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IDEOLOGIES OF RESPONSE IN COMPOSITION CLASSROOMS

By

Matt Dowell

B.A., University of Dayton, 2004

M.A., University of Louisville, 2007

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of the

College of Arts and Sciences of the University of Louisville

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English

University of Louisville

Louisville, KY

August 2013

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A Dissertation Approved on

August 1, 2013

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My committee—Bruce Horner, Bronwyn Williams, Min-Zhan Lu, Susan Ryan, and Jane Fife—deserve special thanks for the feedback they have provided to this project. Bruce provided a critical but patient eye to my work. Min taught me new practices of reading and critical engagement that led to a better project. I could never appropriately thank Bronwyn for the guidance he provides to my teaching, scholarship, and WPA work. I owe him many baseball beers. Susan has provided a critical eye to my writing across two major projects, and Jane offered generous feedback to a project that built from her prior research.

The student and instructor participants in this study provided me not only access but also their time and their honesty. They gave legs to this project and for that I am thankful. I only wish I could thank them by name. A generous donation from the Bonnie Endowment allowed me to pay a small stipend to the student participants.

Joanna Wolfe provided suggestions early in my research. Stephen Schneider deserves honorary committee status for the countless drafts he read. Steve Smith taught me so much about the classroom and he continues to do so almost daily. The list of UofL faculty who contributed to this project includes David Anderson, Karen Hadley, Aaron Jaffe, Karen Kopelson, and Carol Mattingly. I am thankful for everyone's investment in this work and am confident the final project reflects these investments. The earliest seeds for this project were planted during my work at the University of Dayton's Write

Place. A special thanks to Pat Delamer for her very early mentorship and to Steve Wilhoit and Alex Tuss, S.M. for all they taught me.

Although she came to this project late in its development, Ann Ryan provided the time and support necessary to see the project to its conclusion. Maura Brady's input offered the jolt necessary to get this project over the hump. A note of appreciation as well to Eileen Ayers, Robert Baines, Michael Davis, Dan Roche, Brent Young, and many other LMC colleagues for their support and friendship.

Although their labor is often taken for granted, Linda Baldwin, Kareen Habeeb, and Lois Mullins were active behind the scenes answering procedural questions, helping with health insurance questions, and generally making my life easier. Their assistance allowed me to focus on the task at hand.

This project would have been impossible without the support of my parents, Terry and Mary Jane, who were my first and remain my most trusted respondents. My sister, Theresa, is not only my first best friend but also the best professional editor my limited funds could ever buy. My brothers, Greg and Mark, provided the necessary comic relief, often in the form of a certain *Jurassic Park* clip sent at just the right time. Caroline believed in me from the start of this project and her support never wavered. This project is better because of her love.

The list of people whose friendship, support, and response helped shape this project is longer than I have room to list. Dan, Alanna, Scott, and Trauman listened much more than was ever expected of them, and they continue to do so. Countless other UofL colleagues contributed to this project in many ways over many years. I worry that I will

forget a few if I begin to list names. I thank all of you, and I thank the friends and family who supported me throughout this project.

ABSTRACT
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Matt Dowell

August 1, 2013

This project responds to a neglected, over decade-old call from Jane Fife and Peggy O'Neill for greater consideration of classroom contexts in scholarship on teachers' commenting practices. Drawing on Raymond Williams's reconceptualization of ideology, I examine how response occurs within larger contexts including societal, programmatic, institutional, and disciplinary expectations, how teachers and students operate within and against these expectations, and how their beliefs and actions shape the production and reception of response. Deploying data collected through a mixed-methodology approach including classroom observation, interview, textual analysis, and protocol analysis, I examine three first-year writing classes, the instructors for these classes, and students enrolled in the observed courses.

Chapter 1 introduces the limitations of previous response scholarship and defines the various contexts that comprise the classroom context. Chapter 2 focuses on how the expectation for first-year writing as service shapes the production and reception of response. Chapter 3 examines how one instructor's use of a non-traditional grade alongside formative response and the student's reading of this response illustrate the complexities present between grading and response. Chapter 4 draws on the work of Elaine Lees, Louise Weatherbee Phelps, and Elizabeth Rankin to investigate how

response may extend formatively across multiple texts and contribute to what I call “a cumulative project.” In tracing this expansion of response across texts, I consider how the values and beliefs teachers and students have for response both facilitate and complicate such expansion. Chapter 5 concludes the project by demonstrating how the increased attention toward computer grading/response illustrates the central role response occupies in conversations about writing and writing improvement. I summarize the central role “the text” has played in the previous chapters and link this privileging of the text to these calls for computer grading. I argue that future response scholarship must be attentive to both the text and classroom contexts so as to demonstrate the full complexity of response to student writing.

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INTRODUCTION

Given the competing viewpoints held by members of our field—not to mention the countless pages of scholarship produced to present and hash out these viewpoints—Robert Connors’s statement that “most people” have historically perceived that the subject of “English composition” should be focused on “the single-minded enforcement of standards of mechanical and grammatical correctness” highlights the seeming disconnect between writing instructors and those without knowledge of the writing classroom and the specific but complex history that shapes the teaching of writing (112). Many of us surely have experienced that moment when we mention to a relative, friend, or stranger that we teach writing (or English, if we care to substitute the more traditional term) and, in turn, are asked to commiserate over students’ lacking ability when it comes to matters of grammatical and mechanical correctness. Although I do not know of any research that investigates the public’s perceptions of effective and appropriate teacher response, Connors’s tracing of the importance placed on grammatical and mechanical correctness speaks to what the public’s expectations might be for response, as does the common construction of the paper returned to the student, heavily covered in red ink.

The often cited “early” response scholarship is curious in that it seems to downplay this social expectation for response to student writing.¹ Elaine Lees, for example, focuses her attention almost exclusively on the options a teacher has when responding to the sample paper she offers in her text. Although she does account for correcting—the response practice most likely to align with the social expectation Connors outlines—she gives this specific response practice no greater or lesser attention than she provides to the other six she outlines, nor does she directly connect correcting with a dominant expectation. The closest she gets to any social commentary is when she notes that

students may come to assume from certain kinds of comments that learning to write is a matter of learning grammar or learning to describe papers in the way a teacher does or learning what makes a teacher want to write “Nice!” in the margin. (373)

Likewise, W. U. McDonald Jr. puts forth an eloquent argument for teachers to be open to “accepting and commenting on preliminary drafts as well as on the version to be graded,” yet, in doing so, he merely situates this call as growing from the “extensive discussion of the composing process” that had occurred “in professional journals” over the preceding years (“Revising” 167). Nancy Sommers, in the article most often cited for generating increased attention for response practices and research, scarcely acknowledges social

¹ I loosely define “early” scholarship as research published in the years directly preceding and following the 1982 publication of Nancy Sommers’s seminal article. Although I use the term “early” to designate the often cited research from this time period that significantly shaped the trajectory of research scholarship, this term is a misnomer of sorts. As demonstrated by works included in Richard Straub’s anthology, *Key Works on Teacher Response*, and the works cited in Richard Haswell’s “The Complexities of Responding to Student Writing”, research scholarship stretches back decades before this date.

forces beyond the teacher–student interaction, including the production of feedback by the teacher in response to student writing. Although she does, for instance, note the tendency that “students [may] follow every comment and fix their texts appropriately as requested” and the role that teachers’ “preconceptions” play in the locating of error in student writing, Sommers² offers such commentary on the context of teacher response without fully referencing the larger social context in which such response occurs (“Responding” 151, 154). The search for error, she tells her reader, can best be explained by a lack in “teacher-training” or by an unwillingness on the part of teachers to read student texts the same way they read literary texts (154).

A small sample of scholarship, such as that offered in the previous paragraph, merely hints at a trend; it does not prove that a trend exists. Published in 1984, Brooke Horvath’s “The Components of Written Response: A Practical Synthesis of Current Views” accounts for eighty-one articles that speak to how we might go about “respond[ing] productively to student writing” (136). Horvath’s work provides a succinct but telling look at the state of response scholarship in the years immediately surrounding the publication of Sommers’s article. Purposed with the larger goal of accounting for the scope of response scholarship, Horvath does directly address those assumptions that would underlie the “singlehanded” approach for which Connors accounts. For instance, she addresses the need to be cognizant of error’s presence in student writing, and she considers the teacher’s role as critic (139, 143). Yet, in addressing these issues, she places specific parameters on them. First, she excludes what she calls and we know as “summative evaluation” from her review, for she is only interested in response “intent on

² All references to Sommers in the text refer to Nancy Sommers. References to Jeff(rey) Sommers are presented as J. Sommers.

helping students improve their writing ability,” not response directed at “passing judgment” or “ranking” (137). Further, she frames her research when she posits that formative response is seen as “most beneficial” when the teacher views student writing as “a work-in-progress amenable to revision” (138). These parameters, in turn, shape how she discusses error and criticism. When discussing error, Horvath’s interest is not to highlight practices directed at the “simple avoidance” of error but, instead, those practices that help “cultivate” a “tolerance for error” in “both students and teacher” (139). Criticism, when understood as formative response to in-progress writing, must be balanced with the other roles, such as “motivator,” that a teacher brings to his/her reading of a student’s text (145).

This absence of direct mention of the dominant expectations for response should not be read as a shortcoming of the scholarship I’m tracing. In fact, it is not an absence demonstrated in these articles. Instead, these articles demonstrate the deeply embedded nature of these social forces and expectations. The very existence of this scholarship speaks, almost paradoxically, to both the strong influence of such dominant factors and the possibility that such factors can be resisted and, short of resistance, at least reshaped within specific contexts. The possibility for a “tolerance for error” speaks, in turn, to the possibility that teachers can respond to error in ways that view the purpose of such response as something other than feedback directed at the future “avoidance of error” (139). Likewise, a teacher’s ability to establish a balance between the roles of “motivator” and “critic” and, more broadly, the necessity for this teacher to more fully understand all the roles he/she plays as teacher and commenter, offers alternatives to the dominant expectation for correction, evaluation, and judgment. Furthermore, Sommers’s

critique of her peers for their use of product-centered response when responding to process writing announces the very real nature of a pedagogical approach other than the correction of written products (154). Yet, at the same time, the tensions teachers experience when responding to student writing speak to the very conflicts that result because of the intersection of dominant expectations and alternative possibilities.

This project examines the role ideologies play in the production and reception of response to student writing. Because an instructor's response is directly related to the individual text authored by a student, the task is presumed to be tailored to the individual text and/or student. This relationship among student, text, and teacher as illustrated in written comments and other forms of response,³ only begins, however, to account for the way in which response operates in and as a result of larger ideological contexts. A greater understanding of the relationship between response and the classroom/broader contexts in which the response is produced and received will help forward the three-decade conversation on commenting practices in rhetoric and composition by accounting for how the commenting practices used in a particular classroom account for and align with those ideologies shaping the classroom. By further exploring how response and classroom contexts intersect as well as how response is constructed and read within these contexts, we can better understand the challenges surrounding the use of instructor feedback as a way of improving student writing.

³ As I discuss in the next chapter, this project was originally designed to focus on written comments. The focus broadened beyond written comments as a result of the attention given to the classroom context. Within this project, I use "response" as the preferred term. To create stylistic variety, I do, at times, substitute feedback and commenting. I intend these three terms to do the same work. Written feedback is specifically referenced as "comments" or "written comments."

Response and Ideology

The absence of considerable attention given to these dominant expectations further highlights the role that social formations and relationships play in the creation of these alternatives and, at times, the development of these alternatives into privileged practices within particular communities. In his article on revision, McDonald references “professional journals and meetings” to help situate his suggestions within a larger disciplinary conversation (“Revising” 167). In an earlier article, “Grading Student Writing: A Plea for Change,” he more specifically acknowledges how “discussion at the annual CCCC meeting and in both *College English* and *College Composition and Communications* [sic] have focused on the process of writing perhaps more than on its product” (154). In her article, Sommers offers a particular orientation. By orientation, I mean her use of the plural first person to acknowledge her membership within the group she’s addressing. For instance, she acknowledges the tendency to search for error by connecting how it intersects with the way “we read with our preconceptions and preoccupations” (154). She argues that such practices must change, and it is “we” who must “reverse this approach” (154). Such a reversal, she explains, will include exchanging “finding errors or showing students how to patch up parts of their texts” with “sabotag[ing] our students’ convictions that the drafts they have written are complete and coherent” (154).

Sommers’s use of the plural first person can be read as presuming a homogeneity of values and belief within her audience. As I will describe in greater extent later in this chapter, Sommers articulates a social structure known as a formation, which is a recognizable entity that operates within—and often against—dominant values and

beliefs. Writing in 1982, C. W. Griffin argues that the emerging response theory “will be concerned with three major components: our orientations, our verbal responses, and our students’ reactions to our responses” (296). Griffin never specifically defines what he means by orientations, although he lists such orientations alongside “experiences [and] preferences” and acknowledges that orientations, experiences, and preferences help us “account for our differences in reading student papers” (297). Furthermore, he accounts for the experiences teachers bring to their reading and their perceptions of error by examining what then-recent scholarship said about the influences that affect teacher response.

Griffin’s idea of “orientations” is further fleshed out later in the decade by Chris Anson in “Response Styles and Ways of Knowing.” Anson’s work extends Griffin’s work in that, like Griffin, he considers the influences that shape teachers’ reading and response practices. Specifically, Anson calls on William Perry’s developmental schema to illustrate how teachers’ response to student writing “reflect[ed] different ways of interpreting the world” (333). After tracing out the differing response practices of dualistic, relativistic, and reflective responders, Anson notes that the implications from his study move “beyond the Perry scheme” and “into the wider and more varied terrain of instructional ideology” (354). Borrowing from Normand Bernier’s work, Anson defines instructional ideologies as

the integrated patterns of ideas and beliefs that inform teachers’ decisions—what sort of syllabus they design or which textbook they choose, what kinds of assignments they require, how they respond to students and their work, even how they physically arrange the tables and

chairs in their classrooms, and where they place themselves in relation to their students. (354)

As Anson's definition demonstrates, these ideologies account for decisions that can be attributed to the individual teacher *and* what he calls "the integrated patterns of ideas and beliefs" from which these decisions extend and to which they respond (354). The conjunction "and" is important here because it helps acknowledge the interconnectedness between the values, beliefs, and expectations privileged by the individual and the "system of shared group values" that very much inform the individual's values, beliefs, and expectations. According to Bernier and Jack Williams, ideologies are

integrated patterns of ideas, system of beliefs, or a "group consciousness" which characterizes a social group. Such a pattern or system may include doctrines, ideals, slogans, symbols, and directions for social and political action. Ideologies also include objectives, demands, judgments, norms, and justifications, and in this sense they are value-impregnated systems of thought which may be perceived as sacred. (27)

Anson, in his application of Bernier's theory of ideology to argue for greater attention directed toward instructional ideologies, contends that if we want to better understand the production and reception of response, then we must study not merely the student or the teacher but also the relationship present between teacher and student. Bernier refers to this relationship as "the process labeled *teaching-learning*" (292; italics original). By focusing on this process involving both student and teacher, Bernier argues, we can

account for not only the “transaction” between teacher and student but also the “inner processes of individuals in face-to-face interaction and their external activities” (292).

Although I have turned to Anson’s application of Bernier’s work to situate my project, I call on a different theory of ideology to establish the project’s foundation.

Anson acknowledges a common tension present in scholarship extending from different theories of ideology. “Although ideologies are usually seen as individual beliefs, expectations, or attitudes,” Anson writes, “they are also, at some level, part of a system of shared group values” (358). This recognition of the shared group values reflects Bernier and Williams’ definition that centers on the internalization of a “pattern of ideas ... [characterizing] a social group” that, in turn, “become referents for behavior” for the individual (27; Bernier 293). In establishing the relationship between the individual and the social group—a relationship Anson notes exists “at some level”—we erase, at least to some degree, both the multiplicity of social groups that an individual may identify with and the differing values and beliefs that may be present within what we would identify as a single social group (358). Horvath problematizes the possibility for the development of a single school of thought regarding what counts as effective comments by turning to Richard Fulkerson’s “four preeminent contemporary theories of composition” to illustrate how “one’s notion of good prose, hence one’s pedagogy,” results from which theory the teacher aligns with (141). As James Berlin demonstrates in his 1985 work, “Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class,” these differing pedagogies do not result from the instructor choosing from among static options but as a result of “choices” relating to the “economic, social, political, and cultural” (478). The pedagogical practices used by an individual instructor result not from the selection of a particular pedagogical model but

choices on the part of the instructor that respond to dominant social (economic, political, and cultural) factors and that result in practices that extend from the teacher's "orientation" in relation to these factors.

This project, therefore, extends from Anson's reading of Bernier's definition of ideology as well as Berlin's work with ideology. In Chapter 1, I connect Bernier's call for greater attention to the "face-to-face interaction we label *teaching-learning*" with a decade-old call from Peggy O'Neill and Jane Fife for greater attention to the classroom context within the study of response (292; italics original). Bernier's conception of the teacher-student transaction includes attention to both the "inner processes" these participants bring to "the face-to-face interaction" and "the external activities" they engage in as part of the face-to-face interaction (292). The study of the production and reception of response to student writing responds to Bernier's call while also reformulating it to the specific features of the writing classroom. I position response as a particular form of interaction between teacher and student that, in different iterations, represents or replaces the traditional conception of face-to-face interaction. Teacher-student conferences, when compared with written comments, fit more firmly into what we might view to be face-to-face interaction. Yet, given that written feedback is meant to allow for communication between teacher and student that mirrors the feedback that would be provided in face-to-face discussion of the student's writing, I consider it to very much fall within the instructor-student interactions that we should study, and I account for this interaction through the terms "production of response" and "reception of response." As these terms demonstrate, the idea of response operating as a specific type of interaction necessitates our understanding of these two different practices—or what

Bernier calls “external activities” (292). These external activities are, however, mediated by the “inner processes” of the participants (292). As Anson puts it in his study of teacher response practices,

although schemes of instructional ideology vary considerably ..., they all strongly suggest that teachers’ underlying beliefs about why, what, and how students should write are powerful determinants of their actual behaviors. (“Response” 355)

Anson, in putting forth a call for greater attention to instructional ideologies, acknowledges the shortcomings of his own study. One shortcoming he accounts for is his inattention to “the rich interactions that occur between teachers and students in the fuller context of instruction” (355). Said differently, the desire to account for the instructional ideologies at play in a given classroom remains incomplete if we also do not account for those ideologies the student brings to and calls on in the classroom. Accounting for how these ideologies influence the production and reception of response could be accomplished through the creation of what Bernier calls “ideological maps” (292). Yet, if our desire is to better understand the role of ideologies in the production and reception of response in particular classrooms, then the classroom itself emerges as a fitting site for research. The classroom becomes a necessary site for research because it—and the practices engaged in this classroom space—functions as both the shared context in which student and teacher interact and the specific context from which student texts are composed and responded to.

This classroom context, therefore, is a site for ideological conflict. Both participants—the student and the teacher—enter the classroom with beliefs about the

purposes and practices of writing, teaching, and education. Connors's work outlines the many historical developments and tensions that have influenced how writing is taught at the college level, including the introduction of coeducation, the role textbooks play in writing instruction, the contested institutional identity of composition, social expectations for who teaches writing, and concerns regarding the workload faced by writing instructors. Described broadly, these developments and tensions pose questions of how writing has been viewed, described, defined, taught, assigned, and assessed. Although these historical occurrences surely shape the teaching of writing and they do so in the interest of culturally privileged expectations for writing, we cannot assume that these factors shape current classrooms equally. What is needed then is a theory of ideology that best illustrates the role tradition plays in the maintaining of dominant values, the process through which these dominant values are communicated, and the possibility for opposition to such dominant values and beliefs.

Connors's historical tracing illustrates how the teaching of writing has always occurred within dominant social and academic expectations. Yet, these dominant expectations are not absolute. In *Marxism and Literature*, Raymond Williams offers an approach to ideology that allows for a better understanding of how dominant values and beliefs circulate in society, including how alternatives to these dominant values and beliefs are generated. Williams begins his reimaging of ideology by switching the focal point from ideology to what he calls "the hegemonic." The limitation of the term ideology, he argues, rests in the many different, but always inexact, uses that theorists have put forth for it. The majority of these constructions are problematic, Williams contends, because of how they attempt to formulate "separable 'ideas' or 'theories'" and,

in doing so, detach meanings and values from the “material social process” from which the ideologies emerge and through which they are communicated and transformed (70, 62). In introducing hegemony as a replacement for ideology, Williams puts forth an argument for how hegemony offers a theoretical improvement to not only ideology but also culture:

For “hegemony” is a concept which at once includes and goes beyond two powerful earlier concepts: that of “culture” as a “whole social process” in which men define and shape their whole lives; and that of “ideology” in any of its Marxist senses, in which a system of meanings and values is the expression or projection of a particular class interest. (108)

The greatest value of hegemony, according to Williams, is that hegemony accounts for not only “ideas and beliefs” but also “the whole lived social process as practically organized by specific dominant meanings and values” (109). It is the accounting for the actual social process through which dominant meanings and values circulate that both prevents the abstracting of systems of beliefs and acknowledges the possibility of alternatives to the dominant. Williams shifts from hegemony as a noun to the adjective form, “the hegemonic,” to illustrate that whatever is seen as dominant is, at the same time, “never either total or exclusive” (113).

The acknowledgment that the dominant is neither total nor exclusive is not to undermine the dominant’s strength because the dominant is the force around which “the whole lived social process” is “practically organized” (109). At the same time, this acknowledgement not only facilitates a discussion of how “alternative” and “oppositional” values and beliefs come to be but also how perspectives of dominant and

alternative beliefs can differ within what Williams would call “cultures” (122). Williams terms such alternative values, practices, and beliefs as “emergent” and “residual” (121–127). These terms offer greater clarity when discussed theoretically because a practical understanding depends on establishing the emergent or residual value “only in relation to a full sense of the dominant” (123). Although Williams positions the residual as speaking back to “earlier social formations,” he regroups the emergent and the residual in distinguishing each from the dominant when he argues that “no mode of production and therefore no dominant social order and therefore no dominant culture ever in reality includes or exhausts all human practice, human energy, and human intention” (125).

What, though, explains the nontotalizing nature of the dominant such that space opens for residual and emergent values and beliefs? Williams traces this aspect of the dominant to a reworking of tradition. In most cultural thought, tradition is viewed stagnantly as “the surviving past” (115). Tradition, according to Williams, is much more than merely that from the past that lays the foundation for the present; tradition, much more consequentially, is an “active shaping force” (115). Specifically, tradition actively shapes the present because social actors operationalize the present through the selection of values, beliefs, and practices from the past. Yet, this process of selection—because it is just that—both positions that which is privileged and maintains the possibility for the “recovery of discarded areas” and the creation of new oppositional forces that borrow from alternative traditions (116). Within this construction, institutions, crudely imagined, become the site through which the selective tradition is communicated, and formations are understood to be intercessions into the hegemonic that complicate this selective tradition as a result of “specialized practice” (119). It is an oversimplification, however,

to argue that institutions support the hegemonic while formations provide opposition because the very nature of institutions—which include schools, churches, and “places of work”—is such that they include various contradictions (118). That said, these institutions are very much the location through which hegemonic values are communicated and learned (117). The work of formations, then, often becomes the disruption of these hegemonic values communicated in these more structured, more defined institutions (119).

Earlier in this chapter, I claimed that Sommers’s use of the plural first person represented her position within what I called a formation. Because of the operation of dominant values as an active social force, the values and practices of our discipline have always functioned within and often against dominant values regarding expectations for instruction, for who teaches writing, and for where writing is positioned in the university. Early response scholarship emerged at a time in which writing instructors were focusing, in greater degrees, on process writing, formative evaluation, and the role of the social in writing (and writing instruction). These developments can themselves be seen as formations because they emerged from “specialized practice” and they interceded in recognizable institutions, including the academy and the discipline of English (Williams 119). Sommers’s use of the plural first person highlights the population most attuned to these disciplinal developments, and, through this selection, she also highlights the oppositional nature of the practices she calls for toward the always active dominant values and beliefs. Yet, it is surely an oversimplification to position any particular formation as fully oppositional to the dominant.

