as "shape-shifter": spider-woman, guerrilla fighter, medicine woman, mediator, journey-woman.

The course outline is an open-ended map, an invitation to ride off in all directions in order to discover and explore "fugitive" women writers and contentious issues in contemporary theory. We hope the pleasure that we take in sharing some of our favourite texts (Cathy Song's *Picture Bride*, Albalucia Angel's *The Guerrilla Fighter* and Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*) - what Jamie MacKinnon called "texts with souls" - will lead to the students' own discovery and exploration of "other" texts. Our course offers probable points of departure (recommended readings), probable places of interest (topics for discussion), and possible postcards to send back home (writing assignments). It is a course without closure, a journey without a final or known destination.

The text that inspired our dream course was Nancy Miller's *Arachnologies: The Woman, the Text, and the Critic*. In her critique of "death of the author" theorists, Miller chooses to read the Arachne story recorded in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* as "a possible parable of a feminist poetics." Focusing on the image of the woman writer as spider and her text as web, Miller suggests that feminist texts "seek to establish the material and figurative grounds for elaborating a history of female authorship" while patriarchal texts announce the death of the author and a loss of authority. Proposing a theory that does not kill off the writing and reading subject, that does not privilege process over product and creator, and that does not emphasize solitude and introspection, Miller suggests that we "tear the web of women's texts [to] discover in the representations of writing itself the marks of the grossly material, the sometimes brutal traces of the culture of gender; [and] the inscriptions of its political structures (275)."

Cathy Song, Albalcia Angel, and Leslie Silko sing of something larger than self and solitude. They create texts that are communal, texts that are "attached to life at all four corners." They construct a rich tapestry of pictures that reflect the primary colours of the worlds that women inhabit.

Valerie Legge and Phyllis Artiss

Inkshedding

How do you "translate" your dream course into reality? How big is the gap between ideal and reality? Do our *real* students (male as well as female) "fit in" with your ideal? Is it fair to expect students to respond to our passions in reading, our preferred ways of communicating (e.g., diaries, letter-writing), our personal modes of invention? Your "dream-course," however attractive, points to a paradox or quandary which some teachers feel themselves to be caught in - wanting to relinquish control/authority yet maintaining it in a thousand subtle ways (and of course *having* to maintain it because working in the institution). And one major way by which one maintains control is in not making one's theoretical position/situation clear at the outset of the course!

Hilary Clark

I'm not familiar enough about feminist theory to comment much but I have been concerned with the views of some feminists that struck me as quite un-"caring" and exclusionary. Feminism has some very important ideas and this perspective is allowing *all* of us to question long-held

assumptions about learning, teaching, etc. It also helps us to consider our values - what *do* we value? I would like to see a more caring world. I'd like to see learning become a more caring activity. I also think we need to consider the effects of power relations — but this wasn't really raised in this session. Should it have been?

I *liked* the comment that introducing feminist ideas as an alternative introduces complexities that are worthwhile. Yes!

Mary Mar

Valerie's dream course handout puts into words a theme that runs through much of what we are discussing. She says that students must "be willing to relinquish truths for uncertainties" (p.4 of handout). But I think students *think* they are relinquishing their own truths for our truths (and aren't they, in fact, often doing that?). And even when we really do offer "uncertainties," how do students experience them? How does embracing uncertainty affect them? Does it alienate them from their families, friends, classmates? We seem naively surprised by their resistance. Why should they want to embrace *our* uncertainty — an uncertainty, I might add, that we have reached after many years of confident belief in *certainties*. In fact, is it possible to embrace uncertainty *before* you've lived with and rejected some amount of certainty. As Bob Dylan said, "Ah, but I was so much older then/I'm younger than that now." Are we asking our students to be us (postmodern, resistent, uncertain, collaborative)? Are they ready? Are we trying to jumpstart a developmental process?

Anthony Paré

If I listen closely I can hear a hopeful resonance and a wish for the future of our world, where women and men can rediscover what it is to be human beings and rebuild our institutions and creations in a symbiotic fashion that is less damaging than the commercial-based model we are currently enduring. If we all were to design our dream course, and teach it and learn from it with an open heart...!

One can only imagine what change we could bring about!