This oversimplification operates on at least three levels. First, to establish the formation as oppositional is to gloss over the always active role that dominant values and beliefs play within any social process. Second, to establish any particular formation as oppositional is to assume homogeneity within the formation that elides the contradictions and points of conflict present in any social grouping. Third, and related to the previous point, such contradictions result because of the various affiliations a person possesses to multiple social constructions. Williams's complication of ideology and culture via the reworking of both as "the hegemonic" highlights the plural nature of social processes and interactions. Thus, while the actions of social participants are influenced by the privileged values and practices of the individual "social groups" to which a person belongs, the multiplicity of "social groups" or "cultures" to which an individual belongs introduces new values and beliefs across groups.

Emergent values and beliefs that develop as a result of formations can, within the social groups from which they emerge, take on a degree of dominance within these groups. As my literature review will demonstrate, the assumptions underlying much response scholarship in our field reflect the values and beliefs privileged within our discipline. Take, for example, Horvath's exclusion of summative evaluation from her literature survey. Although summative response remains a shaping influence in response scholarship because of the role of summative evaluation as a foundational practice in the academy, response scholars have predominately approached summative response as a point of nuisance, as a practice to be resisted, or as a requirement that must be rethought. In a good portion of this scholarship, summative evaluation is addressed via exclusion, such as with Horvath's article. The scholarship on response, when viewed collectively,

represents its own form of hegemony: the scholarship emerged as a response to dominant expectations for correction, evaluation, and judgment, and, through the reification of what were assumed to be shared values, the scholarship grew to speak to what is taken to be what writing instructors privilege as “best practices” for responding to student writing. Yet, as both Berlin’s work with ideology and Fulkerson’s examination of differing “theories of composition” demonstrate, our very responses to those always active “dominant and hegemonic pressures” are themselves contradictory and competing (Williams 115).

As Williams’s construction of “the hegemonic” suffers from the same limitations understood to be present in any heuristic, tracing out the privileged values and beliefs in our own field merely provides a starting point through which to study the actual social processes through which values and beliefs are communicated and contested. Our research attention, therefore, must be directed toward “the lived social process” in which such communication and contestation occurs (Williams 109). I argue in agreement with Anson and Bernier that we can only fully understand the role of ideologies in education (and in writing instruction) by closely examining the teacher–student interaction within the educational classroom. The classroom becomes a valuable site of research because it is an identifiable location positioned within a recognizable institution that very much forwards dominant expectations for writing and writing instruction while also being actively reshaped, to varying degrees, by emergent and residual beliefs. The social process that occurs in the writing classroom happens because of the participation in the educational process by teachers and students. And, as Berlin establishes, these

participants bring with them competing claims “of value” resulting from “social, political, and cultural” factors (477).

The value, then, of examining the production and reception of response within specific classroom contexts is not only two-fold, but also two-directional. By paying attention to the classroom context, we avail ourselves of those social processes that inform the production and reception of response, and by paying attention to the production and reception of response, we demonstrate the consequential role language occupies as the medium through which values and beliefs are communicated in this particular space. Williams’s critique of the majority of work on developing theories of ideology centers on the separation of “ideas and material reality” (59). Because the classroom operates as the space in which students and teachers interact, it functions then as a starting point through which to understand how beliefs about writing and the teaching of writing shape, respond to, and engage material reality. As the literature review in the following chapter demonstrates, our field’s extensive corpus of response scholarship provides a strong endorsement of specific practices, yet it most often has done so through the decontextualization of response from the specific classrooms in which response is produced and received. This study, therefore, not only furthers prior response scholarship by using this scholarship as a lens through which to study specific writing classrooms but also, in demonstrating the results of this engagement, it provides an alternative to the dominant research practices most often used to study response.

Chapter Descriptions

I begin Chapter 1 by accounting for popular lines of inquiry in response scholarship, including teachers' roles as respondents, specificity, mode and focus, response as conversation, and students' opinions on response. In examining these focal points, I not only provide a review of the literature, but I also demonstrate how this scholarship has been generated with little attention to the classroom context. I then connect this lack of classroom attention to Sandra Murphy's criticism of best practices and demonstrate how this inattention to the classroom space has resulted because of the privileged research methods used in our field to study response. Reiterating the value of a call put forth by Jane Fife and Peggy O'Neill around the turn of the twenty-first century for classroom-based research that moves beyond the written comment, I spend the second half of the chapter arguing for the value of ethnographic methods for the study of response. I conclude the chapter by outlining my methods and introducing the study's teacher and student participants.

In Chapter 2, I investigate the consequences for the production and reception of response that result from the intersection of students' views of response as deficiency correction, the expectation that writing instruction operates in a service capacity, and the roles and goals instructors privilege in their writing classrooms. Specifically, I examine two instructor–student interactions to illustrate how these various factors shape the production and reception of response. The first interaction centers on Megan's expectation for directive, corrective response and how her expectation misaligns with Bertrand's view of himself as a writing coach.⁴ The second interaction centers on Dean's

⁴ All names are pseudonyms chosen by the individual participants.

expectation that English 102 should focus on the “forms” of writing privileged inside and outside the university and how this expectation differs from Connie’s use of the I-Search classroom genre. By examining these instructor–student relationships, I illustrate how writing instructors function within and against service expectations such that their pedagogies become “service but also something else.” In the chapter’s second half, I expand my attention to the intersections between writing instruction and service ideologies by investigating both Bertrand’s worry that his switch to conference response will not be sanctioned by the writing program and the role that available time plays in all three instructors’ classroom decisions, including the production of response.

In Chapter 3, I examine the intersection of response and grading. This examination centers on Jane’s decision to withhold a grade from Ashley’s first paper because of citation issues she located in the paper. I argue this withheld grade, what Jane called a “no grade” (NG), shaped how Ashley read, responded to, and applied the discursive feedback she received. Calling on Beth McCoy’s reading of paratexts as functioning within asymmetrical power relations, I account for how different types of comments, including alphabetic grades and discursive comments, operate in a complex web of purposes, values, and expectations.

Whereas Chapter 3 focuses narrowly on one teacher and one student, I broaden my focus in Chapter 4 by analyzing the assignment sequences in both Bertrand’s class and Jane’s class. My central focus in this chapter is what Louise Weatherbee Phelps terms the question of how an instructor circumscribes a text in the act of reading and responding to student writing. I extend Phelps’s concept of textual circumscription by examining how class design shapes response. Applying Elaine Lees’s idea that response

can function to create a new assignment for students, I consider how the sequenced nature of the assignments in Bertrand's class and Jane's class both facilitates and complicates formative response directed at the current text, a revision of the current text, and development toward the cumulative semester project. I include students' voices to demonstrate how students receive and make use of such formative response. By examining how response relates to a plural text, I unsettle the tradition in our field to study response in relation to either the singular text or the cumulative portfolio while also demonstrating the lasting dominance of the singular text in the writing classroom.

In the final chapter, I consider how the recent push for computer grading of writing grows out of the lasting dominance the text, perceived to be a singular entity, in writing education. I account for this dominance by tracing the text's role in many of the tensioned relationships between students and teachers and teachers and institutions presented previously in this project. I then argue that we need to both increase our attention to the text in our response scholarship and generate scholarship that illustrates the valuable and meaningful interactions that occur among students, teachers, classroom spaces, and texts. Although the idea that we should pay more attention to the text may seem paradoxical given Fife and O'Neill's call for attention beyond comments as texts, I argue that this project demonstrates the central role the values, assumptions, and expectations teachers and students have relating to "the text" play in production and reception of response. Therefore, I argue, we need to better understand these assumptions and expectations for the text if we want to better understand the production and reception of response, including the creation and revision of best practices.

CHAPTER ONE

RESPONSE SCHOLARSHIP AND THE (MISSING) CLASSROOM CONTEXT

Near the Introduction's conclusion, I established the disparity between what we have come to know as best response practices and our field's lack of scholarship that accounts for response practices within the specific classroom context in which response is produced and received. In this chapter, I examine this disparity further through an analysis of the large amount of response scholarship that does exist in our field. In her seminal article, Sommers writes, "For it seems, paradoxically enough, that although commenting on student writing is the most widely used method for responding to student writing, it is the least understood" ("Responding" 148). Sommers does not extend the comparison between commenting and other response methods, so it remains unclear what other response practices she is considering and how she sees these alternative response practices as being more understood than written comments. In fact, in the first line of her article, Sommers uses the compound phrase "responding to and commenting on student writing" to describe the teaching activity that "consumes the largest portion of our time" ("Responding" 148). As I established in an introductory footnote (see page 5), this project began as a consideration of ideology's role in the production and reception of written comments but expanded to also include conferencing because of the practices I witnessed in the observed classrooms.

The considerable corpus of response scholarship has allowed us to establish a greater understanding of the practices, challenges, and limits of response (including written response). Furthermore, given how this research has found its way into materials often used for teacher training (Bean; Lindemann; Straub “Guidelines”), I would argue that we have prioritized responding to student writing such that Sommers’s criticism regarding the lack of attention to response in “teacher-training” and “in writing workshops” no longer applies—or not to the degree it once did (154). This considerable attention paid to response to student writing in our research has led to immeasurable gains in the knowledge that circulates about teachers’ goals and methods for response, students’ perceptions of response, and, to a lesser degree, students’ application of the response they receive. Yet, as this chapter demonstrates, this scholarship has often been developed apart from or tangential to the classrooms in which response is produced and received.

In establishing the need for attention to the classroom context, I turn to a turn-of-the-millennium call put forth by Jane Fife and Peggy O’Neill¹ for a reconfiguration of our research methodologies. Among other purposes, this literature review is intended to demonstrate the lasting role that the “early” response scholarship discussed in the Introduction has had on the trajectory of response scholarship. Sommers and Brannon and Knoblauch, through arguments built from empirical research, noted response trends, including what they saw to be troubling developments. Horvath, through the analysis of then-recent scholarship, painted a broader picture of the dominant research trends

¹ The three articles I cite from Fife and O’Neill were published under different name arrangements (Mathison-Fife and O’Neill (1997), O’Neill and Fife (1999), and Fife and O’Neill (2001)). For readability, I use the most recent construction, Fife and O’Neil, in my prose and include parenthetical clarification to direct the reader to the correct citation.

resulting from and shaping toward scholarly attention directed at response practices. A central theme that emerges from this “early” scholarship is the challenge faced by instructors to provide more effective response within the social forces that shape the writing classroom. This theme appears in both Sommers’s claim that the response she studied demonstrated “a confusion of process and product” and Brannon and Knoblauch’s central argument that teachers should not take control over their students’ writing (“Responding” 154). These calls for teachers to avoid appropriating students’ texts proved to be a sticking point in subsequent research. Such an argument pits the dominant view of the teacher as expert and evaluator against views of teacher roles, such as coach and reader, that the scholarship says composition researchers and teachers should privilege. For example, the “best practice” of providing students with formative response and/or praise collides with students’ preference for their teacher to assume the primary role of evaluator, an occurrence well-documented in response scholarship (Auten “How;” Dohrer; Hayes and Daiker; O’Neill and Fife; Richardson).

As this literature review demonstrates, the tensions present in the production and reception of response result from not only the differing expectations held by instructors and students but also the countless social forces that influence this production and reception. This is to say that response scholarship has, from its inception, been centrally interested in how response functions and how this functioning is shaped by differing values and beliefs for the teaching of writing and for response to student writing. Lees’s work with roles and the scholarship on roles that followed is central to understanding how response functions in competing social contexts. Yet, this attention to the functioning of response within and in response to social forces has been tempered by the

predominant study of comments as “textual artifacts” removed from the contexts in which these comments circulate (O’Neill and Fife 48). Furthermore, a significant portion of response research data has been manufactured through the use of hypothetical and artificial contexts such that the findings do not extend from activities occurring in real writing classrooms. As a result of these research biases, the attention given to understanding how response results from and responds to specific social forces and contexts through the study of students’ preferences for response has produced valuable findings, but these findings are not attached to the material classroom processes in which the response is produced and received. Building from arguments put forth by Fife, O’Neill, and Sandra Murphy, I not only establish the need to account for classroom contexts when studying the production and reception of response but also demonstrate how the classroom, as a focal point for response research, offers a material location through which we can come to understand how values, attitudes, and beliefs shape the production and reception of response.

Research on Roles, Focus, Modes, and Specificity

Judging from citations in later articles, Sommers’s contention that teachers’ comments could be “rubber-stamped” from one student’s paper to another student’s paper and Brannon and Knoblauch’s distinction between directive and facilitative response greatly shaped our understanding of response and the research focuses we have brought to its study (Sommers “Responding” 152). As both contributions illustrate the duality of response as both a textual product that appears on the page and a contributor to a communicative process, it is important to establish how response scholarship quickly

moved away from the study of response as a matter of form while, at the same time, acknowledging the significant amount of scholarship directed toward categorizing response into various taxonomies. In her 2006 reflection on her seminal article, Sommers acknowledges that “her first impulse when researching the topic of response was to imagine a hierarchy of effective and ineffective comments that could be isolated, identified, even memorized by new writing teachers” (“Across” 248). The conversation shifted over time from comments and hierarchies to the examination of practices and taxonomies. This shift allows for more attention to be paid to how comments function, even if the analysis does not always include the functioning of comments within the classroom contexts in which the comments are produced and read.

Writing first in 1981, Knoblauch and Brannon critique prior response literature because of its “habitual focus ... on types or modes of commentary” (“Teacher” 1). Wanting to more fully account for the “attitudes, postures, and motives” that instructors communicate in their responses, they introduce the now well-known terms “directive” and “facilitative” to describe two approaches teachers can engage when responding to student writing. On the surface, these terms distinguish between response that functions as “prescriptions” and response “designed to preserve the writer’s control of the discourse ... and suggest the possibility of negotiation between writer and reader” (*Rhetorical* 125, 128). Yet, because of how this distinction cuts to the heart of the socially situated expectations for response and the roles teachers assume when responding, the concepts of directive and facilitative response speak directly to the primary tensions present in the response situation. These categories, therefore, also speak back to research on teacher control and roles. Building from Lees’s categorization of the different roles teachers can

assume when responding, scholars have made arguments for teachers to occupy roles that extend beyond the traditional roles of judge, evaluator, or critic (Danis; Dohrer; Fuller; Moxley “Teachers”). Joseph Moxley, in “Teachers’ Goals and Methods of Responding to Student Writing,” finds that 80% of instructors “perceive their role to be that of a coach (instead of a judge) when they grade papers” (19).

Knoblauch and Brannon’s categorization of response as facilitative or directive closely mirrors Nina Ziv’s terminology of “implicit cues” and “explicit cues.” In her case study research, Ziv found that her students “responded favorably” to explicit cues “about how they could strengthen or reorganize the ideas they had already formulated in their papers” (372). In more recent scholarship, Marilyn Ruth Sweeney found that basic writing students benefit from receiving both “inductive” and “deductive” teacher feedback, and D. R. Ransdall found that inexperienced writers struggle with applying facilitative response and, therefore, benefit from receiving directive response. Although these scholars use different language to describe types of response, Richard Straub would fault all for “look[ing] at response in dualistic ways” (“Concept” 224). Working to move our field beyond these dualistic ways of describing response, Straub introduces the terms “focus” and “mode” as a means to infuse greater nuance into how we categorize and understand different commenting types.

Responding directly to Knoblauch and Brannon’s terminology, Straub argues that we need new ways of approaching the “the concept of control” so as to more fully distinguish between “varieties of directive and facilitative” response (“Concept” 223). First in *Twelve Readers Reading*, which he coauthored with Ronald Lunsford, and then in “The Concept of Control on Teacher Response: Defining the Varieties of ‘Directive’ and

‘Facilitative’ Commentary,” Straub puts forth the terms “focus” and “mode” as a lens through which to establish distinctions that go beyond a belief that “teacher commentary is either directive or facilitative, authoritative or collaborative, teacher-based or student-based” (“Concept” 224). Focus names the “the area of writing” the comment pays attention to, whereas mode describes how the comment is “presented” on the page (233). Although both terms are important, mode holds special importance because of how it explicitly extends from Knoblauch and Brannon’s claim that greater attention needs to be paid to “attitudes, postures, and motives” and not merely form (“Teacher” 2). In introducing the concept of mode in *Twelve Readers Reading*, Straub and Lunsford state two complementary “assumptions” on which they position the term:

First, the form of a comment strongly influences how the comment functions and what it comes to mean. Second, the form of a comment is not enough: Any analysis of how comments function must consider not only the form of the comments, but also their content and voice. (166)

Through the examination of responses produced by prominent composition scholars to decontextualized student papers, Straub and Lunsford establish seven focus categories and ten mode categories. How teachers apply these different modes and points of focus, they claim, results “in different degrees of control over student writing” (166). Expanding on this point in his follow-up article on teacher control in response to student writing, Straub offers broad findings on the textual analysis he and Lunsford completed:

Generally speaking, the more comments a teacher makes on a piece of writing, the more controlling he or she will likely be. The more a teacher

attends to a text, especially local matters, and tries to lead the student to produce a more complete written product, the more likely he is to point to specific changes and thus to exert more control over the student's writing. The more a teacher attends to the student's writing processes and the larger contexts of writing, and hears his comments to the student behind the text and her ongoing work as a writer, the less likely he is to point to specific changes or to assume control over the student's writing. ("Concept" 234)

Straub's language of mode and focus, although intended as a tool for "charting a teacher's" commenting tendencies, also proves useful for charting tendencies and findings in response scholarship (233). Numerous scholars have examined the limitations of response focused primarily or exclusively on grammatical correction (Danis; Dohrer; Dragga "Effects" and "Praiseworthy;" Moxley "Teachers"). Likewise, a significant amount of scholarship argues that instructors should focus on global issues first before moving to local matters (Brannon and Knoblauch; Moxley "Teachers"; Straub "The Student" and "Students"). Arguments for praise's importance as a correction to the dominant position evaluative feedback occupies (Daiker; Dragga "Praiseworthy;" Zak) have been supported by empirical research that demonstrates stronger writers appreciate praise (Dragga "Effects"). These findings on praise, however, become less certain when placed alongside students' opinion on response, which I examine in the next section. As presented earlier, calls have been put forth for the expansion of the roles teachers assume when responding beyond the traditional roles of judge, evaluator, or critic (Danis; Dohrer; Fuller; Moxley "Teachers"). Perhaps the point on which the majority of

response scholars have agreed is the need for teachers to privilege specificity in their responses and to constrain the scope of their response by focusing on a limited number of concerns within each student paper (Danis; Dohrer; Edgington “Encouraging;” Fuller; Moxley “Responding;” Straub “The Student”).

As I will demonstrate later in this chapter, many of the points from the previous paragraph appear again in lists of the best practices teachers should operationalize when responding to student writing. Although often used as shorthand to categorize different types of response, the terminology offered by Brannon and Knoblauch and Straub and Lunsford also provides a lens to more fully account for how response functions within social frameworks, including the dominant expectation for directive response. Because this project focuses on the role of classroom contexts in the production and reception of response, it is worth noting how attention to these social contexts can be traced far back into response scholarship, including Knoblauch and Brannon’s assessment that response scholarship has paid “too little” attention to “the larger conversation between teacher and students,” of which comments are only one element (“Teacher” 1). As the following section demonstrates, attention to response as conversation demonstrates one expansion of commenting scholarship intended to more fully imagine response as a social activity and to account for the social contexts in which response occurs. I position the extensive research on students’ opinions on and use of response as similar expansions. Yet, as I will demonstrate in a subsequent section, this scholarship continues the tendency to study response removed from the classroom contexts, including the physical classroom and the ideologies shaping the activities engaged within, in which response is produced and received.

Response as Conversation and Students' Opinions on Response

Response scholars have used the idea of conversation as one approach for lessening the control teachers exert over student writing. This scholarship often takes one of two forms: arguments that our written comments should reflect conversational styles or acknowledgements that our written comments should be accompanied with conversations with the individual student or the entire class. M. Francine Danis highlights conversation's "holistic" qualities and argues that good response results from listening to "what's going on in the essay" (19). Ruth Jenkins and Fred Cheney use the term "dialogue" to describe response's communicative purposes. Ziv argues that response's helpfulness is limited if comments are not "part of an ongoing dialogue between [teachers] and their students" (376). Therefore, this dialogue should begin with teachers responding to student writing "as interested adults would react to such writing" (376). Straub ("Teacher") analyzes the teacher comments that comprise the data corpus for *Twelve Readers Reading* to demonstrate how well-known instructors incorporate conversational tones and techniques into their written responses. As part of this work, he offers tips for creating conversational responses. These suggestions include using informal, everyday language, using the students' own words in the response, resisting taking control over the student's text, and providing elaboration of key points included in the response (389–390). Although a fan of framing comments as conversation, Straub reminds us to resist falling into a trap in which all facilitative comments are viewed as being conversational and all directive comments are viewed as being controlling (380–381).

These calls to increase the conversational aspects of our written responses, in that they circulate around the issue of appropriation of student writing, remind us of the social forces shaping the writing classroom, including the dominant expectation for the teacher to act as the primary evaluator of student writing. By illustrating how many writing classrooms are structured around initiation, response, and evaluation cycles, Janet Auten (“Rhetoric”) and Paul Prior (“Contextualizing Teachers”) remind us not to overlook the role power relationships play in response, an acknowledgement that problematizes the idea of response as conversation. Auten, via an application of the traditional rhetorical triangle to the student, teacher, and student text, demonstrates how students are often positioned as the passive readers of their own texts due to the teacher’s appropriative rewriting of these texts through the response he/she produces. Auten and Prior, through the consideration of power’s role in the classroom, highlight the importance of the relationship between reading and response, an aspect of the response context that Anthony Edgington argues has been overlooked (“What”).

Imagining response as conversation demonstrates a greater awareness of response’s “transactive” role (Probst). Likewise, research on students’ opinions for response and their use of the responses they receive also acknowledges how response functions as a communicative process involving both teachers and students. Researchers have found that students prefer specific, elaborate comments (Edgington, “Encouraging;” Ransdell; Straub “Students’;” Treglia; Ziv). Auten, in surveying students, found that 40% of first-semester students expected teachers to mark all errors in a paper, whereas only 25% of second-semester students stated the same expectation (“How”). W. Michael Reed and John K. Burton, Straub (“Students”), and Edgington (“Encouraging”) found students

desire comments on both global content and surface-level issues. Students most strongly speak out against comments critical of the thinking they present in their writing (Beedles and Samuels; Reed and Burton; Straub “Students’;” Treglia). Likewise, they dislike confusing comments presented as jargon or incomplete phrases (Beedles and Samuels; Edgington “Encouraging;” Fuller; Hayes and Daiker; Still and Koerber).

Research on praise, although inconclusive, illustrates a bias in the research on student opinion that speaks to how we conceive of how students receive and apply response. As I presented earlier, numerous scholars have argued for praise’s importance as a response mode. Although some researchers have found that students find praise to be useful (Hayes and Daiker) and desired (Straub “Students’”), other researchers have found that praise is less useful than instructors may assume it to be. For example, Bonnie Beedles and Robert Samuels found that students marked as useful only three of the fifteen praise comments they had included in their study. These differences in how students react to praise might result from how research projects were framed. Beedles and Samuels describe how they modeled their project off of Straub’s work on student opinion, while also deciding to shift Straub’s focus on what types of comments students preferred to what types of comments they found most useful when revising (12). Sommers’s longitudinal study (“Across”) may provide a middle-ground, as she illustrates how students’ privilege constructive criticism over praise, especially when they view the praise to be unwarranted. This privileging of constructive criticism mirrors prior research demonstrating students’ preferences for specific, elaborate response that offers advice directed toward revision (Auten “How;” Edgington “Encouraging;” Ransdall; Straub “Students’;” Ziv).

Best Practices and the Context Criticism

The research on mode, focus, and students' opinions is reflected in response best practices. These best practices appear as lists presented most commonly in teaching rhetorics (Bean; Lindemann; Straub "Guidelines") or summaries of previous research (Moxley "Responding;" Straub "The Student").² The following best practices list is taken from Moxley's article, "Responding to Student Writing: Goals, Methods, Alternatives," in which he reviews the best practices to introduce an argument for teachers to shift to tape-recorded response if they want to best apply these practices. According to Moxley's summary of these best practices, instructors should

- provide "formative" as opposed to "summative" evaluations;
- require multiple drafting;
- place students in small groups and teach them to evaluate each other's work;
- avoid "appropriating" students' texts and simplifying students' roles to that of army privates following orders;
- play the role of the students' intended audience;
- encourage students to view revision to be an opportunity to clarify and discover one's meaning;
- avoid overburdening students with advice by identifying only one or two patterns of error at a time;
- praise positive attributes in each paper;

² The research tradition of offering implications for further research/teaching has led to affirmations and reconstructions of best practices appearing at the end of many scholarly works. These instances are too numerous to list, but tracing shifts in best practices would make for a valuable historical project.

- avoid excessive abstract, formulaic textbook language, such as “edit for efficiency!”; “transition?”; “v/ag”; “p/ag”, etc.; and
- omit grades on individual papers. (3)

In “The Student, the Text, and the Classroom Context: A Case Study of Teacher Response,” Straub offers a set of guiding principles very similar to the ones offered by Moxley before agreeing with “composition scholars” that “there is no one best way to response to student writing” (2). Referring to the importance of context, Straub acknowledges

What works for one teacher, in one context, may or may not work for another. There are no dependable guides. No absolutes. It depends on the particular teacher, the individual student, and the particular circumstances.
(2)

But, as Murphy points out, the recognition of these limitations does not stop Straub from presenting these guidelines “in the linguistic form of commands that take on the force of rules” (84). Murphy critiques the absoluteness of such rules because of how they focus on the production of response and not “students’ interpretations of teachers’ comments,” an absence that overlooks how knowledge, including both the production and reception of comments, is socially constructed (85).

Murphy’s use of the term “interpretations” illustrates a shift from research on students’ opinions on response to their reading of the responses they receive on their writing. Much of the scholarship I traced that addressed students’ opinions is guilty of studying student opinion detached from the students’ own writing. Murphy’s shift

towards students' interpretations not only corrects this shortcoming but also contributes to a larger call for attention to the classroom context in which response is produced and received. Murphy's criticism highlights the problems with making claims about how comments are produced and received when such claims happen outside the "situational context of the classroom" in which they operate and when such claims do not provide both the teacher's and the student's perspectives on the production and reception of such comments (85). Published in 2000, Murphy's call for a transition in our research focus and methods reflects Bernier's conceptualization of the teaching-learning interaction as the necessary focal point for research intended to provide insight into what he calls "the practice of education" (Bernier 291).

The Classroom Context and Privileged Research Methods

The call for greater attention to the classroom context in which response is produced and received requires an expansion of not only the content of our research but also a reshuffling of our privileged methods. A closer investigation of these methods demonstrates the privileged use of survey methods and discourse analysis, the application of findings into constructing response taxonomies, and the artificial constraints often introduced into research methods. Scholars have used surveys and questionnaires to gather information on both students' perceptions of teacher response (Auten "How;" Beedles and Samuels; Lizzio and Wilson; Reed and Burton; Straub "Students'"; Weaver) and teachers' goals in response (Moxley "Teachers"). Discourse analysis, in various applications, has been used to examine trends in teacher response and the perceived rhetorical effects of responses. Given the large umbrella that is discourse analysis,

significant variation exists among different discourse analysis studies researchers have conducted. Robert Connors and Andrea Lunsford's well-known study of "rhetorical comments," later expanded by Lesa A. Stern and Amanda Solomon, focused on distinguishing the content features of a large data sample and counting how often these features were displayed in the sample responses (Connors and Lunsford 200). Summer Smith, in her study of the end comment genre, established "the primary genres" comprising end comments and traced how the genres were used within individual end comments and across the complete data set (252). Gary Dohrer's study of the effectiveness of teachers' comments triangulates discourse analysis of both teachers' comments and students' revisions alongside think-aloud protocols, whereas Anson's application of Perry's developmental schema included the coding of patterns found in teachers' comments ("Response").

Studies that collect quantitative data and/or function through the coding of patterns and features often result from the application of or lead to the creation of taxonomies. Smith, for example, concludes that the majority of end comments can be divided into "sixteen primary genres ... falling into three groups: judging genres, reader response genres, and coaching genres" (252). Although he notes the limitations that come with "oversimplifying" the "complicated network of values, beliefs, and processes" that shape how teachers engage student texts, Anson nonetheless presents his analysis through the categories of "dualistic responders," "relativistic responders," and "reflective responders" ("Response" 343–353). Straub and Lunsford, having analyzed the amount of control the commenters take over the students' writing, present their findings via mode and focus subcategories. Straub, in turn, reanalyzes the responses produced for *Twelve*

Readers Reading to establish the features common to conversational response (“Teacher”).

Along with functioning as means through which to present data, taxonomies have also been used to design research instruments. Dohrer, for example, applied Faigley and Witte’s schema for mapping textual changes to study both the types of comments teachers place on student papers and the students’ use of these comments when revising (49). Likewise, much of the survey and textual analysis research is founded on taxonomical grounds, given how these studies investigate response through the creation of binary constructs. Such constructs include facilitative and directive (Ransdall), conversational and nonconversational (Scrocco), implicit and explicit (Ziv), and mitigated and unmitigated (Treglia). As a means through which to operationalize research questions, organize findings, and give language to these findings, taxonomies aid our attempts at better understanding the production, reception, and use of teacher response. But such taxonomies also, in many cases, speak to how researchers prioritize the decontextualized study of teacher comments and/or the isolated study of one aspect of response within or removed from the classroom context.

The introduction of artificial, anecdotal, and decontextualized features into research projects further distances the study of response from the naturalistic classroom space.³ Some research methods, because of their construction and purposes, must operate artificially to various degrees. Think-aloud protocols (Dohrer; Edgington “What; Hayes and Daiker; Scrocco; Shiffman “Reading;” Ziv), for instance, always introduce an

³ The basis for this argument about decontextualized practices extends out of Fife and O’Neill’s argument in “Moving beyond the Written Comment.” I have attempted to expand and update this argument, specifically by examining the role of artificiality introduced into anecdotal classroom studies.

artificial element to the reading or composing process. Likewise, scholars who use experimental designs may do so as not to disturb the classroom setting or because the data desired cannot be acquired successfully and effectively through classroom-based research. Yet, as Edgington demonstrates in his think-aloud study of how teachers read and respond to student writing, such artificial contexts can be minimized (“What”). In his study, Edgington created a more natural research context by having the participating teachers respond to their students’ papers, a step not always taken in previous think-aloud research.

The introduction of artificiality into response scholarship varies greatly. By far the most popular types of artificial constructs are the use of student papers and teacher response decontextualized from the writing classroom. Straub and Lunsford “invent” a learning context for their readers to respond to in *Twelve Readers Reading* (xiii). Straub, in turn, uses a selection of these teachers’ responses as the starting point for his study of students’ opinions toward response (“Students”). Anson, in his study of reflective reading, uses teachers’ responses to a sample student paper in a writing workshop to develop the list of contexts that he sees as influencing response (“Reflective”). Ransdall, in a teacher–researcher study, surveys his students’ preferences for directive and facilitative feedback by providing them a sample student paper on which he has inserted sample comments.

Artificiality can also be introduced when researchers manipulate the classroom environment to respond to specific hypothesis and research questions. Such manipulation shifts the practices of the classroom and, in turn, may result in an inauthentic view of the production and reception of response within this classroom space. Classroom

manipulation happens most often in studies where the researcher doubles as classroom instructor. For example, Edgington, wanting to better understand his students' preferences for different "formats" of response, artificially manipulates his classroom by changing his response styles from conferences to end notes to marginal notes across the semester ("Encouraging" 288). Such studies allow for the collection of valuable data; at the same time, they may also unsettle the learning context present in the classroom from which the data is collected. Such unsettling is magnified when the instructor also occupies the position of researcher.

Acknowledgements of Context's Importance

Although the majority of previous scholarship has remained decontextualized from the classroom, scholars have, nonetheless, readily acknowledged the importance of context for response practices. Straub, somewhat surprising given how he builds most of his scholarship from the decontextualized data collected in *Twelve Readers Reading*, regularly references the importance context plays in the production and reception of response. In his study of students' opinions, Straub acknowledges, "It is ... difficult to distinguish the effects of comments alone from the effects of the classroom context and the larger institutional setting" ("Students" 96). In his work on teacher control, he admits the limited attention to "the actual context in which the comment was made" by returning our attention to Brannon and Knoblauch's work ("Concept" 235). Directing our attention to the dangers of removing comment from context, Knoblauch and Brannon argue:

Any remark on a student paper, whatever its form, finally owes its meaning and impact to the governing dialogue that influences some student's reaction to it.

Remarks taken out of this context can appear to be more restrictive or open-ended, more facilitative or judgmental, than they really are in light of a teacher's overall communicative habits. ("Teacher" 2; qtd. in Straub "Concept" 235)

In similar fashion, Anson has acknowledged the role context plays in the production and reception of response on at least two occasions. Reflecting on the reading taxonomies he has created, he argues greater attention should be given to the relationship between reading practices and "the rich interactions that occur between teachers and students in the fuller context of instruction" ("Response" 335). A decade later, when once again advocating for a shift in reading practices, he argues that "a greater awareness of how our context influences the way we read students' papers" will help us to "adapt our responses to specific situations" ("Reflective" 303). Anson's work reflects many others that attempt to address the role of context in the production and reception of response. He draws attention to the role context plays in response and theoretically accounts for these contexts without engaging actual classrooms. Other scholars, including Edgington ("What") and Beedles and Samuels, have advanced the attention we provide to the contexts in which response is received by designing research studies in which students are asked to engage with their own writing and not artificially constructed texts. At the same time, these scholars and their research remain significantly removed from the classrooms in which the response is produced and received.

A Call for (Contextual) Change

Writing around the turn of the millennium, Fife and O'Neill authored a series of articles intended both to establish how the classroom context has been largely excluded

from response scholarship and to motivate scholarship that helps fill this void. Originally writing in response to Straub's "Concept of Control in Teacher Response," they argue that Straub "suggests implications for the classroom context strictly from his analysis of written comments" (Mathison-Fife and O'Neill 274). In subsequent articles, they demonstrate how this focus on comments as "textual artifacts" divorces the research from the "complex interaction of pedagogical, textual, and personal contexts" in which response occurs (O'Neill and Fife 48, 39). The criticism Fife and O'Neill apply to our discipline's response scholarship builds from a number of smaller critiques. They contend the following is true of this scholarship. First, scholars have tended to analyze comments "as *text* apart from the classroom *context*" from which the comments emerge (Fife and O'Neill 301; italics original). Second, the students' reading of response has primarily been overlooked in favor of studying the teachers' reading of and response to student writing (O'Neill and Fife 48). Third, the majority of research avoids the "classroom context and the complexities of interpretation it suggests" (Mathison-Fife and O'Neill 274). Taken collectively, their criticism demonstrates how we have studied response textually and not contextually and, in doing so, have assumed that the teacher's production of response holds more value than the student's interpretation of the response he/she receives.

Fife and O'Neill's critique responds to trends they see in response scholarship. As they acknowledge, scholarship in K-12 contexts (Freedman; Sperling; Sperling and Freedman) and writing-in-the-disciplines (Berkenkotter, Huckin, and Ackerman; Prior "Contextualizing Writing" and "Tracing;") has accounted for classroom contexts, students' perspectives, and the "entire response situation" (275). In the time since Fife

and O'Neill's call for increased attention to students' perspectives, a significant number of scholars have responded to this call (Edgington "Encouraging;" Lizzio and Wilson; Scrocco; Still and Koerber; Treglia; Weaver). Yet, research on response in first-year writing classrooms that accounts for classroom contexts remains limited.

How then, we might ask, do we define what Fife and O'Neill first called "the classroom context" in their 1997 article? The language they use in their articles is only somewhat helpful to define this context seeing how the language they use shifts within and across the three articles. The language they use to define these contexts include "the entire response situation in their classrooms" (Mathison-Fife and O'Neill 275), "all the interchanges about evaluation" (O'Neill and Fife 40), "the particular context in which response occurs" (Fife and O'Neill 300), "the pedagogical practices and classroom climate" (O'Neill and Fife 49), and, as referenced earlier, "the complex interaction of pedagogical, textual, and personal contexts" (O'Neill and Fife 39).

These references, especially the use of the plural "contexts" in the notation of "the interaction" among "pedagogical, textual, and personal contexts," highlight the multiplicity of contexts to which Fife and O'Neill speak. We could begin to distinguish between these differing contexts by noting those, such as assessment practices, that occur within the classroom, and other contexts, such as students' educational history, that are brought into the classroom by either teachers or students. The problem with such distinctions is that that they violate the very complexity Fife and O'Neill highlight as that which should be at the center of our individual and collective attention. What we need, then, is a conceptual construction and a methodology that allows for the study of the complexity that is "the classroom context."

The “Classroom Context”

Straub offers a useful schema in his 2002 article, “Reading and Responding to Student Writing: A Heuristic for Reflective Practice,” that helps define these multiple, overlapping contexts. Straub’s purpose in his article is to account for “the various concerns we can take up in our reading [of student writing]” so as to draw connections to “the larger contexts of the writing class” in which reading and response occur (16). Although this anecdotal scholarship suffers from a number of shortcomings, including the exclusion of students’ reception of teacher response, the construction of these contexts through an imaginary protocol, and the creation of a “simple heuristic” meant to guide teachers in navigating the complexities of response to student writing, Straub’s schema (fig. 1.1) maintains value because of how it allows us to imagine the multiple, overlapping, and possibly contradictory contexts in which response occurs.

In mapping the “criteria of student writing,” Straub places the student text at the center of his map and then surrounds this text with the various contexts that shape a teacher’s reading of this work (36). He traces out from the text’s features, to the “contextual concerns” the teacher may bring to his/her reading of the text, to the larger “rhetorical context” to which the paper responds, and to the “classroom context” in which the paper is produced and read, including the assignment and the other work previously completed and that yet to be assigned in the class (24–26). Straub introduces actors into his schema when he accounts for the teacher’s reading of the individual student as well as the student’s writing processes, prior work, and “attitudes, efforts, and capabilities” (33). From there, Straub moves beyond the text, the classroom, and the student—what he calls

“the most obvious frames that inform our reading” and response—to contexts “that are less obvious but often no less powerful” in how they contribute to our reading and response (32–33). These contexts include a wide range of factors, including the teacher’s “approach to teaching writing,” the theories that inform the teacher’s reading, and other extra-textual factors such as what he calls “the academic setting” and “writing program constraints, institutional constraints, and grades” (36, 43, 36–43). Finally, and correctly, Straub notes the role “immediate circumstances” play in our reading practices, including available time, number of students enrolled in a class, and environmental distractions (46).

Figure 1.1: Straub’s Contexts of Student Writing (“Reading” 36)

Straub’s construction of his schema around the reading of the student text and his placement of the textual product at the center of this schema have consequences for how

the rest of the contexts he traces are positioned and analyzed, the most important of which is his notation of how the less immediate contexts “usually remain tacit” in our reading processes (36). When taken as a starting point for the study of the contexts that shape the production and reception of response, Straub’s schema still proves useful as a means to account for these contexts, especially when we imagine the same contexts being equally shaping toward students’ reception of response. But it is Straub’s assessment of the contexts beyond the text, the rhetorical context, the classroom context, and the student context as both “remain[ing] tacit” and “less obvious but often no less powerful” that this project directly responds to (36). Straub focuses his attention outward from the textual document and, by doing so, files in the other contexts accordingly in relation to the textual product. Of particular interest is his definition of the classroom context as definable apart from the other contexts for which he accounts. For Straub, this classroom context comprises primarily of the specific assignment to which the student has responded and the other work, both previously assigned and yet to be assigned (27–29). Seeing as Straub’s purpose is to map the relations among various contexts, I understand this need to partition the classroom context through a concrete definition while also allowing for the overlap that occurs with other contexts. Yet, in doing so, Straub creates a hierarchy, if not of absolute power then of explicitness, in which the classroom’s immediacy is positioned as to trump the various and possibly contradictory factors shaping this classroom space. If we were to, instead, construct a research methodology in which the classroom space, complete with all its practices, complexities, and contradictions, and the participants of this classroom space, including their values, beliefs, and attitudes, could be privileged, we could, in turn, develop a two-directional

relationship between response and the classroom context that would also speak to the societal, disciplinary, and institutional contexts shaping the production and reception of response.

Ideologies and the Classroom Context

Fife and O'Neill's claim that response happens in "a complex interaction of pedagogical, textual, and personal contexts" reflects the discussion of ideologies I presented in the Introduction (O'Neill and Fife 39). Straub's schema, although both hypothetical in nature and focused on the text, paints a picture of the multiple and conflicting contexts that may shape how an instructor reads and, in turn, responds to a student paper. In both the Introduction and this chapter, I've cited similar language that speaks, to various degrees, to these multiple and conflicting contexts. Knoblauch and Brannon, very early in the scholarly discussion on response, wondered how "the attitudes, postures, and motives" teachers bring to and communicate in their responses shape the teacher–student interaction ("Teacher" 2). Griffin posited that the trajectory of response scholarship would be marked by attention to how "orientations," "experiences," and "preferences" help "account for differences in reading student papers" (297). Straub acknowledged the danger of analyzing comments apart "from the classroom context and the larger institutional setting" ("Students" 96). But it is Fife and O'Neill who provide the substance to why investigating comments within the classroom context—both the "immediate" and "tacit" factors that Straub maps—is of great importance. Choosing to do otherwise, they argue, demonstrates an assumption that "a 'true' meaning of ... comments exists divorced from a social context" (O'Neill and Fife 48). This social

context, if we accept that students' and teachers' bring with them "competing claims" resulting from "social, political, and cultural" practices and institutions, becomes not only the teachers' production of response or the students' reception of response but also how this production and reception operates in the writing classroom, including how these "competing claims" speak to dominant and emergent expectations for what writing is, how it is produced, the role of teachers in the teaching of and response to writing, and the role students' play in the writing classroom as thinkers, learners, and writers (Berlin 478). These expectations are put forth by the individual, which helps explain the extensive scholarship on students' opinions on response. Yet, if we focus on the individual, his/her opinions on response, and his/her application of response, we arrive at a point where we might know more about the ideologies circulating around response, but we will not know how these ideologies fully operate within the classroom space.

In their recent usability study of teachers' responses in an introductory technical writing course, Brian Still and Amy Koerber paint a picture of students' use of teachers' comments that, while very much confirming those best practices strongly entrenched in our literature, illustrates how students' opinions on response develop from their values, beliefs, and expectations. Of most consequence, they argue that students "want forms of writing instruction that tell them what to do to improve their grades" and, relatedly, want feedback that will "help them achieve this goal as quickly and efficiently as possible" (219). Such findings—findings that align with other research on students' opinions—reflect dominant expectations for not only what response is and what it should do, but also what roles teachers should occupy in the writing classroom and, more broadly, what might be the purposes of writing education. Still and Koerber's study is just one of many

that, through various methodologies, paints a picture of the attitudes, values, and beliefs that shape the reception (and production) of response. But, unless we triangulate students, teachers, and classrooms, we are left with an incomplete picture of how the teaching–learning interaction functions through material spaces—classrooms, practices, and texts—shaped by the beliefs, values, and investments students and teachers bring to this space. Furthermore, because we can come to know these participants’ beliefs, values, and investments as something more complex and consequential than the source from which a comment is produced or received, we can begin to understand how the production and reception of response to student writing both reflects and responds to socially situated beliefs about the purposes of both writing instruction and response to student writing. Such reflection and response, as the thickly developed chapters that follow demonstrate, operate in various configurations and, in doing so, help push the scholarly conversation beyond an understanding of what response is, how it is produced, and how students’ react to such response to a closer analysis of how such production and reception, situated within specific material processes, illustrates the competing beliefs that underlie writing instruction.

Project Overview

The chapter outlines found at the end of the Introduction provide a sense of the major ideologies being investigated in this project. Chapter 2 examines the long-standing belief that first-year writing instructors should provide “service” to students, institutions, and societies in terms of what is privileged in these classrooms. Such service constructions vary from the expectation for error correction to a pedagogical focus on

academic writing to the teaching of portable skills, but, as I demonstrate, these variations can be traced back to the commonly held belief that first-year writing should respond to students' writing deficiencies. Chapter 3 responds to the separation found in Horvath's article between summative and formative response. Chapter 4 examines response as it relates to the sequencing among multiple assignments and, in examining response longitudinally, expands on previous response scholarship that examines either the single text or the cumulative portfolio.

Because each individual chapter examines a different ideological tension common to the teaching of writing, I provide the necessary contextualizing information in these chapters. For example, I situate Chapter 4 in both scholarship from the 1980s that discussed curricular design and Louise Weatherbee Phelps's examination of the different ways in which a writing instructor can "circumscribe" the text when reading and responding to student writing. Both curricular design and questions of textual circumscription engage how we define "the text" in writing classrooms, and, in doing so, they speak to the larger debate about process and product that has circulated in our field since its inception. My goal in each chapter, then, is to link not only class observations with the production and reception of response but, furthermore, to speak to how these textual and contextual observations result from, deviate from, and speak back to those values and beliefs that shape college writing instruction. This is to say that although my primary focus is on the oral and written responses provided to students (and their writing), I do more than merely explain how dominant, residual, and emergent ideologies show themselves in the production and reception of this response. More consequentially, these specific classroom investigations are meant to provide a greater sense of the

complexity of response to student writing—a complexity that a study of the text alone could hint at but never fully establish.

By observing both text and context, I respond to Fife and O'Neill's concern regarding the distancing of the comment from the social context in which it is produced and read, and, in doing so, I affirm the socially situated positioning of reading, writing, and composition education. In a lengthy footnote that aligns with his introduction to "The Concept of Control," Richard Straub notes the following:

In many ways, the social turn in composition has fueled our resistance to defining different types of commentary in terms of specific textual strategies. Influenced by poststructural theory, we have moved away from a close scrutiny of the written text and focused increasingly on the social conditions and practices that inform writing. ("Concept" 249)

Turning to Brannon and Knoblauch's work, Straub argues that they avoided "the analysis of individual comments based on how they appear on the page" because of their interest in "attitude" and not "technique." (249). Anne M. Greenhalgh, writing after Brannon and Knoblauch but before Straub, argues that one's voice, including its operation within the university as a powerful social institution, deeply shapes how response is received, such that more attention should be given to the social construction of voice in response.

Writing directly in response to *Twelve Readers Reading* among other works of response scholarship, Katherine K. Gottschalk pushes us further into studying response within the social context in which it is produced and received by reminding us of the "rich discursive and collaborative context" that should be present in writing classrooms and, therefore, should be present to us as teachers and researchers (51).

As numerous scholars have argued, our reading and response to student response does not always align with the poststructuralist views of authorship and meaning making now privileged in the reading of literary texts. For example, the collection, *Encountering Student Texts: Interpretive Issues in Reading Student Writing*, offers mostly theoretical engagements with what it means to “encounter” a student text in the rich context in which students write and teachers read. But, as Fife and O’Neill establish, these examinations of what this context means for reading and response have not been carried through to the study of the intersection of the classroom and response. Such attention, they argue, would not only allow for such connections to be made but also allow researchers to expand this attention to other classroom practices including conferences (Newkirk “Writing” and “First”), student memos (J. Sommers), and other approaches that allow students to speak back to the comments they receive (Berzsenyi; Welch) (O’Neill and Fife 49). Although the current project began with a focus on written comments, it expanded to also include teacher–student conferences because of the practices privileged in the classrooms I observed. This expansion results because of a willingness to remain open to that which presents itself in the classroom and also because of an understanding that to examine how response is produced and received, we must move away from the taxonomies privileged by Straub and to the messiness of a classroom that may resist being filed into one or more categories.