Sharron Wall

There's another context, however, which each student can/should explore: what is it in me and my background that causes me to respond to the text in a particular way? Is my response typical? Is it modified by the responses of others? If I knew more about the context of the text would I have a different response?

Betty Holmes

Like Valerie, I too got lots of new critical — "well-wrought urn" practice in the academy as a student. Like Valerie, I too (now) like to position texts in relationship to their authors. But I also now know a lot more about these authors and circumstances of composition than my students do. The effect of my "sharing" this stuff with them is to yank the interpretive rug out from beneath them — this method privileges what I will inevitably know more of. I think it's important to make the contextualizing texts — letters, prefaces, biographies, equally part of the course.

James Brown

Session title: Invention in Collaborative Writing

Abstract: "Writing for Others, or, Invention in New Brunswick"

According to a social rhetorical perspective on invention, we can find our muses in other people. This is illustrated by a project in which a university introductory psychology class in Fredericton, N.B. wrote a booklet about psychology for a grade 9 English class in Dalhousie, N.B. The two groups of students began with vastly different notions of psychology, however, and it was this difference of belief that set the stage for invention. Later, the younger students made editorial comments on and responded to the first draft of the booklet. The difference between intended and actual effects now motivated the psychology students to revise their work.

Douglas Vipond (and Susan Macdonald, in absentia)

Abstract: "Can't You Feel the Driver's Seat?: Reinventing Organizational Reality Through Collaborative Writing"

The notion that communication is fundamental to the creation of organized human activity exists in both the organizational communication literature (e.g., Weick, 1979) and in the composition literature (e.g., Farrell, 1976; Harrison, 1987). Research on written communication has demonstrated the importance of understanding the role of writing in building and defining communities. However, empirical research which investigates this phenomenon is hard to find. This is not surprising, as the taken-for-granted nature of communication within an existing organization works to obscure its role in creating the organization. Opportunities to observe this phenomenon may exist only when organizations are in flux, either when they are first being created (e.g., Doheny-Farina, 1986) or when they are undergoing major changes. This paper describes a research project which took place in an organization undergoing just such a change. In a three-month study conducted at a long-term care hospital, I observed the members of the rehabilitatio department as they collaboratively wrote a proposal to change the delivery of breakfast to the residents of the hospital. Because the hospital is attempting to implement a new philosiphy of delivering nursing care to its unwell elderly population, the writers felt they had an opportunity to change both their role in the organization and how they are perceived by others within the organization. During the writing process it became clear not only to me but also to the participants themselves that as they invented material for their proposal they were also re-inventing the social reality of the organization itself.

Barbara Schneider

Inkshedding

A fascinating presentation. The suggestion that the need to produce a document can lead to potential liberating changes within the discourse community is an interesting one. I hope you do a follow-up study to see whether the effects of the collaboration process in the rhetorical situation were more than fleeting. One thing puzzles me: why did not even one member of the group ask you for your opinion? Did the group know that you possessed some expertise in the area of writing proposals? Finally, were the members of the group disappointed that all their time and efforts led apparently nowhere?

Mieke Koppen Tucker

I think successful collaborative writing ideally demands a sense of equal status, equal investment in the task by all members of the group — and for that to happen each group member needs a feeling of confidence, an "open space" in which to contribute. I wonder how likely this feeling is in an intensely hierarchical system such as the medical world. Yet it was good to know that even with all its problems this collaborative experience was valued by 11 out of 12 participants. Talking in depth to the one (man) who didn't value it would be interesting.

Ann Beer

Is it possible that you over-state when you say that the workers produced rather than reproduced power relations? But even in that event, the overstatement serves an important rhetorical purpose in emphasizing your findings — that the writing project was an occasion for negotiation of roles or exigencies, and that the *genre* of the project — and workers' practical (vs. formal) knowledge of the genre — embodied the occasion. (I liked this a lot.)

Janet Giltrow

I think the reality of an audience is one that has always confounded me because I know that as a reader I myself am terribly fickle in how I respond to and what I expect from texts. Determining what it is that others want is even more difficult, especially when that reader is a professor. I like your idea of having the Gr. 9's send letters to your students before they began to write. I wonder to what extent it would affect students' writing if professors wrote to students about what they knew about a topic, what confused them, and what interested them before having their students write.

Christine Adam

I think the situation set-up between Doug and Susan does create a need to write in the Psychology students out of a need/wish/some openness to know in the Grade 9 students. How typical of writing situations generally is this? There's always some relationship between a writer's wish to say something (for whatever motive, to forward an agenda, make money, work out some problem) and a reader's wish to hear. The writing of these Psychology students was largely driven by the High School students' degree of openness to hear. (As supervised by Douglas' wish/need to produce a work?) Perhaps we could think about writing situations which are writer-expressively driven (writing a journal article — hoping the editor likes it enough to accept it) and writing situations which are audience-rhetorically driven. Doug and Susan created a writing situation of the second kind.

James Brown

Audience is very important to my writing — the ideas are usually pretty clear (to me), and the problem is to make them attractive, interesting, or comprehensible to particular constituencies, so they will pick them up and use them.

I'd like to do more writing which didn't have this practical orientation — more poems, short stories — more writing of a spiritual nature, more muse-goddess-inspired — what Jamie MacKinnon and Yeats call writing out of the quarrel with oneself.

Stephen Bonnycastle

Session title: The Invention(s) of Knowledge in Four Disciplines

The following abstracts report separate studies within a larger research project that includes, besides those whose abstracts follow, Aviva Freedman, Patrick Dias, and Peter Medway.

Abstract: "The Use of Case Studies in Business Courses — Three Modes of Invention"

In looking at a variety of courses in the Schools of Business and Public Administration at Carleton University, we (Freedman, Adam) have identified at least three different types of case studies, each having a distinct purpose and, consequently, a preferred invention strategy.

The first case study is that which students refer to as the "canned case," in which the scenario to be addressed by the student follows a textbook chapter on a particular topic. This type of case study is most common in the early years of one's programme and is intended to engage the student in the issues and concepts presented in the course. It is not uncommon for students in these courses to be expected to draw connections between their previous experience and the material presented in the textbook. Because all of the concepts have just been presented — in both the textbook and through course lectures — the students exploration/invention in writing these cases is "scaffolded."

The second type of case study is most commonly identified as the Harvard style. A book of "truncated narratives" (Ann Harleman-Smith), accompanied by appendices of relevant and irrelevant data, provides students with the raw data which they must apply to the concepts the professor has presented during the course. Most often, the professor has "walked" the students through the process of "doing" the case, indirectly modelling the processes required. The purpose of these cases is to encourage students to acquire and use the specific thinking processes required within that course.

The third type of case study is the most unfamiliar to students and usually the most challenging. Students are required to identify a particular issue in a national trade organization and to research it, looking at "primary documents" such as cabinet briefs, annual reports, speeches, white papers, etc. In this type of case, the students lack any support from textbooks or class room lectures. The primary purpose is to replicate the invention process of the target workplace itself. Not only is the problem undefined, the raw data needed to identify it must be sought out and interpreted.

Christine Adam

Abstract: "Writing in Social Work"

I am investigating writing in McGill's School of Social Work and in the professional settings in which the students of the School do their field placement and the graduates of the School begin their careers. Of particular interest to me at the moment, is what we have been calling "transitional

zones": periods during which students experience some new stage in their education. For me, these stages include the following: the beginnings of the undergraduate program, the one-year, post-baccalaureate diploma program, and the Master's program; the 700 hours of field placement experience, during which students work as apprentice social workers in a variety of professional contexts; and the initial stages of professional life following graduation. I mention two observations:

The rules governing acceptable invention in academic social work cause new students considerable discomfort. Aside from traditional library research (professional journals and books), students are expected to investigate a wide variety of unusual sources (e.g., Census Canada data, municipal regulations, government documents) and to interview individuals on both sides of the social service system. In addition, students are expected to reflect on their own experiences with bureaucracy and government agencies, in order to become more sensitive to their eventual clientele. This last requirement leads to confusion over the status and stance of the writer in social work texts. Personal reflection and first-person pronouns are welcome, even demanded, in some writing; but as students move to more "formal" academic writing, and as they move into workplace writing, the disciplinary demand for "objectivity" forces them out of the text.

In the "transitional zone" between academic and workplace writing, very little explicit instruction is provided. Students in field placement are told to "go to the files" to discover the form and substance of professional documents. Although this aspect of my research is in a very early stage, it does raise interesting questions about the preservation and perpetuation of genre. How does this adherence to established genre constrain and enhance the students' ability to invent their texts, themselves, and their clients?