I was guided by broad questions when I entered the classroom space. These questions related to what students and teachers saw as both good and possible in relation to writing, the teaching of writing, the interaction between students and teachers, and the purposes for and uses of response. Furthermore, I wanted to learn more about how

tensions between a teacher's theoretical beliefs, privileged disciplinary practices, and what this instructor saw to be the dominant goals of the writing program and/or university may have shaped his/her production of response. By observing the classroom, I was also able to investigate questions about the relations among different response practices as well as how power operated in these classrooms. As these were broad points of inquiry, I modified and focused them based on what I observed and what I heard from participating students and instructors. As the following chapters demonstrate, investigating and focusing these points of inquiry through a mixed methodology allows for response to be examined within the social contexts in which it is produced and read. This social context includes but is not limited to feminist theories of response and assessment (Miller; Myers; Shiffman), response to portfolios (Broad; Richardson; Thelin), and the institutional and disciplinary purposes of response and assessment (Detweiler et al.; Faigley; Schwegler). All of these social contexts allow for an investigation of how students and teachers define authority, the text, and facilitative response differently.

Methods Overview

This study was approved by IRB through the expedited review process. The data were collected in the Spring 2010 semester at a public, four-year urban university I describe in the following section. The data were collected across a full semester in three second-semester, first-year writing courses. All three courses focused on research writing, but each participating instructor brought a different pedagogy to his/her teaching. The study began with three instructors and nine student participants. Two student participants dropped out during the study. To collect data in these classrooms and from

these participants, I used a mixed-methodological approach that included direct classroom observation, participant interviews, think-/compose-aloud protocols, and textual analysis. This mixed-methodology approach, described in greater detail shortly, allowed me to privilege ethnographic research methods while also incorporating an experimental method necessary to engage the teachers' production of response and the students' reading of this response. Collectively, these ethnographic and experimental methods allowed for the intersections of ideologies and commenting practices to be investigated within multiple classrooms across an entire semester.

Institutional and Programmatic Contexts

The research-site university, which lies geographically where the South meets the North, will be referred to Hill University the few times I directly reference it in the body chapters. Hill University is a comprehensive, four-year, public institution located on the edge of the urban core in a midsized city. Approximately 15,800 undergraduates attend Hill University. The student population is currently seventy-five percent white and fifty-two percent female, numbers which should reflect the university's demographics at the time the data were collected. Although the university has historically featured a significant nontraditional population, its student population has skewed younger as the university has worked to increase its academic profile over the last 15 or so years. All but one student participant in this study would be classified as a traditionally aged college student. All but one participating student were in-state students, although they came to Hill University from across the state. The only out-of-state student doubled as the only nontraditional student participant.

Hill University has a two-semester first-year writing requirement. Students are placed into the first-semester course unless they have approved credit that exempts them from this course. The program's outcomes (see appendix A) are modeled closely after the well-known WPA outcomes. The first-semester course provides students a foundation in college writing, although the curriculum is not singularly focused on academic writing as the name might imply. The second-semester course emphasizes research writing. The Composition Program, as it is known within the local context, has a long tradition of pedagogical freedom that allows instructors to design classes that both work toward the programmatic outcomes and engage the instructor's investments in specific writing theories, pedagogies, and assignments. This pedagogical diversity is reflected in the fieldworking, I-Search, and academic argument pedagogies privileged by the individual instructors.

At Hill University, M.A. graduate students, Ph.D. graduate students, and part-time contingent faculty teach the majority of the first-year writing classes.⁴ The participants in this study include one Ph.D. graduate student and two "term lecturers."⁵ The "term lecturer" title designates a specific subset of the faculty positioned between part-time instructors and tenured faculty who are typically on year-to-year contracts. Term lecturers teach a 4-4 load, receive a living-wage salary including benefits, and are provided private offices. Because I knew that any class I observed would be shaped by and responsive to social, disciplinary, and institutional ideologies, the inclusion of two term lecturers in this

⁴ The M.A. program has areas of study in creative writing and literature. The Ph.D. program is in rhetoric and composition.

⁵ I attempted to recruit a second-year M.A. instructor to participate in the project. These teachers had first entered the classroom in Fall 2009 and, citing their lack of classroom experience, they all understandably declined my invitation to participate.

study is only consequential to the level that their institutional position may have introduced new ideologies into the study while excluding others.

Participant Recruitment and Informed Consent

The then-current and previous Directors of Composition recommended instructors for the study. These recommendations were made, among other criteria, on the basis of strong student evaluations and demonstrated interest in classroom research. These instructors were recruited by direct e-mail. I met with Bertrand and Connie in person to discuss the project. All three instructors acknowledged their use of written feedback, as this study was originally designed to focus on written feedback. Students were recruited through in-class presentations once the semester began. No attempt was made to randomize the sample or to create a participant population that represented the university's demographics. Interest in the study varied across the three sections. Eight students from Bertrand's class showed interest; the four participating students were chosen through random selection from those who voiced interest (one student later dropped out).

All participants signed an informed consent form; the form varied for students and instructors (appendixes B.1 and B.2). The study, including the information provided in the consent form, was designed to meet the "principles of action" offered by Thomas Newkirk ("Seduction" 12). He offers that the researcher, in recruiting participants and gaining their consent, should acknowledge the possibility of "bad news" being reported in the study and provide participants the "rights of co-interpretation" for any scholarship generated from the collected data (13–14). The consent form described the participant's

rights to anonymity in published accounts, to withdraw from the study at any time, and to decline to answer questions. As anonymity between teacher and student participants was not maintained given the project's focus, students were explicitly told in writing that their participation, including withdrawal from the study, would not affect their grade in English 102. In addition to the standard consent form, Jane asked that I collect written consent from the class members for me to access the weekly responses students published to the course's Blackboard page. Jane and I agreed that I would only access the work of those students who returned this consent form, and I adhered to this agreement during both data collection and analysis.⁶

Student participants were compensated ten dollars for each interview session. A graduate program research grant funded this compensation. Participating instructors were not financially compensated. Victoria Purcell-Gates argues that reciprocity between researcher and participant is a benchmark characteristic for ethical ethnographic research (99). Participants did cite positive outcomes from my observer role in their classes, although I do not argue that what the instructor participants gained was equal to the time and energy they gave to my project. Connie, for example, appreciated how she could turn to me for help on the few occasions where she had trouble with the classroom technology. Bertrand asked me to speak to his students about my own research, seeing how my project aligned with the "fieldworking" method that structured his class. Furthermore, I provided methods advice to students when asked to do so. Most important,

⁶ As this Blackboard page falls within the confines of normal classroom practices, the consent form I distributed operated outside the official IRB review. I offered this consent form to respond to Jane's investment in protecting her students' "rights" to their own work. Because the study focused on individual students and teachers, I rarely accessed writing submitted by other students. In future studies, paying attention to a broader sampling of writing would allow for habits and practices to be traced across the full class roster.

all three participating instructors acknowledged how my presence in their individual classrooms allowed for time and space for them to reflect on their pedagogical practices. Both Bertrand and Connie stated a desire for more opportunities to discuss their teaching in community settings; in turn, they viewed their participation in this project as one approach for greater conversation about classroom pedagogies. My engagement with Bertrand on conferencing methods, as Chapter 2 demonstrates, led to a major shift in his response practices. Although some people might argue that these conversations artificially shifted this classroom's natural setting, I would argue that Bertrand's initiation of these conversations places them closer to research reciprocity than the introduction of artificial contexts.

The informed-consent form reserved for participants the right to review and respond to what I had written about them. I lost contact with two student participants following the study and was not able to provide them the finished project. Both participants, in their final meetings, explicitly articulated limited interest in reviewing what I would write. Three students and all three instructors asked to review the document. I suggested that they bring to my attention any parts of the project they would like to further discuss, including any representations I made of them and their actions. I also invited them to write a short reflection in which they could speak to their inclusion in this study in their own voices. Two instructors wrote with supportive feedback but stated a preference that this feedback not be included in the final document.

This lack of written response should not be read as endorsing the idea that participant "co-interpretation" should not be included in qualitative research design. Although my engagement with the research participants varied following the semester's

conclusion, one of the biggest outcomes of this project has been an ongoing conversation I've had with Bertrand on pedagogical practices. As part of this conversation, I have asked his opinion on choices I was making in how I represented him in writing. Bertrand deferred to my authorial perspective in almost every instance. His deferment, I would argue, speaks to the benefits of including participant review in one's research design. The inclusion of participant review shaped my practices from the project's outset because it led me to hold myself to a very high bar in terms of representing the participants fairly, accurately, and ethically.

Participant-Observer Role and the Natural Classroom Setting

The next section describes the mixed-methodology I used to collect data. As I transition into this methodological discussion, I want to make clear that although the data were collected through ethnographic methods, my role as a participant in any of these classrooms was quite limited. In her discussion of ethnographic methods, Purcell-Gates notes how "classroom ethnography ... often positions the researcher closer to the observer end of the spectrum" (102). The choice to privilege observation over active participation in these classrooms results from a desire to "understand phenomena as they happen naturally" (102). Purcell-Gates recommends two specific practices for classroom research: the researcher should be "present over long periods" so that the classroom participants can grow accustomed to his/her presence, and the researcher should take a "nonparticipatory stance" in these classes (102). My participation in these classes was limited to the actions described in the previous section.

Furthermore, wanting to protect the participating students' identities, I did not explicitly interact with participating students during the class sessions, but I would talk with them if they approached me (as I did with students not directly participating in the study). Having chosen to privilege the preservation of the classroom setting, I only observed peer review and group work from a distance. I did circulate at times to observe how these practices were engaged by different individuals and groups, but I did not physically position myself in any small group activity nor did I closely observe student participants' in-class activities (peer review, drafting, etc.) in such a way that this observation would disturb the natural class setting. I relied on the students' and instructors' perspectives and voices to fill out the details established by my broad observation.

Data Collection

I collected the data through classroom observation, participant interviews, protocol analysis, and textual analysis. I describe each method separately in the following subsections, including limitations that arose during the data collection period.

Classroom Observation

I observed each of the writing classrooms over the entire semester. I missed one of Jane's class meetings and one of Connie's class meetings due to illness. During these observations, I kept extensive field notes that focused on the classroom activities, the teacher's behaviors, and the students' classroom engagement. I also observed teacher-student conferences in Jane's and Bertrand's classes. Bertrand conferenced his first,

third, and fourth papers, whereas Jane held student conferences with students before they submitted their final portfolios. When observing these conferences, I took extensive field notes, including direct quotations from participants, but I did not audio record the conferences. Having previous journalism experience with taking discursive notes in real time, I felt comfortable with this approach. That said, having audio recordings of the conferences would have allowed me to rehear the conferences in the participants' voices.⁷

As the thick description that results from direct observation is viewed as a defining feature of qualitative research, I feel I should further address the use of observation in this study. The “unit of analysis” I privileged shaped how I present my observations in this document (Patton 228). This unit of analysis was the production *and* reception of response as both actions relate to “the process labeled teaching-learning” (Bernier 293). As I established in the Introduction, the study of this process involves attention to both “face-to-face interaction” as well as “inner processes of individuals” (292). Therefore, the classroom observations were intended to further contextualize the responses teachers provided to student writing. These responses were both oral and written. The thick description that appears in this study provides greater contextualization and connection between these responses and the classroom context—defined broadly as I established in my rereading of Straub’s schema. I provide participant and classroom descriptions later in this chapter so that readers can contextualize the participants and practices discussed in this project.

⁷ Conference observation poses a particular challenge because it happens outside the regularly scheduled class time. David’s first conference time was shifted following a university snow closure. I was unable to attend this conference, so I relied on David’s and Bertrand’s accounts for this conference.

Having acknowledged the shortcomings of these observational practices, I do also want to highlight what observation brings to the study of response beyond what I've previously said. In introducing the value of direct observation, Michael J. Patton highlights how observation adds a level of attention not available through the use of participant interviews alone. Interview data, when used as the primary method for data collection, suffer from what he terms the participants' "selective perceptions" (264). By placing my observations alongside what participating students and instructors told me, I was able to "arrive at a more comprehensive view of the setting being studied than if [I relied] entirely on the [participants'] secondhand reports" (264). The observations allowed me to triangulate my perspective, the instructors' perspectives, and the students' perspectives because I had access to the classroom context in which the teaching-learning process occurred. Furthermore, the observations provided additional information to bring to the interviews and through which to analyze the data. Finally, the observations allowed me to understand references the participants made to the classroom without having to rely solely on the details they provided.

This triangulation of observer, teacher, and student perspectives demonstrates an improvement on previous response studies. Fife and O'Neill criticized prior studies for relying on the perspectives of teachers or the researcher (301). Much of the recent scholarship on response, which I acknowledged earlier, responded to this shortcoming by focusing attention squarely on students' perspectives. This project presents the researcher's analysis of the data collected, but the data itself reflect the actions,

perspectives, and words of both students and teachers—an improvement made possible through direct observation.⁸

Participant Interviews

I designed the project to include four meetings with each participant, once of which would feature the generation of a reading/composition protocol. As I acknowledge at the end of this subsection, some student participants did not complete four meetings. No matter the number of interviews completed by each participant, these interviews allowed for the instructors and students to state their reactions and beliefs in their own words. The majority of the interviews lasted between forty-five minutes and an hour. The student interviews occurred in a private office the university provided. Instructor interviews were split between this office and the instructors' offices. Additionally, one interview with Connie happened in the campus library's basement, as she stated a desire to be in a more open space than either of our offices allowed for.

I attempted to schedule interview sessions soon after a paper was returned with feedback or a conference was held while also spacing the meetings across the semester. The actual length of time between “the reception of response” and our meeting varied from participant to participant based on numerous factors. The multiple obligations juggled by all participants, including myself, was one such factor. Winter weather, illness, and delays in paper returns also contributed to meeting times changing.

I designed the interviews to incorporate “guided” interview principles into the “informal conversational interview” approach (Patton 342). With this approach, I began

⁸ Through my use of observation, I forward a methodological tradition privileged by Sarah Freedman, Paul Prior, S. Richardson, and Melanie Sperling.

each interview with a broad list of topics I wanted to cover during the interview. At some points during the semester, portions of the list were standardized across the instructor and/or student populations. For instance, each instructor's first interview was structured around three primary topics: educational biography (including teaching experience); teaching philosophies and pedagogies; and general response practices and beliefs. Within each of these broad categories, I included additional topics of interest. Although the topics may have been standardized to a certain degree, I allowed the conversation to direct the order in which I inserted these points of interest into the exchange. Furthermore, the interview conversation introduced new topics of conversation, some of which would feature prominently in one or more interviews.

The first and last interviews with each student were standardized to a certain degree. The first interview focused on general demographic information, educational history including experiences with writing, experiences with response, and preferences for response (see appendix C for the full list of guiding questions used in these first student interviews).⁹ The final interview included questions in which students were asked to assess their professor, to speak to what they learned during the semester, and to reflect on their experiences with response across the semester. These final interviews were conducted after students had submitted all graded work. Throughout the semester, the majority of the interview questions addressed either class content (assignments, activities, response) or participants' beliefs and values.

⁹ Wanting to develop a "rapport" with the student participants, I loosely structured the demographic conversations during the first meeting. These questions were meant primarily as means for the students to introduce themselves. I asked more directed and standardized demographic questions during the second and third interview sessions (Purcell-Gates 99).

My use of extensive interviewing alongside direct observation across the entire semester distinguishes this study from the majority of response scholarship in our field. Because I valued maintaining each classroom's natural setting to the highest degree possible, I took special care to allow the participants' voices to set the language during a given interview session. I was particularly careful with student participants, as I worried that our interactions could impact their class performance (a performance catalogued via the traditional letter grade). To guard against this possibility, I began most interviews (and interview subsections) with broad, open-ended questions that would allow the participants to dictate the conversation's terms. For example, I might ask students, "What was your reaction to the feedback you received?" Although possibly not as clear and as specific as qualitative researchers might recommend, this question allowed for the participants' language and ideas to take center stage in our conversations. I would then ask follow-up and probing questions to dig deeper into the responses and the concepts being discussed (Patton 348).

Student absences from the interview sessions were a minor problem during the data collection phase. The two students who dropped out both did so because of an inability to keep scheduled appointments. Furthermore, Josh missed his second interview session, and Ava missed both the second and fourth interview sessions. As I describe in the participant descriptions, these absences reflected each student's classroom attendance. Although these interview absences forced changes to the project's original schedule, decreased the amount of data collected, and added temporal distance from the student's "reception" of a particular response and our discussion of that response, I argue that the data remain meaningful because the absences reflect each student's classroom behavior

and the across-the-semester interview model allows for data collection flexibility, although this flexibility weakens data and methods standardization.

Protocol Analysis

Researchers have used think-aloud and compose-aloud protocols to study teachers' reading and response practices (Edgington "What;" Shiffman "Reading") and students' preferences for the response they receive (Hayes and Daiker; Scrocco) and their use of this response (Dohrer; Ziv). Because both response and reception are directly tied to reading (Anson "Reflective;" Anson "Response;" Edgington "What;" Huot), studying instructors' reading habits is fundamental if we hope to better understand how instructors produce response within competing contexts. Furthermore, studying students' reception(s) of the feedback they receive allows for a better understanding of the role values and beliefs play in how students read, react to, and use this feedback.

I conducted these protocols in relation to the response produced on each student's second major submission. For Bertrand and the students from his class, this aligned with our second interview sessions. For Jane and the students from her class, this aligned with our third interview sessions. Because of a scheduling error on my part and the lack of written response directed toward the participating students, I did not conduct a think-aloud protocol with Connie. Furthermore, Dean's lack of paper submission prevented a think-aloud with him. Here, the mixed-methodology proved useful. Because of my attention to the intersections of response and ideologies, Dean's discussion of the limited amount of work he produced and the lack of response he received as a result provides a different perspective on response not accessible through attention to texts alone.

I chose to include think-aloud and compose-aloud protocols in this study because I wanted to observe both the teacher's production of response and students' reaction to the response they received so I could triangulate reading and response practices, values and beliefs, and the responses provided to students. Wanting to maintain each classroom's organic standing to the fullest extent possible, I placed certain parameters on my use of protocol analysis. First, I modified the teacher protocols to account for the instructors' response habits. For example, because Jane produced response during her second reading of each student's writing project, I conducted the protocol analysis on this reading and not on her "norming" initial reading. Second, I asked each instructor to complete only one protocol. As a result of this decision, the data generated through each instructor's reading, thinking, and composing aloud provide a glimpse into that teacher's privileged practices and not a robust picture of responses to multiple student texts. Third, the student protocols were not conducted on the students' original reading of the response they received. I made the decision not to record their original interaction with the texts both because of the logistics of scheduling multiple appointments in a timely manner and because recording these initial reactions, although valuable, would alter how students initiated engagement with the teacher response. My approach straddles the line between think-aloud protocol and what have been called "text-based interviews" (O'Neill and Fife 49; Prior "Contextualizing Writing" 273–274). The students were successful to varying extents with reading and responding aloud. By modifying the protocol when necessary to navigate such challenges, I maintained a central focus on students' articulating their engagement with the response they had received.

The students' varying levels of success with the think-aloud protocol may have resulted from the mixed-methodology used in this study. The think-aloud protocol's artificiality collided with the casual, conversational tone I had established during the "interview" sessions. Students appeared uncomfortable transitioning from the malleable conversations to the tightly structured protocol. The protocols may have been more successful had I provided students with the instructions in advance. By doing this, students would have time to internalize the task being asked of them. Although demonstrating limitations, the compose-aloud and think-aloud protocols allowed for specific attention to be given to the relationships present among reading practices, textual products, and those values and beliefs that shape the production and reception of response. The data collected through the protocols and text-based interviews occupied a central role in the contextual knowledge I acquired while collecting data.

Textual Analysis

I describe the analytical process I used to investigate the data, including textual products, in the next section. I collected all documents, print and digital, distributed by instructors and submitted by students. These documents include syllabi, assignment handouts, other handouts, classroom activities, students' papers, and teachers' responses. Documents were collected in the format they functioned in the individual classrooms. Student submissions and teacher responses produced in print form were copied and immediately returned to the student. For papers submitted and returned digitally, I asked both students and instructors to send a copy. Doing so increased the likelihood that I would receive the document in a timely manner.

Data Analysis

I reviewed and developed connections among my observational notes, interviews, protocols, and textual documents throughout the semester, but I waited until after the semester concluded to conduct selective transcription. This transcription included specific moments of interest from the interviews and protocols. Patton argues that data analysis “begins during fieldwork” (452). Throughout the semester, I drew connections across the data collected to direct my actions and attention as the semester progressed. This process included reviewing field notes between class meetings, listening to interviews and protocols before the next meeting with the same student or instructor, and analyzing collected texts.

Patton argues that a researcher, when choosing an approach for data analysis, needs to consider both emic and etic analysis (453–55). Emic analysis depends on “participants’ language” to organize the data and establish patterns, whereas etic analysis results from linguistic frameworks the researcher brings to the analytical process (455). In my analysis, I called on both emic and etic analysis during both the data collection period and after the semester’s conclusion when I conducted the postcollection analysis. Patton offers the idea of sensitizing concepts as one approach for etic analysis. Building from Herbert Blumer’s definition of “directions along which to look,” Patton further establishes a sensitizing concept as “a starting point in thinking about the class of data of which the social researcher has no definite idea” such that it “provides an initial guide to [the] research” (Blumer 148; qtd. in Patton 278). I borrowed my sensitizing concepts from both the literature on ideology and the common language scholars have used to describe response practices. Because a large amount of literature on commenting

practices has focused on the creation of explanatory terminology, categories, and taxonomies, I had an extensive and widely accepted vocabulary to call on when analyzing my data. This vocabulary included “mode,” “role,” “power,” “control,” “purpose,” “form,” and “praise,” to name just a few terms. I further defined these concepts through the descriptive language commonly contained within these broad categories. For example, the term “role” included many of the terms scholars have put forth to provide alternatives to the evaluator role, including “coach,” “friend,” “interested reader,” and “intended audience.” A number of the sensitizing concepts—including power, control, and purpose—help connect response terminology with vocabulary commonly used to describe how ideologies operate.

Although I used these sensitizing concepts to frame my interview questions and to analyze the data emerging from these classes, I also remained attuned to the language the participants used to describe their preferences, practices, experiences, and beliefs. For example, as I discuss in Chapter 2, the majority of students preferred response that would allow them to “fix” their writing. Such language aligns with common response concepts such as directive feedback and appropriation. My privileging of participants’ language offers a variation on the “Listening Guide” method for data analysis (Brown and Gilligan). This feminist analytical method asks researchers to listen against the grain of an audio-recording (or the transcript if one is reading) to uncover ideas and values that may not be prominent within the recording and, as a result, may not be the first materials uncovered in the data analysis. For example, Chapter 4 originally investigated Bertrand’s use of reflective memos as means to lessen his control over students’ writing. As I listened and relistened to the interview audio and analyzed this audio alongside the

collected documents and class observations, I came to see that an analysis of formative response within semester-long engagements allowed for a better engagement with the uncertainty I was hearing in Bertrand's discussion of his response practices.

Data Presentation

Data collected via ethnographic methods is often presented as/in case studies. Some uncertainty exists about the parameters of a case study relating to the unit of analysis studied (Barone 8; Patton 296). Mary Sue MacNealy defines the case study as "a carefully designed project to systematically collect information about an event, situation, or small group of persons or objects for the purpose of exploring, describing, and/or explaining aspects not previously known or considered" (197). Patton mirrors MacNealy's language by arguing that a case study can investigate "particular events, occurrences, or incidents" (228). Yet, this expansion beyond the study of individuals complicates the case study genre by unsettling its most basic unit of analysis.

Patton works to bridge the gap between the study of persons and events by noting that the single case study can be made up of "nestled and layered case studies" comprising "bound events" (297). As I established previously, the production and reception of response within the instructor-student interaction is my particular point of analysis in this study, but because of the nature of this "unit," it comprises multiple "bound events." These bound events include not only the teachers' production of response and the students' reception of this response but also the material and social processes that shape this production and reception (remembering Straub's schema is useful here). For example, Chapter 2 discusses Bertrand's uneasiness with increasing the

number of teacher–student conferences he scheduled because he did not know where the new WPA stood on conferences as a response method. To demonstrate this uneasiness, I consider the intersections and disjunctions between Bertrand’s values and beliefs and those he saw valued in the writing program so as to investigate the role ideologies play in his production of response.