Anthony Paré

Abstract: "Writing in Management"

The field I'm investigating is management: the writing situations of students in an MBA program and graduate MBA's in the workplace. I've just completed doctoral research on MBA's in the workplace. I've just completed doctoral research on managers" responses to their subordinates (many of whom were recent graduates) writing in a large for-profit organization. As well, I have begun to study the writing done by students in the McGill MBA program - a 2-year graduate program which draws students from a variety of disciplines including science, arts, commerce, and engineering. In my study of managers' responses to writing in the workplace, my participants worked in the Management Information Systems and the Marketing divisions of a pharmaceutical company. So far, most of my information about writing in the MBA program has come from teachers and students in the Management Information Systems and Marketing courses. Based on my doctoral research and on the initial findings of my study of MBA writing, I am beginning to see both similarities and differences in the writing situations of MBA students and graduates.

Research methods include 1) interviewing managers and their subordinates, teachers and students; 2) collecting respond-aloud protocols from managers reviewing reports and from teachers reading students' case analyses and exams; 3) observing first and second-year classes; and compiling

an inventory of workplace reports and student assignments. Plans for next year include collecting respond-aloud protocols from writers reviewing their own work before they submit it to a manager or teacher so that I can gain an understanding of writers' perceptions of readers' expectations.

Jane Ledwell-Brown

Abstract: "Writing in the Bank of Canada"

Working in parallel with Aviva Freedman and Christine Adam, I've been examining the discourse practices of a group of analysts, managers, and executives at the Ottawa head office of the Bank of Canada. Specifically, I've been looking at how this group goes about inventing specialized knowledge needed by the executives for making policy decisions, knowledge referred to in the Bank as "written analysis."

In this research, I've drawn on the concept of "inscription," as developed by Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar in their study of laboratory scientists. Inscription refers to a staged process of knowledge production within a social group, a process in which empirical data reflecting the physical world are manipulated, interpreted, and transformed through a chain of texts into some final written form of knowledge. I've found this concept useful in exploring the social processes that underlie the creation of the written analysis required by the Bank's executives.

The data I've collected to this point suggest three broad notions about the process of inscription as it occurs in the Bank. First, as economic data are manipulated, interpreted and eventually converted into written analysis, the emerging discourse is gradually shaped towards specific organizational needs. As decision-makers, the Bank's executives require certain specific forms of written knowledge to support their policy discussions. The executives' expectations are communicated downward through the hierarchy, with the result that the analysts, as writers, and the managers, as reviewers, collaborate in producing a particular range of genres.

A second noteworthy aspect of the Bank's inscription process is the development of argumentation. The executives place great value on the heuristic power of argument, and expect the texts prepared for them to take and defend a definite position on an issue. Frequently, however, analysts' early drafts are descriptive in nature and stop short of taking a stance. When this is the case, the managers guide the analysts in shaping the discourse into the discipline-specific forms of argumentation that are expected.

The final aspect of the inscription process that I'll mention is the role of theoretical models in transforming economic data into written analysis. One example is a large macro-economic model called RDXF. This model, which is composed of approximately 400 interconnected mathematical equations, is a symbolic representation of the Canadian economy, with built-in assumptions about the influences of monetary policy. Such models provide the analysts, managers, and executives with shared conceptual frameworks that are central to the process of inventing the specialized written knowledge needed by the Bank.

Graham Smart

Inkshedding

Are the decision-makers of our society top dogs in a pyramid that invents models and discourse that determines what data are fed to them and then act accordingly? How would non-paradigmatic data get filtered up the channels of communication? How would deviant ideas get accepted? Or does the process ensure that only paradigmatically consistent data is incorporated into written analysis? Is document production the requirement of a social leader like it was in the Middle Ages or in the case of Hindu Brahmins?

Ron Irwin

Most enjoyable and intriguing. So much comes to mind to discuss but I'd like just to mention two things: Christine's "hand of the great spirit" image which I though was wonderful; and Graham's Bank executives talking about how economic analysis and decision-making occurs. These represent, perhaps, two extremes of views about knowledge-making. An interesting link between them, for me, is Marilyn Waring's book *If Women Counted*, which explores not only woman's but also environmental and minority groups' types of knowledge-making and decision-making. There are different forms of power, and there are profound questions of ethical, emotional and "perspective-based" bias involved in this whole fascinating study.

Ann Beer

Miscellaneous

Inkshed as Experience

I am not a victim of an oppressive conspiracy to silence me. I choose to remain silent. When I want to speak, if I want to speak, I will. I should have the right to do this.

The terms "insiders" and "outsiders" which I heard people using at Banff are not terms I would use about this community. What is a community if it can't be a relatively stable group of individuals whose shared interests create common bonds? It is this very stability which draws newcomers.

Instead of thinking of insiders versus outsiders it seems more useful to me to think of apprentices and masters. Any newcomer to any group becomes, for a time, an apprentice learner. There are ways to incorporate such learners without silencing the elders or casting the learners into the role of helpless incompetents.

Sandra Dueck

Virtual Realities for the 21st Century

"What we have here is an insurmountable opportunity"
— Yogi Berra

The call for papers for the San Diego Conference on College Composition and Communication asked respondents to identify twentieth-century problems and twenty-first century solutions. The essay that follows addressed the conference theme by describing some of the realities some of us face in the late twentieth-century and by suggesting solutions or actions we can take to change these realities. I know that we all face our own sets of constraints. What I document below may be particular to my own situation, but I hope that Inkshed readers will contribute their own perspectives in an effort to think about what lies ahead and how we might prepare ourselves and our students for the twenty-first century. For me, though, reality begins when I stub my toe as I enter my lecture hall.

Reality Number One: My classroom seats 400 people. CCCC guidelines suggest 20 students per room and 60 total per faculty member.

While it is true that my lecture hall holds 400, funding cuts for teaching assistants have curtailed enrollments to about 200 students. Nevertheless, I am required to lecture to a large mass of students at least once a week on how to write. I once tried to get them freewriting — really. It worked for a couple of weeks, but eventually the genre of the lecture reasserted itself and they simply refused to write. I felt like Peter Elbow in hell. It was awful. I did the only sane thing I could think of, under the circumstances, and limited the number of lectures and doubled the number of tutorial hours. In these tutorials, students met with teaching assistants to work through exercises, drafts, and peer reviews. They were encouraged to work collaboratively on assignments and provided with time to schedule meetings for group work in these tutorials. I regarded the tutorials as the valuable part of the course. In addition to lecturing and holding my own tutorial section as a demonstration section for the graduate teaching assistants, I was responsible for training, supervising, and evaluating them. This was one of my three courses for the term.

Reality Number Two: The first-year composition program has been systematically shrunk over the last 10 years. In 1980 each TA had one class of about 22 students; in 1992 each TA had two classes of about 22 students. In 1980 there were over 20 tutors in the writing centre; in 1992 there were 9 tutors in the writing centre.

I really don't know what to say about this except that the pattern is unmistakable. In a time of continually shrinking budgets, this program has proven to be vulnerable again and again and again to budget cuts.

Reality Number Three: Recent mandated cuts in undergraduate enrollments throughout the Arts faculty (and 10% of English department courses) resulted in disproportionate decreases to writing courses. Overall, 54% of the decreases came from cutting composition enrollments.

Part of the rationale for these cuts in composition courses came from the identification of them as "other," as the dark twin of literature. But funding is a more direct or immediate cause. The funding for composition courses consists mainly of money for teaching assistants, and that money

has been cut drastically. The only alternative to cutting enrollments in composition would have been to devote more professors (as opposed to graduate teaching assistants) to teaching first-year students from other disciplines.

Virtual Reality: First-year composition is not a viable option at this time or at this place.

This conclusion is, of course, not one shared by the experience of others in Canada. The programs in composition at the University of Winnipeg come to mind immediately. Winnipeg's program follows the traditional first-year design of ensuring that all students take some kind of writing course before they move on into their major areas of study. Winnipeg is remarkable because it follows up this instruction with a series of writing in the disciplines courses and with two writing centers staffed by faculty and peer tutors. Unfortunately, this program is an anomaly or exception to the rule. It deserves to be replicated at other Canadian institutions who share Winnipeg's non-traditional student body and mandate to provide access for non-traditional students. At Waterloo, however, composition (a term which has been constructed differently from rhetoric) is expendable.