Although this project focuses on multiple classrooms, teachers, and students, I would be misrepresenting how the data are organized if I were to call it a single case study of three classrooms. I structure the project around sensitizing concepts intended to bridge my emic and etic analysis, and, in doing so, I speak to the ideologies shaping the production and reception of response by individuals in these classrooms. Given my orientation and methods, I appreciate Brenda Brueggemann’s term, “ethnographically orientated case studies,” because of how it accounts for both her “boxes of ... ethnographic data” and her primary “focus ... on individuals” (17, 35). My hope in structuring my findings around sensitizing concepts, including service, summative feedback, formative feedback, and text, is that I represent not only the interactions between individuals but also how these interactions begin to speak to those dominant and emergent ideologies that shape the production and reception of response.

Participant and Classroom Descriptions

Bertrand, His Class, and Participating Students

Bertrand is a middle-aged, white male. He was a term lecturer in the Composition Program at the time of this study. As a term lecturer, he has taught English

101, English 102, English 303: Scientific and Technical Writing, and English 306: Business Writing. During the observation semester, he taught two 102 classes and two 303 classes. Before starting as a college composition instructor, Bertrand taught middle school and high school English in a nearby county. Bertrand followed in his father's footsteps as both a school teacher and basketball coach. As Chapter 2 demonstrates, Bertrand's experience coaching high school basketball plays a big role in how he approaches the writing classrooms.

As a high school teacher, Bertrand used what he called "working folders" before the approach was termed a "portfolio pedagogy." Bertrand taught high school during a period of massive education overhaul in the state, including the implementation of mandated writing portfolios. Although a supporter of the portfolio approach, Bertrand was also leery of how the mandate might standardize this approach such that teachers would lose control over the design of their portfolio pedagogies. Bertrand's engagement with portfolios includes authorship of articles voicing concerns about this state-wide implementation and demonstrating the value of portfolios in college writing classrooms. For a number of years, Bertrand taught at both the high school and college level. In the mid-1990s, he was recruited into the university's doctoral program in rhetoric and composition. He completed coursework but was unable to complete the program because of family changes. Following his retirement as a high school teacher, he increased his teaching at the university and was promoted to the term lecturer position.

Bertrand's investment in fieldwork (see the next section describing his class) extends from concerns he has with how the traditional research essay leads to the regurgitation of "other people's thinking." Invested in seeing his students contribute to

the intellectual work of the university, Bertrand views fieldworking as a way for students to both investigate a topic of their own interest and generate their own research, research that reflects the knowledge privileged in the academy. As the following section demonstrates, Bertrand values the role of peer response in the writing classroom and he worries about exerting too much influence on student writing.

All of the participating students spoke at length about how they felt comfortable approaching Bertrand with questions. As an instructor, Bertrand valued getting to know his students because he felt it was nearly impossible to successfully respond to them if he did not know them. Throughout the semester in which he participated in this study, he spoke about the need to get to know his students more quickly so that he could more effectively engage with them, including through his response to their work.

Bertrand's class prominently featured process writing, peer review, and embedded research. In working toward the programmatic outcomes, Bertrand structured the class around fieldworking. Students were to locate a site for research and visit it across the semester. They were to investigate how culture operated in this location and, in turn, develop research questions growing from the field notes they kept in their research journals.

Bertrand structured his classroom as, in his words, "a writing workshop." Because this class was held in one of the composition program's computer labs, each student had access to a personal computer. Students spent a large amount of class time drafting, peer reviewing, and revising. Peer review was conducted on the computers, and students submitted work electronically. A typical class period featured ten to fifteen minutes of a

class activity followed by drafting, reviewing, or revising. At the beginning of the semester, the class featured lengthier activities, some of which occupied the entire class period. These activities included the viewing of ethnographic documentaries and the discussion of sample essays, all of which were intended to introduce students to the work they were being asked to complete. As the semester progressed, more and more class time was dedicated to students working on their own writing or responding to classmates' writing. When students were composing or peer reviewing, Bertrand sat at his own computer station where he was available to answer student questions.

Bertrand introduced a greater number of conferences during the semester I was observing his class. He conferenced essays one, three, and four. He provided written comments to essay two. Students were expected to receive peer response and use this peer response for revision before submitting the paper for written feedback or for conferencing. Bertrand also asked his students to complete reflective memos for each writing assignment. The post-peer review response and the reflective memos were successful to differing degrees across students and across the semester. Students received a "process" grade and an "imaginary" grade on each essay. At the end of the semester, 50% of the student's grade came from the process grade and the other 50% came from the final portfolio.

David, the son of a substitute teacher (mother) and hospital technician (father), referred to himself as a first-generation student, although his mother had returned to college as an adult to earn her degree. David grew up in the same city in which Hill University is located and attended a highly ranked, public high school just off of Hill

University's campus. Across the semester, David talked about how he was motivated to attend college by the way his maternal grandfather and father would talk about college. Although neither attended college, they conveyed to David the freedom experienced by college students and the career opportunities made possible by a college degree. An African American, David desired to do well in college because he wanted to set an example for his two younger siblings, because he wanted to work against what he saw to be educational stereotypes applied to blacks, and because he knew education would provide him new opportunities. David was studying computer programming, and his original fieldworking topic, the role of illegal downloading in the music industry, grew out of his interest in both computers and music. As he came to understand how fieldworking differed from argumentative writing, he localized his observational work within a well-known, local music store that was facing difficult financial times due to the music industry's changing identity.

David was highly influenced by his first-semester writing instructor. He saw similarities between this instructor's focus on "developing your voice" and the idea of writing as practice that Bertrand privileged. David was eager to participate in Bertrand's class during group discussions. In our engagement, David demonstrated an uncommon mix of casualness and respect for elders. This respect for elders included a sense of deference to instructors, which most often came across as agreement with those practices a teacher privileged.

Martin moved to the state in which Hill University is located during his teenage years. He went to the county-seat high school in a small, river town an hour from Hill

University. The son of a chiropractor, Martin had a keen interest in film production. He had considered attending film school instead of Hill University, but decided not to because of both distance and his belief that one does not need to study film to produce film. He began college studying dentistry but quickly switched his major to finance. He made this switch because he knew a finance degree would help him with the film business he had started with a friend. Martin's involvement in this study was highly marked by this business. The company secured a number of contracts at the beginning of the semester. As a result, Martin faced time constraints across the semester. During the middle of the semester, he was more often absent from class than present. Martin was surprised when Bertrand said he could stick around in the class after missing one more than the accepted number of absences. Martin took Bertrand's decision seriously and completed the semester missing only one more class due to illness. During the time in which he was regularly absent from class, Martin missed our second interview session.

Martin focused his fieldwork on the local music scene. He faced some challenges gaining access to shows because of his age, but he found these challenges to be acceptable because he wanted to make new business connections while also growing his social circle. Because of his interest in film, Martin often spoke of response as a videographer referencing both the revision process used by him and his business partner and the film critic's role of deciding what works and what doesn't work in a film. According to Martin, his family expected him to drop out of college to focus on film; Martin did not agree with this assessment, although he said it wasn't his goal to prove them wrong.

Megan is a first-generation American. She purposefully chose her pseudonym to obscure her ethnicity; therefore, I am respecting her wishes by not specifically naming her ethnicity. She grew up in the city in which she attends college, having completed high school within walking distance of the university at the same school David attended. According to Megan, she performed well in high school, although her performance would have improved with greater consistency in her studies. Megan's father is a Ph.D. chemist, and she hopes to have a career in medicine. At times, she would articulate pressure from her parents to pursue this career in medicine, but she was also quick to clarify that her parents were most interested in her achieving personal happiness over achievement in a particular field.

Megan prioritized her science and math classes above Bertrand's writing class, although she attended the majority of the class meetings and submitted all the assignments. She readily admitted that procrastination was one of her biggest challenges; often she articulated a plan of action for her writing that did not come to fruition. During the semester, she focused her research on an assisted living community. Megan was drawn to this research location by both her interest in medicine and the fact that her grandmother had recently entered such a community. As Chapter 2 demonstrates, Megan privileged response directed at the correction of error. This expectation for corrective feedback is particularly interesting because of the bad experience she had in high school with a teacher who tended to cover her papers in red ink.

Connie, Her Class, and Participating Students

Connie, to use her own words, is closer in age to her students' grandparents than her students. She most often teaches English 101, English 102, English 309: Inquires in Writing, and an upper-level writing course required in the Liberal Studies Program. She returned to college as an adult student in the late 1980s to complete an M.A. in English. Her first teaching experience was with basic writers. This experience led her to complete a thesis focused on basic writing pedagogy. Connie's experience in these basic writing classrooms as well as with what she calls the academy's "rigidity" contributes to the maternal identity she brings to the writing classroom. This maternal identity is at the center of Chapter 2. She has also been influenced by watching her two sons traverse the educational system with disabilities, by teaching students with full-time jobs, and by experiences with illness. Connie is a cancer survivor, an experience she credits with allowing her to understand how illnesses of all kind affect performance and productivity. During the data collection semester, one of Connie's sons was diagnosed with what would be a fatal illness. Although not directly referenced in this project, this family situation both limited the time Connie had to spend with student writing outside of the classroom and reaffirmed her commitment to decentered approaches to learning, including group work.

In our initial interview, Connie acknowledged that she had never encountered response to student writing apart from grammatical correction until she began graduate school. She credits her experience in a "Teaching Composition" course with providing her a basis for response practices. Having tried out many different approaches to response, she has found that she highly privileges praise but also will challenge students

through the use of questions. At the end of the semester, due to concerns she had with students' engagement in the class and how her grading practices might be viewed as "inflated," Connie began to investigate the use of grading contracts.

Connie's class was focused on I-Search papers, peer group work, and research methods. Connie first became aware of the I-Search paper when helping her son complete an assignment when he was in high school. Following this experience, she gathered further research on this classroom genre and began to assign I-Search papers in her basic writing classes. She values this assignment because of how it allows students to engage topics they are interested in, provides them an opportunity to develop research practices, and allows them to build to the bigger assignment through smaller sections. Students were to complete three I-Search papers. For the first, they all investigated environmental topics. For the second, they were to investigate a topic related to a career of interest. Students were able to pick a topic of their own choosing for the third paper, but Connie suggested that this topic be related to the first or second paper.

A typical class featured Connie talking for five to fifteen minutes before students broke out into small groups of their own choosing. Some classes would end with Connie briefly lecturing on a specific topic such as MLA citation, whereas other classes would end after the group work. Alongside the group work classes, the students also attended three library research sessions. Connie also held a few research reminders across the semester as portions of other class meetings. In groups, students were to share ideas on the next portion of the assigned I-Search paper and were to brainstorm research topics, questions, and methods. Connie circulated through the various groups, always sitting

down to talk to the students. She tended to join active conversations or to facilitate conversations by asking, “How’s it going over here?”

Connie’s participation in these peer groups represents her most common response practice. From time to time, she would hold short one-on-one conferences with students at the same time the peer groups met. These conferences, which she held at the teacher’s desk, provided students an opportunity to ask specific questions while also providing Connie an opportunity to check on a student’s progress. Her written responses were short and consisted primarily of praise and questions directed at either revision of the current document or development of the next I-Search paper. The class was designed so that students were to submit the I-Search paper in small sections. The two student participants did not follow this expectation, so I was not able to fully investigate how this submission structure functioned in Connie’s class.

Dean came to Hill University from a small metropolitan area in the South after serving four years in the Marines, including two tours in Iraq. He served in a number of different positions but said most were communication and/or writing intensive. Dean’s experience in the Marines, including the military-privileged approach to writing, significantly shaped his expectations for and experience in Connie’s class, which I examine further in Chapter 2. Dean brought a very pragmatic view to education, and he desired to learn the “forms” of writing privileged by the university and the working world. His pragmatic view of education stemmed from watching the career ceilings his parents had hit because of their lack of college degrees. His dad worked in shipping for a CD/DVD manufacturer, having started “on the docks” before working his way up. His

dad worried constantly about downsizing due to changes in entertainment buying trends. Dean's mom worked as an accountant but did not have her CPA license. Although he did not see himself as a college student before the Marines, he came to understand the importance of a college education.

Because he struggled to see practical value in Connie's class, Dean often skipped the class. He was working full-time at a local restaurant for eight dollars an hour. He was also working on the side for the restaurant's owner doing odd jobs. When he found out during the semester that he was going to be a father, both time and money became more pressing issues. He negotiated with Connie the option of writing one longer paper on the beer brewing process to go along with his first I-Search paper on water-powered vehicles instead of the two remaining papers the syllabus called for. At the end of the semester, he told me he was going to leave school to pursue licensure as an emergency technician, an interest that aligned with his growing interest in nursing.

Mindy grew up the daughter of an Army veteran and a Korean immigrant in a rural, small town. She moved to the area when she was six-months old following the family's departure from Korea. Her dad worked as the town's postmaster, and her mom worked as a clerk in the post office. Mindy described both her parents as being highly literate, with her mom privileging math and her dad being a history buff. Her mother, in Mindy's words, was the "stereotypical Asian mother" who pushed academics and expected high achievement. Mindy grew up writing significantly and imagined herself as an author when she grew up. This interest in writing lessened in high school. She

attended the only high school in her county and did well, although she said the school was not challenging.

Mindy came to Hill University to experience new opportunities and to escape this town, which had a high poverty level and few career possibilities. She desired to go further away to an out-of-state school, but that was not possible financially. Originally interested in graphic design, she had recently changed her interest to biology after becoming concerned with the financial outcomes available in graphic design. She had completed Connie's English 101 class and had enrolled in this class because she knew Connie was both "easy" and "approachable." Like Dean, she missed a considerable number of class meetings. She did submit a complete portfolio, which included papers on the colony collapse disorder affecting bees, career opportunities in biochemistry, and the Pacific Garbage Patch. Mindy plays a very minor role in this written product, but the conversations I had with her shaped my observations as well as the questions I asked Connie.

Jane, Her Class, and Participating Students

Jane was in her last semester of teaching as a graduate student during the data collection semester. White and in her late twenties, Jane had earned an M.F.A. at a major research university in the Mid-Atlantic. She then taught as an adjunct at a community college and a small, liberal arts college in the Midwest before coming to Hill University. During her time at Hill University, she taught a wide variety of courses, including English 101, English 102, the honors FYC course, various courses in the creative writing program, and upper-level literature courses. Having taught this wide variety of courses,

Jane had been out of the first-year, research-writing classroom for a number of years prior to the data collection semester. A significant amount of our conversations focused on reacquainting herself with the English 102 curriculum, changes she was introducing since the last time she had taught the class, and changes she sensed she would need to make the next time she taught a similar course. She taught two English 102 courses, the standard graduate student teaching load, in Spring 2010.

One of Jane's major points of emphasis during the observation semester was her own role as expert. She wanted to share her own expertise with her students while also developing mechanisms to facilitate classroom conversation, peer review, and student engagement. Jane spoke of using rubrics previously in her teaching and how she now found such an approach to be inadequate for a full engagement with student writing. This movement away from what might be called artificial assessment mechanisms was part of a bigger shift Jane had been making in her teaching that focused on treating students more fully as participants in a meaningful learning process. On numerous occasions she referenced the need to listen and respect student writing, and she voiced little patience for writing instructors who belittle students or student writing. As part of her explanation of this ongoing pedagogical shift, Jane discussed her movement away from focusing on error in student writing to seeing student writing as a space in which students are trying to take on complicated ideas. Jane cited numerous factors for this shift, including graduate coursework and discussions with colleagues on how we construct students in the writing classroom. Throughout the semester, Jane voiced a desire to engage student ideas, but she also worried about appropriating these ideas by misreading them or directing students in directions they may not want to go. At the same time, she called on her institutional

expertise in emphasizing those practices privileged by the academy. Her feedback to a student's paper featuring what she called "citation issues" is the focus of Chapter 3.

Jane structured her class around argumentative researched writing, sequenced assignments, and peer response. Students completed three major writing projects focused on the same broad topic. This series of papers expanded from the establishment of a problem with social implications, to the consideration of multiple perspectives on the issue, and, finally, to proposing a solution by taking a position in relation to these multiple perspectives. By having students engage an issue of social importance across a semester and by having students consider how the problem and proposed solution affected different populations, Jane felt she was forwarding a more socially responsible approach to argument than commonly found in composition classrooms.

Along with these three major writing projects, students submitted 250-word response essays on Fridays on which a writing project was not due. Students completed a specific task or series of tasks for each response essay. Early in the semester, these responses focused on finding research sources, whereas later assignments asked students to engage these sources or to return to an earlier assignment to draw connections with an upcoming assignment. Jane responded to half of these responses, whereas the other half were responded to through a peer pair approach. The peer pairs changed each week, as did the half to which Jane responded.

The class meetings in Jane's course were structured around selected sample response essays. Students came to Tuesday class periods having read the distributed samples. These samples were then used in the class in various ways. For instance, the

student samples were often used to facilitate class-wide conversation following a group exercise. In the group exercise, students would give and receive feedback on their own ideas/texts. The shared student texts, in turn, would be used to operationalize the group discussion across the student population.

Group work featured prominently in Jane's class, but she often used it to move into or out of individual exercises or lectures. Almost all of Jane's classes featured multiple, linked activities. Jane lectured on important concepts like library research, but she tended to facilitate these lectures via sample student texts, and she would follow the lecture with a hands-on activity. Each class period was full of activity from the beginning to the end, and Jane distributed notes and summaries through the Blackboard e-mail system. Both participating students articulated, at different points in the semester, a sense of being overwhelmed at times with the various materials, although they also said they appreciated the depth of engagement present in Jane's course.

As the following chapters demonstrate, Jane responded extensively to student writing. She responded to half the response essays each week and also wrote extensive cover letter responses to the writing projects. She managed her responses using an egg timer, and, because she had limited time, she tried to focus on the most important points of interest in students' writing. For the major writing projects, she read the entire pile to get a sense for the writing collectively. While she did this, she generated points of focus to comment on in each student's paper. Jane also held a one-on-one conference with each of her students before the final portfolio submission. Students received grades on the major writing projects and were allowed to revise them for the final portfolio. The

portfolio accounted for 50% of the student's grade, while participation and the response essays each counted for 25%.

Ashley came to Hill University from a rural area lying just outside the outskirts of a major metropolitan city. She graduated as valedictorian from the large county high school. Both of Ashley's parents had undergone career changes due to varying circumstances. Her dad was a long-time welder but was moved into the company's shipping division as a result of a decline in demand for airplanes after the September 2001 terrorist attacks. Her mom had worked as an office manager and bank manager before taking disability as the result of a brain tumor. Ashley is a first-generation college student and was interested in studying dental hygiene, although her major was psychology during the data collection semester. Like many of the other participants, she shared the view that a college education would make her less prone to the employment shifts she had witnessed her parents experienced.

Ashley likes school and enjoys learning. She saw limited application for writing in her life, as she was more interested in anatomy, math, and other sciences. She did articulate the belief that writing well would be important to her career success. Ashley focused her research on post-traumatic stress syndrome, a topic of interest to her as a member of the campus's R.O.T.C unit. Ashley was a focused student but not overly serious. She preferred instructions and feedback to be direct and clear. I examine her frustration with an aspect of Jane's response in Chapter 3.

Ava came to Hill University from the suburbs of a major metropolitan area located in a bordering state. Although her family conducted business in the metropolitan area, they lived across the river in the state in which Hill University is located. She attended a small, Catholic high school because her parents valued the religious education offered alongside the college preparatory curriculum. Ava's father owned a small printing business, and her mother had transitioned through a number of careers before becoming a stay-at-home mom. Both parents were college educated, and Ava grew up knowing that she was expected to go to college as well. Her primary interest was art, which was an interest she developed at a young age. Her parents, and especially her dad, were supportive of her studying art, but they also hoped she would pursue this interest in the form of art education or art therapy.

Ava described herself as someone who was not "very language oriented." She wanted to improve her writing because she knew she would need to write documents, including what she called art statements, but she also found herself in what she called a vicious cycle. This cycle was that she didn't write because she wasn't comfortable writing while knowing that she wouldn't become comfortable if she didn't write. Ava's performance over the semester was very uneven. She missed the maximum allowed number of classes, and she expected these absences to negatively affect her grade more than they actually did. She explained her lack of motivation as resulting from both her lukewarm interest in writing and as a side effect of medicine she was taking. She did appreciate that she was able to write on a topic of her choosing, which was the question of whether child soldiers should be viewed as victims or assailants.

CHAPTER TWO

RESPONDING WITHIN AND AGAINST COMPOSITION'S SERVICE IDENTITY

In some ways, a restaurant is a structured and predictable environment. The physical layout guides movement and behavior, and the various conventions associated with dining out are well known, to customer and waitress alike. But when analyzed in terms of the interrelated physical and cognitive demands of the work itself, the environment, particularly at peak hours, becomes more complex, with a variable and ill-structured quality.

Mike Rose, "The Working Life of a Waitress"

In his article "The Working Life of a Waitress," Mike Rose uses alternative research methods to pay homage to his mother's waitressing career by investigating the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical factors shaping a waitress's work. Choosing to focus on how these factors converge and not merely on each factor individually allows Rose¹ to illustrate the complex environment in which waitressing² occurs. This environment includes the restaurant's physical layout, the physical demands placed on a waitress, the waitress's contextually dependent use of memory, and the multiple layers of personal and institutional relationships present in the restaurant. Also influencing a waitress's work are waitressing's social history and the economic realities understood by anyone who has ever waited tables. The picture Rose paints accounts for "the mix of strategies and processes" a waitress uses to navigate her workspace, the relationship

¹ All references to Rose in the text refer to Mike Rose. References to Alan Rose are presented as A. Rose.

² I use the feminine terms "waitress," "waitressing," and "her" as a sign of respect for Rose's work and the gendered tradition he traces.

between cognitive processes and physical actions necessary for the waitress to successfully navigate her workspace, and the balance a waitress must keep among demands placed on her by customers, coworkers, and management (13). The attention Rose pays to these various factors allows him to trouble the “structured and predictable environment” people might expect in a restaurant (9). By doing so, he demonstrates the multitude of factors shaping a waitress’s work.

This move to complicate what might first be viewed as a well-structured and well-understood context is what draws me to Rose’s work. By accounting for both the intersections and disjunctions present among these influential factors, Rose asks his readers to reconsider how they view the work of waitressing given the cognitive demands a waitress faces.³ Borrowing from Rose, I pay special attention to how a constellation of influences shapes the production and reception of feedback. My attraction to Rose’s work does not end with the attention he pays to the complicated intersection that occurs among numerous factors. The parallel realities that exist between waitressing and teaching provide a starting point to consider how teaching and response are fraught with tensions.

For example, both waitress and teacher are triangulated between the customer/student and larger structures including management/administration and company/institutional policies. Furthermore, each career can be traced through a specific sociocultural history. In the Introduction, I accounted for composition’s history through attention to Connors work. In his article, Rose traces the social-historical context of

³ Part of Rose’s project addresses the materiality of work, a topic broached, in regard to composition, by Bruce Horner in *Terms of Work for Composition*. Although Rose accounts for the sociocultural history of waitressing, his primary focus remains situated in the physical restaurant space. My own project works to leave the most commonly studied physical aspect of comments (the comments placed on the page) to better understand the values, beliefs, and attitudes that influence the production and reception of these comments. Although I touch on the physical classroom when needed, such an investigation is not at the project’s center.

waitressing to conclude “the waitress–customer encounter is shaped by the historical residue of the servant role and by various cultural expectations regarding gender” (20). Although there are surely differences between these two positions, the role of cultural expectations and gender are central to how both are constructed within dominant society. Looked at in relationship to each other, they reaffirm Connors’s historical work and provide a way into my own project.