Several factors — I hesitate to say causes — affect the status of composition in my department. First, many members of the department believe that writing does not belong in the department in any form. Composition is not recognized as part of the department self but as a "service" course for other departments. The department trades in it, but is not of it. Part of this self/other construction derives from the belief that writing is not an intellectual activity. Rather, it consists of grammar instruction and writing in the forms or modes of discourse. In the end, such a traditional (or current-traditional) definition of compositon contributes to a separation of composition from rhetoric and professional writing. The major program in rhetoric and professional writing avoids composition as a label because composition has "negative ethos."

Composition Evangelism

Such a situation is not unique, of course. In my own reading in composition (including articles by Michael Moore in early issues of *Inkshed*), I find similar discussions of narrow definitions given to writing, particularly within the area of writing across the curriculum. Many WAC directors spend much of their time selling their programs both within their own departments and in other departments across the university. In an effort to develop alternative forms of writing instruction, I developed a proposal for Writing Across the Curriculum at the request of the department chair. This proposal was also encouraged by the dean and vice-provost of the university. In addition to meeting these administrators, I met with the university-wide undergraduate affairs group and talked about the proposal at department meetings. This kind of public discussion and advocacy - even if it doesn't result in immediate change - seems to me to be a necessary kind of social action within universities if we are to change the realities mentioned at the start of this talk. We have to change attitudes about what writing is, how it happens, and who is responsible for developing and nurturing student abilities as writers. I don't think this is a particularly stunning statement, but it does provide a necessary step to what I see as the next set of actions we need to consider to change our realities.

Another kind of social action demands our attention: external contributions to public policy debate. In Canada, the report of the Association of Universities and Colleges by Stuart Smith provides such an invitation to public policy debate because of its comments on writing, the link between communication skills and the information economy, and the attitude that writing instruction is an integral part of the "value-added" by universities to students. In the U.S., the debate

over cultural literacy and increased accountability (read testing) by recent appointees to the Department of Education have also provided the opportunity for action.

In the upheaval caused by free-trade agreements between Canada and the US, among the countries of the European Commonwealth, and the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement, we have come to realize some of the changes resulting from the economic integration of North America, and indeed the world. We are entering the information economy, according to analysts such as Robert Reich (Harvard political economist, author of *The Work of Nations*, and advisor to President Clinton) and Nuala Beck (Canadian business consultant and author of *Shifting Gears: Thriving in the New Economy*). This era will combine large-scale economic adjustments such as the 50,000 or so jobs Sears is cutting and the 25,000 jobs IBM has done away with. In the province of Ontario alone, over 300,000 private sector jobs have been lost in the past three years (Ontario had 4 million jobs at the start of the recession, according to an article in the *Globe and Mail*, Wednesday, March 31, 1993, p. A 5). This reduction has taken place simultaneously with an increase in the use and value ascribed to information. Those who can create and manipulate information in a variety of media - not just print - will survive and even thrive in the face of economic upheaval. As teachers of composition, we will not be unaffected by these large-scale (tectonic?) shifts in the ground under our feet. In my own department I have seen - simultaneously - the emaciation of a large, traditional composition program juxtaposed with the establishment of a rhetoric and professional writing program. But these changes are not limited to my own institution either. I have also documented increased course offerings in writing and/or communication courses in various disciplines, particularly engineering, during these same difficult economic times.

In a recent survey of technical communication programs which I am involved in, respondents from many two- and four-year colleges and universities have identified many courses in technical communication. Because of incomplete results at this point I cannot speak with authority about what percentage of these schools have technical communication courses, but my impression from reading the results so far is that most have some form of this instruction. A survey I completed two years ago noted that most university-level engineering departments required their students to take some form of writing and communication course, and that more than half of these units offered their own course. Early returns from the current survey indicate that this trend continues.

Tea Leaves, Crystal Balls, and Composition Entrails

All of this leads me to wonder if we are seeing (overseeing?)- at least in Canada - the development of a two-tiered system. Help will remain scarce but available for the students at the very lowest levels of competency in our universities - in continuing education departments and second-language programs. Programs aimed at developing highly-skilled literacies - such as MA programs in technical communication, professional writing, and so on - will also continue to develop. Traditional composition programs - very expensive because of the volume of students who take these courses - will come under tremendous pressure as state and provincial budgets strain to find money in bad times. Nor will bad times and the budget crises that come with them go away with the current recession. Government borrowing for deficits in both the U.S. and Canada will ensure that pressure to downsize educational systems remains with us for the forseeable future.