Rose pays particular attention to the “association of maid and waitress—and ... the waitress’s desire to distinguish her work from that of housemaid” (18). This association and the phrase most often used to describe the work waitresses do—“the serving of food”—highlights the predominant social view of what waitressing is (17). Rose’s work challenges people to consider the work of waitressing beyond a perspective bound in the concept of service or, worse, servitude. A similar orientation toward service has shaped how people make sense of composition’s work as well. Tracing the role service has played in our field’s history, Sharon Crowley argues:

[T]he discourse of needs positions composition teachers as servants of a student need that is spoken, not by students themselves, but by people speaking for powerful institutions. Like the narrative of progress, the discourse of needs interpellates composition teachers as subjects who implement the regulatory desires of the academy and the culture at large.
(257)

Highlighting what she sees to be a lack of rhetorical purpose in required composition courses, Crowley argues for the abolition of such courses as a means to reposition writing and rhetoric in the university, including the teaching of these subjects. In the introduction

to their collection, *Contending with Words: Composition and Rhetoric in a Postmodern Age*, Patricia Harkin and John Schlib problematize the interpellation of the composition teacher by arguing that the authors included in the text construct “the study of composition and rhetoric [as] not merely the service component of the English department, but also inquiry into cultural values” (3). The authors’ use of “but also” to illustrate a relation present between the teaching of composition as both “service” and “inquiry into cultural values” positions their view of the teaching of composition as an endeavor in which alternatives exist to composition as service, yet, at the same time, such alternatives operate alongside this service expectation and not as a replacement. This line of thought could be explained by a phrase such as “service but also something else.” The instructors I worked with for this study possessed differing levels of investment in engaging “inquiry into cultural values,” although all instructors did address cultural values to some extent. Bertrand articulated a hidden goal in his class of radicalizing student thought through critical engagement with research sites. Connie asked students to develop their first I-search papers around environmental issues after a class viewing of *Food, Inc.* Jane designed her class around social controversies, including the investigation of who is most affected by them. At the same time, Bertrand commented on the use of a hanging indent in MLA format; Connie focused multiple class sessions on increasing students’ comfort with library research processes; and Jane provided regular “writing tips” intended to inform students on more nuanced matters of style and grammar, including the proper use of the colon and how to decide between “affect” and “effect.” Put simply, each instructor provided a service component to his or her students; at the same time, no instructor only provided a service component if service component is

defined either as the historical emphasis on grammar correctness Connors outlines or the more general concept of articulated “student need” Crowley offers.

Composition’s institutional positioning as a service course viewed alongside our individual (and collective) attempts to make the course something more than merely service helps explain not only the tensions present between practitioners in the field and outside institutions but also the tensions present within the field. As I look at the contexts shaping three composition classrooms, I do so from the perspective that each instructor, given his or her awareness of composition’s history and historical positioning in the university, is very much trying to do “service but also something else.” The tensions between students’ various expectations for service and whatever else it is that the instructor is trying to do exist as a starting point through which to consider the differing expectations instructors and students have for the class and for the roles students and teachers occupy.

The service writing instructors are to provide positions the instructors as responding to social expectations, individual student expectations, a problematic sociocultural history, supervision/surveillance, and policies and guidelines. Although it would surely be reductive to draw too absolute of connections between waitressing and teaching, the waitressing context offers a useful visual through which to imagine these factors operating. The most central and obvious interaction for the waitress is that which occurs with the seated customer. For the instructor, the most obvious interaction is that interaction around which the field of education revolves—the interaction with the individual student or class of students. For the waitress, there are many other matters that shape, are shaped by, and exist outside this interaction with the individual customer.

These items include the interaction that occurs with fellow waitresses and waiters, other employees, and managers; the real-time demands being made by customers; and the general work flow the waitress faces. Broader factors that may influence the waitress's work include past training, years of experience, and degree of experience in different types of establishments; personal views on the workplace, waitressing as a profession, and company policies; quality of work provided in this specific restaurant; economic pressures; and health concerns—to name only a few. Writing instructors also face immediate and broader factors. Immediate pressures an instructor faces include how best to use class time, workload at a given moment or in a given semester, the amount of student work requiring response, and the time available to do this response. Broader contexts include the instructor's perspective on the purposes of required writing classes, his/her expectations for students, his/her perspectives on departmental outcomes and university policies, the extent and quality of teaching training he/she has received, and his/her classroom experience—to name only a few of many.

The instructor–student context provides a central point through which to orient all other commenting contexts, and it mirrors the waitress–customer context. Although these factors do not position themselves around the instructor–student interaction in nice, neat heliocentric orbits in a way that might mirror a middle-school student's solar system diagram (see Straub's diagram in Chapter 1), imaging the instructor–student interaction as the center of my focus, much like the waitress–customer interaction is at the heart of restaurant service operations, provides a means to make sense of the many factors influencing the production and reception of feedback. Just as the customer may or may not be aware of consequential events that occur in a restaurant's kitchen galley, the

student may or may not be aware of outside factors influencing how and why an instructor comments the way he/she does. Equally consequential, the instructor may be aware or remain unaware of contextual factors shaping how and why a student acts the way he/she does. Accounting for the fuller context in which the instructor–student interaction occurs allows us to more fully account for how these varying contexts shape this interaction.

Commenting occurs not only in the text produced by the student and read by the teacher, and not only in the instructor–student interaction beyond the page, but also in a physical space involving but not limited to the interaction between these two participants. From this perspective, Rose’s contention about waitressing—that it is “complex, with a variable and ill-structured quality”—may apply to response to student writing as well (9). Furthermore, the “service” component of teaching and commenting is complicated by the role values, attitudes, and beliefs play in both the interaction between student and teacher and the task of writing instruction represented by this interaction. Rose’s study of the physical, cognitive, and relational factors that influence the waitress’s work helps to paint a more thorough picture of the many overlapping and sometimes conflicting aspects that may not be accounted for in popular perceptions.

Although both waitressing and teaching writing are situated in gendered, service sociocultural histories, there is one primary distinction between the two careers consequential to my work. Waitressing and teaching both involve the relative short-term interaction between two individuals, yet the instructor–student interaction is situated as to facilitate ongoing growth and development directed toward later student investments, both inside and outside the university. Cynthia Tuell uses a metaphor of “straightening a

closet” to describe the service offered by writing instructors (126). By “organiz[ing] the discourse of our students,” we provide the “‘regular’ professors” with students, like closets, that are free of clutter (126). In this sense, the instructor–student interaction differs from that of waitress–customer because the educational activity is marked with an expectation of preparation for various, more advanced activities that will come at a future time. The end result of this expectation is the further complication of the short-in-duration engagement between the student and the instructor. Although this interaction lasts merely a semester, the social stigmas and expectations associated with the teaching of writing establish that what is taught and learned in the writing classroom, although presumably basic in nature, will be consequential for what happens beyond this writing classroom, not only for the student but also for other instructors and the university as a whole and the student’s employers. The consequences of this engagement, as traditionally constructed, are the eradication of errors, the remediation of issues in student writing, and the dissemination of skills—what Crowley terms “student need.” As this chapter will demonstrate, students do voice needs, and they voice needs that align with dominant definitions of what writing is and how writing should be taught. Such articulations may result as another form of interpellation—in this case, the interpellation of student writers to speak of the very needs desired by “powerful institutions” (Crowley 257). The students in this chapter speak of a desire for their instructors to organize the students’ discursal closet, and rarely do they problematize this desire. Although such desire can be traced to other institutional structures, including parents, the expectations privileged in high school, and prior work experience, this desire is most consequential to

the production and reception of response to student writing—their writing—because it shapes the very context in which this production and reception occurs.

My purpose in this chapter is to demonstrate how the production and reception of comments are influenced by and respond to, to use Connors's terminology, those influences and pressures of our "shared past" and shared present (18). Like Connors, I cannot cover every thematic issue, nor can I present a "coherent 'whole picture'" that fully establishes the tensions present in commenting practices due to the countless factors shaping pedagogy—and commenting more specifically (17). Because students' desire for response that acts as correction was *the* dominant theme present in my data collection and analysis, I focus my attention in this chapter on this thread, and I place it alongside the concept of service that began this chapter. To illustrate that students' expectations and desires are more complex than simply grammatical correction, I situate my analysis within Rose's work with deficiency. By constructing this chapter's foundation in Rose's scholarship, I am able to situate my own work in relation to the complicating moves common to Rose's work. The idea that these instructors are working both within and against service expectations provides space through which to consider how the students' expectations relate to the pedagogical roles the participating instructors engaged in in the courses I observed. The intersection of deficiency and teacher roles provides ample room to consider how moments of connection and disjunction that occur between teacher and student relate to differences in expectations regarding the work and methods of writing instructors—differences that relate specifically to how students and teachers view writing differently, the material conditions in which the instructors work, and, in one case, the role gender played in these differing perspectives. Seeing how many students' viewpoints

on writing and the teaching of writing are structured around beliefs regarding deficiency and error correction, it follows that such beliefs, especially considering students' uncomplicated acceptance of these beliefs, shape students' expectations of and responses to the comments they receive.

To illustrate these points, I paint this complex desire for correction more broadly by considering the beliefs, expectations, and classroom experiences of two students—Megan, who was enrolled in Bertrand's class, and Dean, who was enrolled in Connie's class—alongside the roles these instructors constructed for themselves. I position Bertrand in the role of coach and Connie in the role of mother and then consider how these roles operate outside the expectations Megan and Dean had for their instructors, both in regard to their identities and their response practices. My primary purpose with this portion of the chapter is to bring to surface differences in how “service” is constructed and the consequences these differences have for pedagogy, including commenting. I then expand beyond these specific instructor–student relationships to investigate broader influences on instructor commenting and how an individual instructor's pedagogical practices, including commenting practices, are shaped by the intersection of beliefs, expectations, and material conditions. First, I analyze Bertrand's uneasiness with expanding his use of conferences because of worries about how the programmatic leadership views conferencing as a pedagogical practice. Second, I examine how Bertrand, Connie, and Jane address matters of workload and time, especially in relation to what their workloads and shortages of time mean for response to student writing. As I conclude the chapter, I use the matters of workload, time, and conflicting beliefs to consider how “service but something else” can operate in

classrooms situated within complex and competing beliefs about how the teaching of writing should occur.

Deficiency and Writing Instruction

Before turning his attention to complicating how we account for the role of cognition in physical labor, Rose first focused his scholarly attention on problematizing approaches to basic writing. In the early 1980s, Rose and other education scholars, including Mina Shaughnessy, Patricia Bizzell, and David Bartholomae, examined the role of remedial education in universities, especially as it related to writing instruction. In “The Language of Exclusion: Writing Instruction in the University,” Rose outlines the history of approaches to writing focused on remediation and skills development to raise questions about how such approaches “[reveal] a reductive, fundamentally behaviorist model of the development and use of written language, a problematic definition of writing, and an inaccurate assessment of student ability and need” (341). Of his five points of focus, two are especially useful for my current project: remediation and “English as skill” (346). He situates remediation as “corrective” approaches to teaching that “lead educators to view writing problems from a medical-remedial paradigm.” (352). This approach allows for the diagnosis of what ails student writing and the assigning of exercises that will correct such issues (352). Remediation, Rose tells us, is intended “to correct errors or fill in gaps in a person’s knowledge” (349). The perspective of writing as skill operates in a similar manner. Definitions of writing that privilege skills development imagine writing as a “technical” activity (347). As such, writing becomes equivalent to “transcription” and can be defined as resulting from “fundamental tools” and “basic

procedures” that should be “mastered” before students advance to new contexts in which these tools can be applied without issue (347).

The construction of writing instruction as deficiency correction matters to the teaching of writing because this mindset defines both what may occur in a classroom and how the teaching of writing is positioned within the academy. Rose situates the expectation that first-year writing acts as remediation as one of a number of reasons why writing is reduced to a “second-class intellectual status” that “influence[s]” the way faculty, students, and society view the teaching of writing” (348). Although Rose’s work is now nearly 30 years old, the students in my study voiced beliefs about writing and the teaching of writing that demonstrate a continuation of writing instruction steeped in correction and skills development (see fig. 2.1).

These voices present a concern about “error,” “fixing,” and “correctness” that extends beyond one student’s idiosyncratic preferences. Given the prominent role of such statements in my conversations with these student-participants, I’m led to believe that these statements help support Rose’s contention about how “students and society view the teaching of writing” (348). Rose highlights how traditional approaches to writing instruction focused on error because error is “eminently measurable” and easily tabulated (343).

Measurement and tabulation, long-standing practices of writing instruction and writing assessment, have been extended, especially in the No Child Left Behind era, to the assessment of entire schools and school systems. The year after my data collection, *The Courier-Journal*, Louisville, Kentucky’s daily newspaper, published a story

Megan: I really want to know where I am going wrong because, like I said, I want to be the best I can be, and the only way to be the best if is you tell me where I'm going wrong because I know I am not going to write perfect papers.

Martin: Even if I have an A, I want to see something I did wrong, so next time I can do better.

Ashley: Well, after I read that [a marginal comment], I figured there would be, like, some things I would have to fix.

Ava: I realize that my papers, at the beginning, typically need a lot of work, and I don't need to know what the person likes because that doesn't help me improve it. I just need to know what needs to be fixed or taken out or what needs to be added because that's how I am going to fix it. I'm not worried about my feelings getting hurt. I'm worried about getting a bad grade.

Dean: There's always room for improvement, so when you get a paper back and there's nothing on it, that's like saying it was perfect. That doesn't happen. Like it may be worthy of a one hundred, but that doesn't mean it's perfect. There's got to be an error somewhere.

Mindy: You can decide how you want to fix it or if you want to. I mean, maybe she is taking it wrong, so you have to fix something so that it makes more sense.

Figure 2.1: Selections from Student Conversations Focused on Correction

entitled “Options Limited to Fix 3 Struggling JCPS Schools.” The use of the terms “options,” “fix,” and “struggling” connect back to remediation—Rose’s “troublesome metaphor” (357). Chris Kenning, the author’s article, lists “four options” available to Jefferson County Public Schools for “overhauling failing schools,” a status resulting from “an array of deficiencies” reported by state education auditors. These deficiencies “[range] from poor classroom instruction to disruptive student behavior that impedes learning.” The state’s use of “options” to address “deficiencies” mirrors Rose’s conclusion that remedial approaches privilege the diagnosis and curing of those defects hampering a student or, in this case, multiple schools. Further connections can be drawn between these student voices, Connors’s historical account, the current state of K–12

education as articulated in *The Courier-Journal* article, and Rose's examination of educational remediation to illustrate both the lasting importance placed on correctness in society's expectations for education and the continuance of these values in the students' expectations for their writing education.

Although I can't fully trace to what extent these expectations result from students being represented by "people speaking for powerful institutions" (Crowley 257), it is impossible to ignore the degree to which these student voices articulate a desire for correction and remediation. Furthermore, a student's belief that the instructor's job is to "tell me where I am going wrong" demonstrates not what it is that is supposed to be corrected (and taught) but who is supposed to be doing this work and how this person should go about his/her work. The student excerpts provided in Figure 2.1 illustrate an expectation regarding not only what work will be engaged in the composition classroom but also what the composition instructor is expected to do. Ava, for instance, wants to know "what needs to be fixed or taken out," whereas both Martin and Dean are wary that a strong grade might overlook an "error" in the paper or limit improvement in the next paper. By expressing expectations for an instructor centered on fixing and correcting, these student voices, possibly unknowingly, sustain a push for a certain type of instructor service. The data I collected demonstrate that Rose's goal "to abandon this troublesome metaphor" (meaning remediation) has taken hold with (some) composition instructors and (presumably) composition programs; however, at the same time, remedial views of education and writing demonstrate lasting importance with students and society.

As a result of these competing factors, the pedagogical approach of "service but also something else" makes sense. Like the waitress, the composition instructor

simultaneously responds to pressures from many different directions. As they responded to these pressures, all three instructor-participants brought their own views on writing, the teaching of writing, and the work of the university to their teaching. Even when we take into account their divergent backgrounds (as outlined in Chapter 1), all three instructors came to composition well into the period Connors calls “contemporary composition-rhetoric” (15, 66–67). They began their careers as college-level instructors and developed composition pedagogies in an era in which composition, as a field of study and teaching, was pushing back against the problematic threads offered by Connors. Yet, at the same time, given the always-present social expectations regarding the goals and purposes of writing instruction, they never teach free of these pressures. They’re afforded the freedom (within the local context) to engage pedagogies in which they are invested, yet, by doing so, they are always already forced to make sense of how what they do in the classroom and how they present themselves in the classroom moves away, either slightly or significantly, from the expectations, which themselves are not homogeneous, that students bring to their classrooms. As I demonstrate in the remainder of the chapter, any disjunctions between student and teacher occur not because an individual instructor is fully resisting a service pedagogy but as a result of the instructor engaging pedagogical practices, including commenting approaches, he/she believes forward the service he/she privileges and considers possible within specific material conditions.

Response as Surveillance

It’s like a surveillance camera. When you are trying to train a child and discipline them into being a good kid, you know, normally the kid has no

idea what they are doing wrong. So if you put a surveillance camera and let the child do what it's normally doing, and the child sees the playback and sees how badly they are going, it kind of walks them through what they are doing wrong. Similarly, I mean I think the teacher or anybody who reads [my paper] is kind of like a surveillance camera. Like they're going through my paper and trying to pinpoint the faults or the negatives in my paper, and then they relay those messages back to me for me to see where I am going wrong.

My conversations with Megan were filled with references to worries about where she was “going wrong,” the desire to be told where she was “going wrong,” and the belief that the teacher’s main role as commenter is to point out where her writing was “going wrong.” Alongside her desire to know “what I am doing wrong in my paper,” Megan also desired to know if her writing, both globally and locally, was “good or not good.” Megan, almost out of necessity, saw writing in binary terms, with her writing surely falling on the “not good” side.⁴ Although references to wrongness colored numerous students’ views on the teaching of writing, Megan’s reference to the surveillance camera illustrates how her view of the first-year writing classroom reaches the far extreme of this shared ideology. For Megan, Bertrand’s primary role as teacher was to act as this camera and capture *everywhere* she was going wrong in her writing. Megan’s desire for correction is augmented by a desire for feedback regarding the structure of her writing. For example, in the assigned reflective memo she included with her first paper, she claims, “I had some

⁴ At the beginning of the semester, Megan described herself as a “competent” writer. Furthermore, she described the benefit of peer review as allowing her to see how her writing compared with her classmates’. She appraised her own grammatical abilities as exceeding her classmates’. Yet, her stated expectations for response demonstrate someone who conceived of her own writing ability in very negative terms.

trouble in organizing all my notes, thoughts, and observations in coherent paragraphs that wouldn't sound choppy when it was read." Later in the same memo she writes, "I would also like to get your feedback on how I can improve my essay in terms of sentence structure, word choice, coherence, and proper grammar." She presented similar concerns in the reflective memo submitted with paper 2:

If there are a few things I can change about my paper, I'd like to double check and [make] sure that my sentence structure and grammar are all in check with this paper (meaning that my sentences and thought-processes within these paragraphs make perfect sense to the reader without sound[ing] colloquial). Second, I'd like to improve my transitions (this is one of my major issues with writing papers – letting my ideas flow properly).

These selections from Megan's reflective memos illustrate her attention to correctness, but they also demonstrate a level of rhetorical awareness that extends beyond one, all-encompassing belief. I do not want to make too much out of these reflective memos, as I am not of the belief that any student who was asked to write one spent considerable time composing the document. At the same time, these documents do present evidence for Megan's primary attention being directed at correctness or, if not correctness, formal elements of writing.

The desires Megan articulated in her reflective memos and in conversation with me concerning her desires for the class's content and Bertrand's role as teacher fit when placed alongside what she wanted to gain from the course. Reflecting on her transition from high school to college and her experience in English 101, Megan drew a separation

between learning grammar as static knowledge versus learning grammar so as to use the rules in her writing. She did not so much want “to be a strong grammarian” as she wanted to “be able to use the grammatical rules of English, like the parts of speech, to be able to create an effective, nice paper.” Noting that she had “learned ... how to use the grammatical rules of English to make a great paper” in her English 101 class the previous semester, Megan expected such work to continue into this English 102 class. Her acknowledgment that she had learned how “to make a great paper” in English 101 contradicted her worry about the quality of her writing and the assumption that errors and mistakes were present in her writing. This fixation with errors and mistakes shaped her expectations for the response she received from Bertrand. Before further examining Bertrand’s role as teacher in the class and the disconnect present between Megan and Bertrand, I want to develop a more robust picture of students’ expectations for corrective response by examining Dean’s expectations for English 102 and for Connie, his instructor.

Response as Formal Concern

At the beginning of the semester, Dean articulated what he wanted to gain from the class as “the ability to write clearly in a standard form” as well as “how to write clearly and how to do research.” His use of the phrase “standard form” deserves further consideration given how the semester progressed for him. Throughout our semester-long discussions, Dean used the term “form” so often that it led me to ask him what he meant by the term. Attempting to explain his understanding of the term and what he wanted to learn about form, Dean explained that he “meant it more like formatting styles” before

going on to say, “I could be completely wrong, but from what I understand a research paper is a research paper. It’s the formatting styles that change from paper to paper.”

Dean further clarified this idea by acknowledging that he was using form and formatting interchangeably and, in regard to Connie’s class, he wanted to learn the “three most popular [formatting] styles.”

In Dean’s case, the focus on correction has shifted from that primarily of grammatical correction to one regarding paper structure and citation. Given his interest in learning what he calls research formatting styles, the feedback he desired should not come as a surprise:

When I get writing back from a teacher, I don’t care what they have to say about my writing, I care more about, about—How do I put this? I don’t really care about what they say about what I wrote, as much as how I wrote it. That’s usually what I look at and that’s where I want most of my criticism to come from.

Although I want to resist the problematic tendency to tie a person’s values and beliefs to a single point of origin, Dean’s experience with writing in the military did appear to heavily influence how he defined writing and what he expected from his instructor’s feedback. At the very beginning of our first discussion, Dean distinguished between what he imagined would be the military approach to English 102 and the I-Search approach Connie assigned. The military approach, according to Dean, would involve being taught “how to write a ... certain formatted paper” modeled from examples. The military learning process would include teaching “all about” this “certain formatted paper” and then establishing a due date on which the completed document would be submitted. With

this approach—what Dean called the “teaching of the three most popular styles”—the instructor’s feedback would take the form of letting him know “whether or not it was done correctly.” Such feedback, according to Dean, “would be one where like ‘yes it is done correct’ or ‘no it was not, and here’s why.’”

As I will demonstrate later in the chapter, Dean struggled throughout the semester with both the content and structure of Connie’s class. He voiced frustration with both the class’s focus on the I-Search paper and the structuring of class periods around small group discussions. To understand how Dean’s values on writing instruction and Connie’s values differ, I need to better position Connie’s pedagogy, her purposes for this pedagogy, and the values and beliefs influencing her pedagogical decisions.

One of the primary differences between Dean’s desire for feedback directed at the form of his writing and Megan’s desire for feedback directed at where she is going wrong in her writing was Dean’s attachment of his expectations for writing and response to the research focus privileged in the second-semester writing class. Although Megan did acknowledge how Bertrand’s response helped her further develop her fieldworking research, she never shifted her perspective on response from one situated in writing skills defined broadly. Dean, on the other hand, spoke to a specific desire for feedback on the form of his writing, which he defined both as the research style he was using as well as the flow of his writing. Just as Megan desired to be able to communicate an idea clearly, Dean acknowledged that “[a] big part of writing is taking an idea and explaining it and being able to put it into words that other people understand.” Each of these participants, I would argue, noted the rhetorical work that writing accomplishes.