What does it all mean? Large composition programs, particularly those with requirements for more than one semester of work (such as many in the U.S.), may well be rolled back to one course. Classes at Canadian universities will increase in size, and some courses may substitute computerized grammar and style programs for traditional classes. Many courses will simply be cancelled altogether.

What will fill the void? Writing Across the Curriculum programs, while not cheap and not a substitute per se for first-year composition courses, offer a kind of writing instruction particularly appropriate for the advanced literacies demanded by the information economy. These advanced literacies must be grounded in disciplinary knowledge and highly contextualized ways of communicating and knowing. They will be linked to subject or discipline specialties rather than required of all students, and advanced programs will have strictly limited enrollments. Courses will also be offered not to the traditional undergraduate student body but to businesses who ask for and pay for continuing education.

Twenty-First-Century Answers

The larger picture - at least in Canada - suggests that the "plastic" art of composition (Susan Miller's phrase) will not be eradicated but will metamorphose. Just as it is squeezed out of one institutional location, composition transmogrifies itself into another shape and being and appears elsewhere in the academy. Composition or writing instruction will not disappear, but in Canada it will probably come under increasing pressure, at least as an offshoot of the English department. Instead, we can expect continued growth in writing courses tied to specific disciplines, specific contexts.

As writing teachers, this diaspora of sorts marks a change from established disciplinary identities in English departments to less well-established identities in various disciplines. In very real terms, it will become increasingly harder to form groups of colleagues interested in issues about writing. For example, one campus I visited had four separate areas teaching writing of one sort or another, but precious little communciation took place among these groups. On my own campus it has proven difficult to identify — let alone locate — all those who teach writing. One of our biggest challenges in Canada, then, will be to get organized on our own campuses.

We also need to get organized on a national level in Canada. Too many disparate and uncoordinated groups compete for the attention of instructors. Inkshed provides a meeting ground for a wide variety of perspectives, but it (at this point anyway) doesn't serve as a national body or developer of policy. The Canadian Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts (CCTELA) focuses mainly on elementary and secondary school teachers. The Association of Community College and University Teachers of English (ACCUTE) doesn't even have a category for composition or rhetoric as an area of interest. The Canadian Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) again serves a narrow — though valuable — function. But there is no coordinating body, no body to issue policy statements, and no political voice.

What can Canadian teachers of writing do about this? I think the first step would be to bring together representatives of these various organizations to form a national group much like the NCTE. Membership in one of the constituent groups would automatically provide

membership in the national group. Even if these groups continue to meet separately, their voices must contribute to the national debate to effect change. Exactly how they could get together might involve any one of or some combination of the following methods:

- Electronic meetings, electronic mail, electronic journals and newsletters
- Biennial meetings, such as the National Writing Conferences held in Winnipeg
- Research publications such as Textual Studies in Canada
- Graduate education with a focus on rhetoric and composition

Some of these initiatives exist already in a loose network. My point is to affirm these as appropriate actions that would collectively make much more of an impact if they were coordinated and directed. To make a difference, we need to do the following:

- Get everybody together in one organization.
- Build a community/negotiate difference.
- Link political action (improved material conditions) to scholarly status.

These are the kind of actions I think will lead to twenty-first century solutions. We need to work at both the micro and macro, at both the local and national levels if we are to improve both the quality of our own lives and the quality of the education we can provide for our students.

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Deconstructing Media Texts by Reconstructing Them:

Evaluating Students in Media English in Secondary Schools

The central thrust in teaching Media English in Ontario high schools (and elsewhere) is teaching students to deconstruct media texts. Students are expected to learn how to analyze media in its various forms: a 15 second ad, a 30 minute sit-com, a documentary film, or a magazine ad. Students learn to deconstruct by identifying the codes and conventions employed, identifying and expressing the ideology that acts as the foundation of the media text, and determining how the media has created reality.