In describing the limitations of a remedial view of writing, Rose argues that such approaches situate writing as “bits of discourse bereft of rhetorical or conceptual context” (345). Both Dean and Megan displayed awareness of the very role rhetoric plays in writing; they either did not value this rhetorical function to the extent that they valued correction or they expected feedback on form and correctness to exist alongside the other rhetorical goals their instructors privileged. Remediation, as Rose understands the term to function, can mean “to correct errors” or to “to fill in gaps in a person’s knowledge” (349). Megan’s privileging of corrective feedback follows from the first definition, whereas Dean’s expectation for a pedagogy centered in the teaching of “research forms” follows from the second definition. Where these two students’ beliefs align is in their expectation that the feedback offered by their instructors should “tell me where I’m going wrong” and “tell if it’s correct or not correct.” This expectation for correctness reiterates a long-held social expectation for the teaching of writing, as demonstrated by both Rose and Connors. Of specific note is how each student constructs his/her expectations as imperatives. Constructed as imperatives, these expectations demonstrate what appears to be a shift in power within these classrooms—that because the students’ expectations reflect long-held beliefs about the work of first-year writing, they possess the power to demand a particular form of instruction and particular behaviors by the instructors. Yet, as the next section demonstrates, each instructor chose to situate his/her pedagogies, identities, and feedback practices to some degree against the normative expectation for service directed at the correction of errors in student writing and the dissemination of writing skills that can be applied in later contexts.

Dominant and Emergent Teacher Roles

Having accounted for each student's investments in specific views of writing based in correctness, I turn my attention to the teacher's role in these classes so as to consider how the roles they saw themselves occupying and the roles the students desired—as teachers broadly and commenters more specifically—did not fully intersect. As I accounted for in the previous chapter, literature on the roles teachers do or may occupy in response was a common point of inquiry in the first decade or so after the publication of Sommers's seminal article. Much of this scholarship focused on the need to shift away from the traditional role of writing teacher as judge. Scholars accounted for this shift in similar ways. Ruth Jenkins attributes her use of “dialogical written responses” for shifting students' perspectives of her from merely an “evaluator” to “a real reader” (85). Likewise, M. Francine Danis traces her shift in self-conception from “ruthless judge” to “a collaborator—a midwife, a coach” to how she came to imagine her comments as a conversation with her students (19). Examining survey findings he collected about instructors' perceptions of commenting practices, Joseph Moxley argues that eighty percent of those surveyed “perceive their roles to be that of a coach (instead of a judge) when they grade papers” (“Teachers” 19).

These arguments demonstrate a desire to shift our practices from a dominant expectation for evaluation to an emergent want to formatively assist students in developing their writing abilities. Such arguments have been criticized on a number of levels, including the lack of student voices in the research and for imagining teacher practices existing outside of contextual factors. Moxley does establish that many instructors, when responding to open-ended questions, “discussed difficulties balancing

their need to be judges with their desire to be coaches” (19). Moxley quotes from one instructor who specifically mentioned the challenge with balancing “a grade that reflects the values of the institution with the need to encourage students” (19).

More broadly, the study of instructor roles on response has been criticized because the study of roles assumes unified identities. David Fuller highlights how an instructor “might [reveal] a variety of roles” when commenting on a single paper (312). He names the possible perspectives an instructor may switch between as the “interested reaction to the message from the reader, grammatical correction from a critic, and [evaluative] remarks from a judge” (312). Ann M. Greenhalgh further troubles the idea of the specific focus on roles through her emphasis on voice in written response (401). Greenhalgh traces the issues with role back to the interpellation Crowley establishes—teacher and student roles are the result of “educational discourse, rather than individual choice” (402). Because of the role limitations that result from this interpellative process, Greenhalgh argues that “what is needed is not so much more information about the roles teachers and students are assigned but a better understanding of how they ‘voice’ their set roles” (402). Like Fuller, Greenhalgh notes that an instructor’s response may include “various and conflicting voices” (402).

These differing perspectives on role in teacher response, including the replacement of role with voice, are themselves limited because they maintain a focus set within the text. Unlike Greenhalgh, I do not imagine the possible roles a teacher can assume to be limited to “given” roles (402). Although the roles available to an instructor are very much shaped by dominant expectations about what writing is, how it should be taught, and how instructors should respond to student texts, there are possibilities that are

positioned within this dominant tradition that nonetheless work against traditional expectations for correction and evaluation. The limitations of Greenhalgh's argument depend on the roles we assume are available. By starting my analysis with the roles Connie and Bertrand voiced themselves occupying, I am able to consider how these roles exist within the various contexts I traced in the previous chapter and the specific desire for correction voiced by student-participants. By returning the scholarly focus to instructor roles, I am able to draw connections among my observations, the instructor's own perceptions of his/her teaching, the student's expectations and perceptions of the teaching of writing, and the production and reception of response. In doing so, I also extend the prior focus to role as demonstrated in textual form to intersections and disjunctions between text (or oral response), student, and instructor. I begin this focus by considering a rather long quote from a think-aloud with Bertrand that helps illustrate how he views himself as a commenter and how this self-construction plays out in his comments.

Coaching, Nurturing, and the Classroom Context

I don't want to tell him this, but I find his paper is kind of, umm, it's always difficult for me. It's why I resist doing [commenting], and I put it off. It's hard for me to respond because of lots of factors. One reason it's hard for me to respond is that I think, in a previous life, I was probably an editor. And, in that previous life, I spent years and years in that mode of having that idea that I can see this paper and what you've done, and I can see what it could become. I see that as an editor, you know, not as a

teacher. Sometimes it's really hard for me not to make an editorial comment in terms of "this is where you need to take this [paper] if you want it to succeed in the [state-mandated] portfolio," for example. You know, "this is what you need to consider doing." I would not write for them, but give them very direct response. In doing that for fifteen years, you know, it kind of becomes hard-wired. So that's one reason it's hard. And it's because I see him really engaging with his work here, and I'm trying both—well, he just, I don't know him well enough. I've only known him a little bit, and he seems—I mean the ethos he's presented to me as a student. It was just like at the end of class today when he came up and [told] me, "What you said about this course being practice," ... he said it made sense to him. "That helped me a lot," is what he said, [and] I was like, "I am glad it did." So his ethos, I think he's not trying to pull the wool over me or anything like that. He's trying to do what I am asking him to do and, you know, I think the paper is in pretty good shape for the most part. And I feel that if I told him exactly, "Well, this is what you should do here, here, here, here, and here" then he could do that. But I don't think that's—you know, I'm not going to be there next time to show him how to do that."

Bertrand offered this lengthy but telling reflection on commenting immediately after completing a think-aloud protocol that asked him to vocalize his reading of and response to David's second paper. At the end of the think-aloud, Bertrand commented, "That was hard," to describe his reaction to thinking aloud while commenting. From this

starting point, the conversation quickly shifted to a discussion of difficulties Bertrand faces when responding; the above quotation is taken from this portion of our conversation. According to Bertrand, such reflections on his own commenting practices are common even when someone is not sitting next to him “taping it.”

Bertrand’s reflection provides a glimpse into how he views himself, in the position of instructor, as a coach. Coaching was the preferred metaphor Bertrand used to describe his role as teacher, which is not surprising, given what he would call his “previous life” as a secondary-school teacher and high-school basketball coach. In total, Bertrand coached basketball for sixteen years. Asked if he viewed himself as a writing coach, Bertrand responded, “I have for quite a while,” before continuing by explaining how his basketball coaching experience has influenced what he does as a writing teacher. When he was teaching in high school, he tried as hard as possible to “make the classroom a studio.” He has tried to bring a similar approach to the college composition classroom, although he admitted that the computer lab in which he was teaching made this ongoing transition more challenging. Describing his high-school teaching experience, he categorized a normal day as “teaching for five, ten, maybe fifteen minutes at most and then it was workshop time every day.” As I explained in the classroom descriptions included in Chapter 1, Bertrand uses a similar approach in his college writing courses. For him, the workshop most closely resembles the “live-action scrimmage,” his preferred mode of practice when a basketball coach because this scrimmage, unlike drills, does not become “rote.” As the coach in this high-school writing classroom, Bertrand would “have time to sit in with a small group or sit in with an individual and coach, you know. Try to work on their moves whatever those moves might be, whatever those ... literacy moves

might be.” I did not consistently witness this student interaction from Bertrand—an observation, given our conversations, that could be contributed to the constant labor crunch Bertrand felt, the desire Bertrand had for these students to take ownership over their own learning, the limiting physical layout of the computer lab in which he taught, or the replacement of this daily interaction with instructor–student conferences.

This coaching identity helps explain Bertrand’s resistance to grading; he felt he had spent much of his coaching career assessing players and, worse, defending these assessments, especially to parents. In the middle of one of our interviews, wanting to explain the necessary but unwelcome role grading plays in both writing and basketball, Bertrand conveyed with a chuckle the story of a halftime discussion where a father questioned Bertrand for not playing his son in the first half. Noting how the parent was quick to complain but also quick to reject Bertrand’s offer to allow him to take over the coaching duties, Bertrand acknowledged that part of the trouble with assessment is the sure fact that his assessments were always being assessed—often by people who seemed long on judgment but short on investment. Coaching explains Bertrand’s view of the classroom as a site of practice, and, as I will demonstrate shortly, this identity also explains his push toward using conferences more in his pedagogy.

Whereas Bertrand’s primary teaching identity is that of coach, Connie’s is that of mother. Her maternal style results primarily from watching and helping her own children proceed through the educational system with learning disabilities as well as her own graduate experience within a program she described as “rigid.” She embraces collaborative work and sees her role within this work primarily as facilitator and listener. Considering her own teaching, she concluded:

There is a book called *Mothers, Teachers, and Gypsy Academics*, and I think that's kind of like the way I feel—very maternal. You know, at this point I'm old enough to be more than a mother, um, that's how I feel. You know, ever maternal about these students. Show me you're making an effort at some point, and I'll go with you.

Tuell uses similar language to that used by Connie in the title of her article, "Composition Teaching as 'Women's Work': Daughters, Handmaids, Whores, and Mothers." Tuell writes from a similar professional position as the one in which Connie found herself, as a "usually full-time" instructor who has faced the "patriarchal" values privileged in the academy and, in turn, privileges a different set of values in her own teaching (125). The values and approaches she privileges in her classroom, however, do not fully unsettle those values privileged in the research university. To better understand how the teaching of composition operates in a "patriarchal society," Tuell turns to the metaphor of "women's work" (125).

Tuell traces the differing identities the composition instructor occupies within dominant society. It is important to note that because she is using women's work as a metaphor, she is not speaking narrowly of female composition instructors but more broadly of what results from the power differences present between the work of studying literature and the work of teaching composition (124–25). She accounts for three metaphorical positions at length: the handmaid, the whore, and the mother. All three positions allow us to better understand Connie's self-construction. Tuell's definition of the handmaid accounts for the connections between service and remediation I have traced so far:

Composition is often named a “service course,” that is, a service to the university: thus we are handmaids. The handmaid assists in the great educational enterprise by doing the dirty, tedious but not very difficult work. We clean up the comma splices. We organize the discourse of our students as though straightening a closet. (126)

Tuell’s accounting of the service provided by the first-year writing course intersects with Crowley’s assertion that “the discourse of needs” is “spoken not by students themselves, but by people speaking for powerful institutions.” The institutions’ role in the continuation of remediation as the established expectation for first-year writing helps explain the “whore” role Tuell establishes. The composition instructor’s status as whore results from the instructor’s inability to have control over the pedagogy he/she enacts in the classroom. Composition instructors commonly use “course structures,” “textbooks,” and “syllabi” that belong to the institution, not the individual instructor (127). This restriction against self-designed pedagogy not only strips the instructor of power over his/her own classroom, but it also makes the instructor easily replaceable—or, as Tuell puts it, the instructor operates without “commitments” (127).

Connie’s appraisal of her position within the “patriarchal” structure of both the academy and society both complicates this “whore” position and situates her specific identification with the “maternal” role. Connie acknowledged that she felt institutional intrusions in her pedagogy at the beginning of her teaching career that resulted from an expectation for her to grade on a curve as well as the programmatic use of an assessment model in which a student’s semester grade was decided by a communal reading. She also felt that such pressures had abated over time as writing instructors “stopped being treated

such like second-class citizens.” This change in treatment included invitations to faculty meetings and involvement on committees where she heard from other writing teachers, specifically creative writing teachers, who validated her pedagogy. The pedagogical freedom afforded to instructors for “picking texts” and pedagogical “approach,” both of which had been protected characteristics of the writing program “for a long time,” also acted as affirmation of her pedagogy. This pedagogical freedom was in contrast to the “Mickey Mouse” textbooks and “Mickey Mouse” approaches she had experienced when previously tutoring at the local community college. Having been employed as a writing instructor at Hill University for over 20 years, Connie had experienced an expansion of instructor’s rights—including membership in department functions and pedagogical freedoms—that moved her away from identifying strongly with Tuell’s construction of the academic “whore.” That said, one aspect of the patriarchal society that bothered Connie above all else was what she saw as the inherent unfairness shown to teaching in the university’s merit review process. She claimed that because the merit process for tenure-track faculty had simply been extended to term faculty, the system could not properly account for and evaluate these term faculty members’ teaching. Although still a point of bother for her, she claimed that she settled the matter by writing a letter to the review board and coming to realize that because the “1-2-3” scoring system used for merit review so closely mirrored grades, it could never adequately evaluate her teaching’s effectiveness. Connie did note her age and stable financial situation as additional reasons why she did not worry if her pedagogical approaches were sanctioned by the department, the university, and society. Things would be different, she told me, were she “forty-one instead of sixty-one” or were she dependent on the income she earned at the university.

Of the positions Tuell establishes as metaphorical representations of the women's work that is the teaching of composition, Connie both identified with and embraced the role of mother. Tuell establishes that because teaching composition is seen as the teaching of "basic, introductory stuff," it is the less privileged work in the university. Connie, however, did not fully share this viewpoint.

For Connie, the issue was less of privilege and more of both affect and effect. Given her own experiences in higher education and her sons' experiences, Connie felt that she was well positioned to engage those students who may otherwise fall through the cracks of the university. This includes students with learning disabilities, those facing work and personal challenges, and those traditionally defined as basic writers. In her examination of composition work as analogous to "the sad woman in the basement," Susan Miller reminds her reader of the strong ideological functioning that shapes the teaching of composition (121). Having acknowledged the "enormous variations" that exist among the "interests, education, experience, and self-images" of those who teach composition, Miller considers these variations as they relate to ideology:

But when we examine the ideological "call" to create these individuals as a special form of subjectivity for composition teaching, we see them in a definitive set of imaginary relationships to their students and colleagues. Particularities are masked by an ideologically constructed identity for the teacher of composition. (123)

Specifically, Miller sees this construction as a "female coding" that results from an identity purposefully created to "ensure group survival" (123). Such group survival is not that of instructors but that of those masculine traits privileged by the sciences and by the

university (122). Miller's criticism recalls both Crowley's argument about interpellation and Tuell's examination of the multiple positions composition as "women's work" occupies. Specifically, these arguments ask if Connie is able to operate apart from the dominant, traditional identities assumed of her. As the analysis of her interaction with Dean will show, such dominant constructions very much played a role in the hurdles present in this interaction. Connie, given her interests and age, seems little interested in the debate about the "worthiness" of teaching composition versus what "theoretical" value people place in this endeavor (122). Although such disinterest may support Miller's argument about the composition instructor's "ideologically constructed identity," there remains value in examining Connie's self-construction as mother because it shapes her classroom practices and, in turn, contributed to the disjunctions present in the interaction between her and Dean.

To illustrate the strong maternal nature of Connie's teaching, I turn to a conversation we had in April that addressed a classroom experience that occurred much earlier in the semester. Asked how she may comment differently to students who do not have stellar attendance records, she turned her attention to one specific student and an interaction they had shared earlier in the semester:

With [him⁵] I've tried harder with my comments because I was afraid of embarrassing him that one day when he came up with the Monsanto source that didn't look like a Monsanto source. I really bent over backwards trying to say, "I would have thought it was totally legitimate. I

⁵ This student had been a participant in my study but "withdrew" as a result of a number of missed interview appointments. Connie's memory of this experience may be contributable to the student's early participation in my study.

would have never looked further except it was odd.” ... So I tried to say more and be more careful with him because I wanted to acknowledge to him that I had that concern, but I didn’t want to make him self-conscious. I was really concerned about that.

In the class Connie described, which occurred nearly two months before our conversation, Connie used an article this student had sent to her to demonstrate issues with source credibility. The class had recently finished watching *Food, Inc.*, and this student had sent her an article that questioned the movie’s validity. Connie used the first portion of the class period to establish that the article’s author was a Monsanto lawyer; thus his credibility should be questioned. Two months after this class, Connie returned to this specific classroom experience—which lasted at most ten minutes—to explain how she was approaching one, individual student. To me, this was a surprising connection if for no other reason than Connie was teaching nearly, if not more than, 100 students across five sections. But for Connie, her entire pedagogy centers on how she can best “meet” an individual student where this student is within the many factors affecting her teaching.

In thinking about Connie’s teaching, I’m reminded of Elizabeth Flynn’s work “Composing as a Woman,” especially the epigraph she constructs from Adrienne Rich’s “Taking Women Students Seriously.” In this section of her text, Rich highlights what she sees as the female challenge of “listening ... for silences, the absences, the nameless, the unspoken, the encoded” (qtd. in Flynn 423). Reading this epigraph, I am reminded of how Connie would often answer my questions with stories of past students, stories that both answered my questions and illustrated the specific and lasting interaction she had

with students. I am also reminded of her answer to the question that asked which students benefit most from her classroom approach. To her, it was those students who encountered expected and unexpected factors that impacted their ability to fully engage the class. She explained that she would be “really sympathetic” to those students who had health- and work-related problems because of her and her children’s educational experiences:

They [her children] would tell me stories about “you have to be there right on the dot or you’ll get points taken away” or someone would talk about a test where if you didn’t show up at 8 a.m. or something, you couldn’t even take it. I mean, stuff like that drives me crazy, and it drove me crazy as a student too. When I was a student, English professors were mostly guys and some of them were incredibly rigid.

The very end of Connie’s statement seems especially prescient when placed next to Flynn’s consideration of composition’s history in regard to how “composition specialists replace the figure of the authoritative father with an image of a nurturing mother” (423). Given the prominent use of group work in Connie’s class and her own role as what might be best described as a “roving sounding board” as part of such class activity, connections can be drawn between Connie’s pedagogy and Flynn’s analysis of student writing via Nancy Chodorow’s *The Reproduction of Mothering*, an analysis focusing on a female student’s essay that, according to Flynn, demonstrates what Chodorow calls relation identification processes and connected learning (Flynn 426). As peer groups formed each class period, Connie would remind her students to “make best use of the people that are here.” As these class periods progressed, Connie would move from group to group,

almost always entering the group by asking, “How’s it going?”—a question directed as much at the students as at their writing.

Through establishment of these teaching identities, I’ve only begun to explain how Bertrand and Connie did not fulfill students’ expectations regarding the role of the writing instructor. To put this differently, one could very much teach correction through the role of coach or mother. To explain the disconnects that existed between Megan and Bertrand as well as between Dean and Connie, I need to dig deeper into these classroom contexts.

Tracing Instructor–Student Disjunctions: Bertrand and Megan

The large block quotations I presented from Bertrand and Megan earlier in this chapter help demonstrate the differences between this instructor and student. Although these quotations are mere representations of a part of each participant’s thinking, there exists, nonetheless, a telling difference in what each participant emphasized.

Bertrand’s long explanation of the troubles he faces as a commenter functions around a metaphorical construction between a previous life and a current life that is meant to represent how he views his high school teaching and his college teaching differently. Although Bertrand was speaking in response to David’s writing and not Megan’s, his words present a sure awareness of not only the possibilities of how he can perform as a teacher and commenter but also, maybe more important, the uses and limits of this “hard-wired,” directive approach to response. In other words, he acknowledges why there might be merit in his acting like a surveillance camera, even if he does not use those words. Toward the end of his explanation, he brings forth, although not in clear

terms, an argument that his response is constricted by the degree to which he does not know the student-writer. If he were acting as a surveillance camera, he would have little need to know the person being watched. Given his use of workshop classes and his desire to act as a coach to his students, Bertrand introduces the need for his understanding of context if he is to successfully engage his students' papers. He also, at the very end, clearly articulates what he sees to be the most pressing limits for a directive, corrective approach to commenting. He fears that, were he to comment in this way, the student would not be prepared to continue to perform and to grow as a writer once he/she moves on from Bertrand's class.

Given the extensive time I spent with all the participants, including Bertrand and Megan, I was also able to extend analysis of these different viewpoints in regard to teaching and commenting roles by considering the perspectives in relation to views on language and learning. These perspectives on what language does and how the teaching of language use should be approached in the classroom illustrate a more definitive understanding of how fundamental differences existed between Bertrand and Megan. This difference is best demonstrated by the comments Bertrand wrote in response to Megan's second paper. In her reflective memo, Megan voiced a desire to make "sure that my sentence structure and grammar are all in check," which she further defines, parenthetically, as "meaning that my sentences and thought-processes within these paragraphs make perfect sense to the reader without sound[ing] colloquial." In this same reflective memo, she also notes that she would "like to improve my transitions," because "letting my ideas flow freely" is one of her "major issues with writing papers."

Responding to both Megan's paper and the included reflective memo, Bertrand begins his response by reassuring Megan about the grammatically correct nature of her paper:

As far as your concerns about sentence structure and language, I think the paper is very-well developed on both accounts. If you think you have problems with transitions I would prefer to conference about this in class so you can point to specific places you consider troublesome.

Moving away from Megan's concerns with grammar and what might commonly be referred to as lower-order issues, Bertrand takes on the persona of an interested reader for the remainder of his comments:

The part of your paper that intrigues this reader the most is when you write, "Third, I'm picking up on a common theme among the nurses of [_____], and it all revolves around job stress and difficulty dealing with the elderly. How these individuals handle it is really up to their discretion, however, I know very well that these employees cannot vent out their frustration to the residents, for fear of being fired, sued, or even arrested." You have located a tension within the culture and it seems to surprise you and disturb you. I think your conclusion could "think" about this a lot more than presently. What questions can you raise about this tension? But that is your call to make.

This tension between Megan's desire for feedback relating to matters of correctness and Bertrand's feedback which asks her to rethink a section of her paper can be explained by

considering how Megan and Bertrand constructed the relationship between writing and thinking differently. In our conversations, Megan often voiced a belief that writing has to do with “effective communication” and drew connections between a desire for feedback on correctness and this idea of effective communication. Articulating a resistance to positive feedback, Megan told me she would “prefer that the teacher tells me all my faults ... because the bottom line is I want a larger audience to read it, understand it, and get the main idea I am trying to propose.” Here, Megan moves away from a particular focus limited to grammatical correctness as described in Connors’s work to a more broad conception of deficit as described in Rose’s work. This shift, however, does not extend to a consideration that Bertrand’s feedback might be directed at something other than error—namely, thinking—because, as Megan said:

you can’t really change your thinking patterns, because that’s very abstract. What you’re thinking is very abstract; it’s not concrete. Writing is the concrete form of what you’re thinking. Therefore, you can easily amend what you’re writing but you can’t change your mentality or your thinking.

If we compare how Megan constructs thinking in her reflective memo with how Bertrand constructs it in his written response, this difference in perception of writing and thinking comes to the surface. Whereas Megan desires Bertrand’s attention be drawn to how effectively she presents her thoughts on the page (“that ... my thought processes within these paragraphs make perfect sense”), Bertrand desires Megan’s attention be drawn to how she can more extensively engage a specific aspect of her essay by giving it greater consideration (“‘think’ about this a lot more”) in her conclusion.

I return to Megan and Bertrand's interaction in Chapter 4 to further consider how these differing beliefs about writing, response, and the work of instructors may influence the writing a student engages across a semester, including how a student makes use of response. One of Bertrand's biggest criticisms of his own teaching was the degree to which he felt he did not adequately scaffold his students' writing. During our conversation, he defined scaffolding as both his involvement in each text the student composed and the alignment he offered that linked multiple writing assignments. Chapter 4 focuses on the role of response in sequenced writing, which I argue unsettles traditional definitions of "the text" such that the production and reception of response to sequenced writing changes the orientation of response to text. Many of the major investments Bertrand made in his teaching—including his switch to conferences, the students' engagement with fieldworking, and the sequenced relationship that existed among assignments—resulted from a desire to reshape the writing classroom to increase student engagement with writing and to reposition himself as the instructor in these classrooms. Yet, these investments also troubled traditional expectations for a writing instructor, including Megan's expectation for corrective response. The pedagogical choices Bertrand makes result not merely from his experiences with and beliefs about writing but also what Anson calls "external pressures such as curricular mandates" as well as material conditions, including workload (355). I examine one external pressure as well as the issue of workload further in this chapter. Before moving in that direction, I examine Dean and Connie's interaction to show how differences in definitions of writing and expectations for instructors—including the production of response—can directly influence a student's interest in an instructor's response.