Evaluating students' ability to deconstruct texts has been problematic; I have found they experience great difficulty. They are all too often committed to what they are viewing and express a certain displeasure about the task. They resist the teacher, who they feel is spoiling their viewing.

In my Media English class, offered at a Senior General Level, we deconstruct media texts in a variety of ways. Sometimes the students work in small groups putting together their own media texts: they produce a videographic short, a stop-action animated short, a commercial, a documentary short, a magazine program, and a videofest.

I have used the videofest as a formal means to evaluate both their production and deconstructing abilities. For the videofest, my students piece together a short video production, roughly 26 minutes. The final product is compiled from the videos they and others have filmed of school events: athletic matches, course work, independent class projects, etc. The videofest is a class project, and the whole school is invited to watch the projects in the gymnasium. The videofest serves as the final examination of the course.

Every student has a task: advertising team, camera crew, computer editors (the computers run a paint program and a titler program), audio recording engineers, segment directors, and a producer who organizes and co-ordinates the program. Every student gets to edit part of the program. During the editing process the students serve as test audiences for the edited segments.

Another aspect of evaluation entails writing. Students are asked to write in their media log about the class production. They also write a critical review. I expect them to use the form that film (or television) critics use and in it to be able to tell what they created, how, why they created it, and to consider if their message(s) hit home. They are instructed to interview members of the audience, not their fellow classmates.

Including this activity in the evaluative scheme permits me to observe my students constructing and deconstructing their own media texts. Putting the videofest together involves *de*constructing the separate media texts and reconstructing a new text which serves a new purpose and a different audience. It offers considerable potential for evaluating the abilities of students in the spirit of the goals of Media Education.

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Call for Proposals: Writings • Genders • Cultures

McGill University, May 13, 14, 15, 1994

We are inviting proposals for a two-stage project. The first stage will be a conference at McGill University, May 13 - 15, 1994; the second stage of the project will be the proceedings of that conference, to be published as a special issue of *Textual Studies in Canada* (*TSC*) in November, 1995. The theme of both the conference and the special issue of *TSC* is Writings • Genders • Cultures. We are particularly interested in collaborative, interdisciplinary proposals, and we welcome sessions that will allow us to invent and explore new textual practices.

Although there will be an opportunity to revise conference presentations for publication, we encourage proposals that anticipate both stages of the project; that is, proposals for oral presentation first and publication second.

Conference

This will be a working conference, with presenters and participants actively involved in writing and speaking during and after scheduled sessions. (Texts composed individually and collaboratively during the conference and transcripts of group discussion will be considered for publication.)

Although we welcome proposals for formal papers, we are interested in a variety of session types: small group work, dialogues, debates, round tables, workshops, and so on. Proposals should indicate how presenters expect to involve participants. We hope, as well, to have poetry readings, graphic arts exhibits, and other non-traditional conference events.

Special issue of *TSC*

The editors of *TSC* have expressed great interest in turning the conference proceedings into a special issue of the journal. *TSC* has a broad and innovative mandate:

> *Textual Studies in Canada* provides a collaborative and interdisciplinary form in which researchers and teachers can address issues related to the study of texts within a Canadian context. We are interested in how texts are composed, read, and variously defined according to disciplinary and cultural presuppositions. Appropriate subjects include Canadian literature (including "non-fiction"), popular culture, rhetoric, composition, reading theory, translation, pedagogy, Canadian Studies, feminism, and critical theory. In keeping with *TSC*'s definition as a "collaborative" journal, we are particularly interested in receiving articles of joint or multiple authorship. (*TSC, 1,* 1991: iii).

The time between the conference and the special issue will allow presenters to prepare published versions of their conference sessions. Thus, for example, workshops that engage participants in writing and/or talking may become group-authored publications.

It may not be possible to publish *all* of the conference proceedings, and what is published will necessarily reflect the interests of *TSC* readers, as judged by the journal's editors. However, proposers should be ready to grant publication rights to *TSC*.

Proposals

Proposals should include the following:

-Names and addresses of proposer(s)
-Title of presentation
-Abstract of presentation (200 words), including some indication of how participants will be involved in the session.
-Plans for publication: a brief statement explaining how the proposers anticipate transforming the conference presentation into a publication.

Deadline: September 30, 1993

Send proposals to:

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Organizing Committee:

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