Tracing Instructor–Student Disjunctions: Connie and Dean

As described in Chapter 1, Connie asked students to complete three I-Search papers. In the assignment handout, she describes the finished I-Search project as “resembl[ing] an extensive research journal in which you discuss your choice of topic, describe and evaluate sources of information, explain what you have learned, and tell what the project means to you as a researcher.” For Connie, the I-Search paper allows students to work toward her goal of gaining “some sense of how they are doing research and some sense of how to do advanced research in a kind of limited way” while also allowing them to research topics of interest to them and engage fellow students’ work in community. The I-Search paper focused “not that much on [writing] technique” as it functioned “more [as] a research journal.” As the semester progressed, the I-Search papers became a source of frustration and then resentment for Dean, specifically because he felt he was doing research “without actually writing about what I am doing research on.” Of specific frustration for Dean was the requirement, as articulated on the assignment sheet, to evaluate the research he was finding and consider what further research he would conduct “if [he were] writing a full-length paper oriented primarily toward research results.”

From my discussions with Connie and Dean, each seemed to favor a different view of the relationship between research and writing. Connie saw her purpose as a teacher to help facilitate students’ research skills and writing from research by gently guiding them through a process of discovery in which they not so much wrote a research paper as they articulated their interaction with research material. For her, this was a process of discovery, but for Dean, it was a process of unnecessary work. With Dean,

writing never seemed to be a process of discovery. Instead, it was a task one completed as a means to record information and provide that information to an audience. Building from this mindset, Dean seemingly knew exactly what research he was looking for before he set out to find it. He saw research as the process to put an answer with a question. Source evaluation, therefore, took the form of deciding if he had found what he was looking for or not. Not happy with the I-Search requirement to narrate and analyze his research processes and the material he found, Dean purposefully found sources that were not what he was looking for to satisfy this section requirement. As the semester progressed, he was left doing I-Search papers and not explicitly learning the “forms” that he valued. Although he admitted the project “covers all the bases of what a 102 class is supposed to cover,” it did not allow him to do “a research paper.”

Dean’s disinterest in the I-Search genre was augmented by a similar disinterest in the use of peer groups in nearly every class period. Connie’s investment in peer groups mirrored Bertrand’s investment in what he called “the writing workshop.” Connie desired to shift the emphasis from exercising her own expertise to a learning context in which students learned from one another. Dean found these peer groups frustrating because he did not feel like his classmates had anything to teach him. Connie conceptualized these peer groups as a means for a plurality of voices to help students as they engaged their individual inquiry processes. Said differently, Connie’s privileging of peer response groups reflected one of the central course goals—that students learn to do “advanced research in a kind of limited way.” The peer response groups added to the students’ engagement with research because these groups provided them an opportunity to discuss their processes and findings as well as to receive feedback on their research and writing.

Connie's description of her class as being less about writing as "technique" helps explain Dean's dislike for the peer groups. Because he was interested in learning what he described as the "forms of writing" and because he expected the knowledge of these forms to originate with his instructor and not his peers, Dean found that the peer groups only compounded his disinterest in the course. Although the I-Search paper appeared to be the originating point for his frustration, the peer groups only exacerbated his frustration.

In our very last conversation, Dean explained his own culpability in the lack of feedback he received during the semester. Although Dean ended up at a point where he understood his own role in the lack of feedback he received, his explanation begins with an articulation of how Connie differed from the instructor he expected and wanted:

If she was harder, that means she would have been grading every little thing, and I would have turned everything in on time and I would have participated more. And I would have gotten more out of the class—which means I would have gotten more feedback, I assume. So the lack of feedback is my fault because I didn't turn anything in to get feedback.

Dean's articulation of the expectation for turning "everything in on time" aligns with how the course would have been constructed as a military course. Ending the previous thought with the word feedback, Dean paused for a moment and then, accounting for how he saw the class functioning, he remembered that he did receive some feedback, "but not a whole lot," before continuing with a reflection that led him to a different understanding of how response operated in Connie's class. Starting with a simple summary that "we would sit in class, and she would give us feedback," he continued:

Actually, that is a good point. She does give feedback, if you turn them [the papers] in. She just doesn't write it down. She sits and talks to you about it. If you go to class and you turn everything in on time ... she sits and talks with you about your paper and says where you're doing good, where you're doing bad, how to proceed if you're stuck, and things like that. She does do that. I didn't get any of that because I didn't go to class. I felt it was pointless because I wasn't doing the assignments.

As Dean had articulated earlier in the semester, his expectation was that he would apply what the instructor had taught him and, in responding to his submission, the teacher would tell him "whether or not it was done correctly." Connie's class diverted significantly from these expectations, and, as I have demonstrated, Dean both struggled with and grew frustrated with the distance between his expectations and the specifics of Connie's class. Asked to assess Connie's strengths as an instructor, Dean commented on how Connie would make an excellent high-school teacher because of the investment and care she showed her students. Dean's personal interest was less being shown care as it was learning the different formats in which a text could be written. At the end of the course, Dean was left wondering if "a college ... is looking to make sure the paper itself is formatted right." Talking aloud, he wondered, "Is that something I truly need to know, or is it something that as long as it looks like a paper, they really don't care?" Although both Connie and his English 101 instructor had given him the impression that "the information you are writing about" was more important than the paper's formatting, Dean left English 102 still wanting to know the correct formats and, furthermore, wanting to know if knowing the correct formats mattered.

It is hard to establish the extent to which gender played a role in Dean's interaction with Connie. But, as I established earlier, Tuell's construction of the teaching of composition as "women's work" is not so much defined by gender as it is defined by socially constructed expectations of what it means to teach composition and who is expected to do this work. Dean's view that Connie would make an "excellent" high-school teacher speaks to the intersection of remediation and composition as "women's work." Of specific interest is Dean's expectation of being taught formats of writing he did not know placed alongside his contention that his expectation of teaching writing as form results from "how we did this when I was in high school." Dean expected continuing focus on writing as formal concern because that was the definition of writing his high-school experience had provided him. Dean did not see what he did not know as problematic "gaps in [his] knowledge," but simply a continuation of practices he had engaged in high school. But seeing as Connie's own pedagogical investments diverged from this focus on writing "forms," Dean's assessment of Connie as an "excellent" high-school teacher must have been supported by other values and beliefs. In her work, Tuell establishes that writing instructors "fulfill a motherly role at the university because our students are metaphorically young, often chronologically young freshman, and always considered developmentally young" (129). It appears it is this construction of him as "developmentally young" that Dean resisted the most. Specifically, he did not want to do research and not write the research paper. He wanted to receive criticism on his writing so he would know if it was correct or not—information which, in turn, would allow him to fix the writing if it was not correct. Dean's investment was in production, not in

growth. Growth for him seemed to be the work of high school and, given Connie's commitments and pedagogies, it was there that he believed she could do her best work.

As Megan's and Dean's expectations illustrate, students construct differing definitions for the service expected of writing instructors. Likewise, Bertrand's and Connie's classroom approaches and the beliefs that inform these classroom approaches illustrate how instructors are always working within, and sometimes directly against, dominant expectations of what it means to teach writing. To better understand how these expectations operate in the complex networks I outlined at the beginning of this chapter, I add two points of focus to my analysis in the remainder of this chapter. First, I examine the tensions Bertrand felt when shifting from written comments to conferencing, including worries about how sanctioned conferences were viewed as a pedagogical practice within the departmental context. Then, I consider how all three instructor-participants dealt with issues of time and workload in their teaching and how workload may have influenced the pedagogical choices they made. Examining matters of sanction and workload allows for a more complex picture to be painted of the competing contexts in which teaching occurs, including students' expectations for a specific form of service.

Conferencing and Departmental Sanction

As I outlined in Chapter 1, Bertrand's expanded use of conferencing came as a surprise to me. Bertrand's interest in making conferences a more central point of his response practices resulted from both the benefits he saw in conferences and the limitations he had experienced with written comments. Specifically, he wanted to engage in conversation with students about their work, and he did not feel such conversations

were possible with written feedback. Bertrand and I first discussed alternatives to written response during his second class meeting, and this discussion carried into our first interview session. Accounting for the various approaches he had taken with written feedback, Bertrand discussed how he had tested a system in which he attempted to create a dialogue with students by responding to questions students had inserted into their texts. Throwing out another possible new approach to response, the use of vocal, recorded comments, Bertrand articulated a tension between how he wanted to comment and the factors limiting his implementation of the approach:

If I could do it this way, I would do it, but I haven't figured out how to. They would turn in their papers, I'd read them, they'd come in and conference with me. But with four classes of about one hundred students, I can't figure out how to schedule it to save me. You know ..., I think that's *the* most effective way to respond.

Bertrand continued by highlighting the benefits often mentioned in scholarship on conferencing as a response practice. The greatest positive he saw with conferencing was what he referred to as “the sheer physicality of being in the same space at the same time and talking the way we’re talking right now about an idea, about a rhetorical move, about the way it [the writing] is setup.” He compared the difference between written comments and conferencing to the difference between e-mailing an artist feedback on his/her work and “if we actually went to their studio and stood there and talked about it, you know, there where they created it.” Noting also the benefits of eye contact, tone of voice, and physical gestures, Bertrand’s hope was that conferencing could provide a refuge from the “abstract” nature of written comments. Conferences were also of interest to him from a

quantitative perspective, as he knew he could provide more feedback in a one-on-one setting than he would ever be able to write to an individual student.

In tossing out the possibility of making greater use of conferences, Bertrand highlighted time issues as what had so far held him back from going in this direction with his teaching. As our conversation continued, Bertrand also made it clear that concerns about departmental sanctioning and the pedagogical consequences of missed class periods were just as influential, if not more influential, to his own resistance to this pedagogical shift:

I feel uncomfortable with my 102s. I will cancel class one week, and we'll have conferences. I'm like, I come from high school, okay? So I mean, I miss school, but there's always someone there in class [for] me. So canceling class for a week? So I'm going to cancel class for four weeks out of fourteen just so I can have conferences for four papers? I don't know. I figure someone would tell me I'm crazy.

Here, at the beginning of the semester, Bertrand was weighing the cost-benefit analysis of canceling what he calls “a week of practice” to facilitate one-on-one meetings with students. Although aware that conferences offer a different form of practice, he worried both about the students' loss of practice time and the inability to work in community. Asked to consider if the trade-off was worthwhile, Bertrand could only respond with, “I don't know.”

Bertrand was also highly concerned with how conferencing was viewed by the Writing Program Administrator (WPA). The WPA's opinion mattered to Bertrand because of both a recent change in programmatic leadership and worries about staffing

related to university budget cuts. Fully aware of the previous WPA's strong support for conferencing, Bertrand was less aware of where the new WPA stood on the topic, an uncertainty that left him uneasy. These concerns about what I would call programmatic sanctioning (a term that implies less force than Anson's "curricular mandates") for a specific pedagogical approach were expressed not so much during our interview sessions as during our conversations that followed nearly every class period. As a result of this project, Bertrand and I developed a collegial back-and-forth in which we discussed topics that ranged from ideas for our own classes to trends in the discipline to uncertainty about programmatic and institutional policies. Because I had administrative experience in a writing program and used conferencing in my own teaching, Bertrand appeared to view me as a resource to bounce ideas off of as he thought through the possibility of expanding conferencing in his English 102 classes. I recommended readings for him to consult, and, given his concerns about how much time conferencing could consume, I explained different approaches he could take with reading the student text, including the cold conference or what Donald Murray calls "reading during the conference" (165). Between our conversations and conversations he had with others, Bertrand came to believe that conferences were, within the program, an acceptable form of response. At the end of the semester, Bertrand highlighted his expanded use of conferences as the most surprising aspect of the semester:

I've done one [conference] a semester [in previous semesters], and that's mainly because I didn't know what we could do. Eventually I kind of figured out just by paying attention that, "Gosh, people must be canceling classes and having conferences because I think they have a class right

now, but they're down here [in the part-time faculty offices]." It's almost like an underground kind of thing. It's like no one really talks about it in a public way.

Bertrand's concern about what I am calling sanctioning arose again the semester after my data collection as a result of a comment made at the annual composition program orientation. In an e-mail, Bertrand voiced uneasiness with the WPA's statement in a workshop that focused on comments. Answering a question about conferencing, the WPA stated that teachers should provide written feedback to students on at least one occasion during the semester. Having spent a semester testing out cold (or lukewarm) conferencing and being happy with the results, Bertrand planned to shift all of his response to conferences, but he felt the comment the WPA had made clashed with his growing preference for one-on-one conferences.

Bertrand's uneasiness with the programmatic approval for conferencing fits with Tuell's characterization of teaching composition as the need to "do it the way they like it, using their course structures, their textbooks, [and] their syllabi" (127). Although my e-mailed response to Bertrand pushed him to do what he felt was best for his pedagogy and his students, his ongoing uneasiness with the official sanctioning for conferences does raise questions about how feedback practices that are alternative to written comments are viewed differently by departments, institutions, and our discipline. Scholars including Murray and Alan Rose have championed the benefits of conferences as opposed to written comments. A. Rose notes the "general advantages" of conferencing include the

opportunity to actually see minds at work. A student can be asked to rethink an unclear word or sentence—than [sic] and there, and then this

revision can be commented on by the teacher. The teacher can also test out possible revisions himself, thus enabling the student to see another mind at work on the same problem. The give-and-take of discussion sometimes uncovers problems that might have gone unrecognized—for example, interpretations that don't match the author's intentions. (326)

Yet, as Bertrand's interpretation of the WPA's comment demonstrates, written comments can be the privileged response practice. Resistance to conferences can be traced to various institutional concerns, including (1) the assumption that students are better able to use written feedback and (2) the need to monitor or review both individual instructors and instructor–student interactions. Having worked as an assistant WPA, I can say with certainty that comments are an important resource when considering student grievances relating to a grade or a lack of feedback. The most basic line of reasoning in such situations is that written comments provide evidence not available with conferences. Conferences, because of the lack of a written record, can be viewed as operating on a “he said, she said” level. The existence of written comments or the lack of comments allows for conclusions to be drawn about what comments an instructor provided to a student. The director's statement might have also been motivated by other factors, including a university-wide policy that a student know where he/she stands in a class before the withdrawal date. This consideration of why a WPA may prefer the use of written comments in at least a limited extent begins to highlight the additional work comments do beyond merely acting as feedback and evaluation. These additional purposes take response back to the realm of the surveillance camera Megan described. Furthermore, Bertrand's uneasiness with which pedagogical practices are and are not privileged puts

the spotlight back on the expectation of response as service—in this case, a service to both the student and the program that contradicts the instructor’s preferred practices.

A less cynical reading of a preference for written feedback shifts the analysis from the realm of surveillance to the question of what type of feedback better serves writing development. A sure advantage to written feedback is the student’s ability to return to the response on multiple readings and, in turn, develop a better understanding of these comments. The data collected in this study raise questions about this practice. The students in this study mentioned the problems posed by a response misplaced by the student (Ava), the single engagement with the instructor’s response (Megan; David), and the “day before” engagement with the instructor’s response (Ashley).

Although students cannot textually return to the ideas shared in one-on-one conferences, this form of response offers benefits of its own as articulated by Bertrand’s students. Martin noted the role Bertrand’s facial expressions and actions played in his ability to fully interpret the feedback he received. This “emotion” made it “a little bit easier to refer back” to the feedback when he was revising his papers. David acknowledged that written comments have greater impact in the short term, but, because he could “read it and then blow it off,” he was wary of how beneficial the written comments were over time. Of note, he did not return to the written feedback he received on his second paper, although he previously said that he planned to. For David, the inability to refer back to specific comments was a hidden benefit for conferences. Conferences allowed him to construct his own interpretation of a conference, whereas he felt the written comments constrained him by forcing him to work with the comments as the instructor presented them.

Given her desire for correction, Megan was less enthused with Bertrand's conferencing method. Like Martin and David, Megan also recognized the value of being able to see Bertrand's facial reactions because they provided her with an assessment of her work. For instance, Bertrand's disappointed look in her third conference resulted, she claimed, from the lack of writing she had produced for the fourth paper. His facial expression of disappointment motivated her because the visual memory she had of this interaction "was worth a thousand words." Yet, she also worried about her ability to "pick what I need to listen to" and write notes at the same time.⁶ She would have preferred to read Bertrand's comments because she would "learn better" this way. Megan's analysis raises questions about the role of note-taking in conferences (see footnote 6), and it reminds us of the dominant expectation that it is the instructor's task to produce response and the student's role to receive and implement the response. Although Martin and David preferred the ability to engage in "face-to-face" conversation about their work, Megan preferred the traditional approach with which she was most familiar.

The students little mentioned if the conferences helped them become more successful writers, so it is hard to establish if the conferences were more useful to students. Although David's and Martin's stated preferences seemed to be motivated by a sense that the conferences would be useful to them as writers, Beedles and Samuels have

⁶ Starting with the second conference and continuing through the third and final conference, Bertrand recommended that students take notes during the conferences. The student-participants recounted taking limited notes, and none acknowledged returning to these notes. They were able, though, to recount material from the conferences when asked at various times following conferences. I am not able to establish the role the notes played in what the students' remembered. Jane, in her pre-portfolio conferences, tended to write the notes for her students, and both Ashley and Ava noted using these notes while composing writing project 3 and the portfolio. Writing center research has long argued against writing on student papers, although, like all "best practices," agreement with this practice varies. Megan's worry about juggling listening, writing, and talking presents an argument for greater teacher facilitation during conferences in the form of alleviating students of the note-taking responsibility.

warned of the dangers associated with confusing what students “like” with what they find “useful.” In a few instances, evidence does exist that demonstrates how students made use of Bertrand’s oral comments—including Martin’s articulation of why he didn’t change his third essay’s conclusion after discussing it with Bertrand, David’s decision to include photographs that represented the customers at the music store, and Megan’s inclusion of an evaluative paragraph in each annotated bibliography entry—but such changes may have also followed had Bertrand provided written response. The greatest benefit of conferencing for Bertrand appears to be the personal interaction made available between instructor and student. Although such interaction would appear to extend from arguments for instructors to resist appropriation of student texts (Brannon and Knoblauch), it also goes beyond these arguments because of Bertrand’s distance from the student text. Bertrand most often used the student text as a jumping-off point for a broader conversation about writing decisions and processes. From Bertrand’s perspective, such conversations allowed him to engage students as developing scholars or, put differently, to act as a coach who helps his students become more developed thinkers, readers, and writers. But for Megan, a student who desires a specific type of corrective feedback, these conferences focused the conversation further away from the text and the dominantly defined teacher service she expected.

Workload and the Endless Search for Time

Bertrand’s shift from written response to conferences may at first appear counterintuitive when viewed from the common perspective that conferencing takes more time. Attempting to proactively respond to the “reader” who has questions about

conferencing's practicality, Alan Rose recounts his own experience shifting from written response to conferencing:

I generally devote half-hour to each student, which is only about ten minutes more than I would spend writing comments on his paper. Though the work in individual conferences is taxing—both intellectually and emotionally—it is nonetheless satisfying. (329)

Bertrand never voiced worries about the time conferencing would consume apart from the worry over lost class time. Like Rose, he did comment that the work was intellectually and emotionally taxing, but, also like Rose, he found the work to be satisfying. When responding, Bertrand's biggest time loss occurred with the "approach avoidance" he found himself battling when composing written response. This "approach avoidance" adds a valuable wrinkle to questions about how long instructors spend responding and what methods are the most effective. Although each written response *may* have consumed less of Bertrand's time than the fifteen minutes he spent with each student, conferencing caused Bertrand less strife, which, in turn, led him to not avoid response. Bertrand's "approach avoidance" with written response resulted from what he felt were the limitations with this mode of response, and it was this approach avoidance that contributed to his shift to conferencing.⁷

Arguing that Bertrand found conferencing to be both more satisfying and less hampered by issues of approach avoidance does not lessen the time-consuming nature of

⁷ Bertrand and I discussed on multiple occasions the satisfaction one feels after completing a stretch of conferences. Although an equal satisfaction may follow response to a stack of papers, conferences tend to be completed without those time-wasting practices familiar to most veteran writing instructors.

his response practices. Nancy Sommers's article that reinitiated attention toward response begins with attention to how time consuming response can be; she writes:

More than any other enterprise in the teaching of writing, responding to and commenting on student writing consumes the largest portion of our time. Most teachers estimate that it takes them at least 20 to 40 minutes to comment on an individual student paper, and those 20 to 40 minutes times 20 students per class, times 8 papers, more or less, during the course of a semester add up to an enormous amount of time. (148)

Like the waitress who has been double-sat or is working a fourth double in a row, writing instructors must juggle demands while working with limited resources, including the lack of time Sommers describes. As evidenced by Bertrand's concern with the classes lost to conferences, time is a major point of concern and frustration for writing instructors. When it comes to issues such as assignment sequences, daily class plans, and response, many instructors find themselves short on this very precious commodity.

Reflecting on his increased use of conferences at the end of the semester, Bertrand had arrived at a better understanding of how he made sense of the challenges posed by written response. Seeing written comments as a more time-consuming activity, Bertrand concluded, "Let's say I collect papers today, and I don't get to them until this time next week. They're still always on my mind; I know I've got to get to them. They eat up lots of energy even when I'm not [commenting]. That sucks, it really does."

Bertrand's perspective on the time requirement differences between written comments and conferencing offers a specific point of consideration in regard to time and workload. Bertrand taught four sections and roughly 100 students the semester he

participated in the study. Connie taught five sections and more than 100 students. Both Bertrand and Connie were contractually obligated to teach four sections a semester. Connie's fifth class was a liberal studies class she had taught for a number of years. Jane taught two classes a semester as part of her graduate studies contract. Each of these participants mentioned matters of time constraint during our conversations. The lack of time explains both Jane's use of an egg timer to limit her written responses to ten minutes and her decision to divide the responsibility of response to the weekly assignment between her and her students. Explaining this decision, she voiced both the fact that "practically speaking, [she could] not comment every week on fifty-two students" and, more definitely, that she wasn't going to. The lack of time also explains Jane's use of only one conference during the semester because she, offering the opposite perspective Bertrand offers, saw limited benefit from the conferences compared with the time asked of her to hold conferences. Connie, when asked about the limited written commenting in her class, often would draw attention to the total number of students she was teaching. Bertrand, describing the same context, would often use the phrase "the sheer numbers." Comparing her current feedback practices with the practices she used when teaching fewer sections, Connie concluded:

Long ago, when I only taught one or two classes, I did [written comments] a whole lot, like to most of the students. I'd write little notes. ... I don't really have time anymore to do that, and I'm not sure how much of a loss that is for most students because I feel that our personal contact usually works pretty well. I mean, you know how supportive I am, and maternal and everything. I mean, that's what I offer.

Connie's assessment of the time challenges posed by written response helps explain her decision to rely heavily on peer response groups in her classes. As Connie highlights, her reliance on in-class communication to provide feedback to students was motivated by both time and her belief that face-to-face communication is more supportive than written feedback. It is worth noting that all three participating instructors began their college teaching careers responding primarily through written feedback. Of equal value is how two instructors can find a particular pedagogical practice to have a significantly different degree of benefit. For Bertrand, conferences are beneficial because he finds them less time-consuming, more efficient, and more beneficial for students. For Jane, she finds a sense of order and predictability in written comments. Although an over-simplification, I can't help imagining the stark contrast between Bertrand and Jane where Bertrand is unproductively avoiding the task of producing written comments while Jane is dutifully setting the egg timer, knowing that each reset brings her one paper closer to the bottom of the stack.

Whereas Connie spoke to what she used to do when she had more time, Bertrand would often reference what would be possible "if there was only time." For Bertrand, this lack of time and "the sheer number" of students worked hand-in-hand to constrict the pedagogical approaches available to him. In his historical work, Connors notes that rhetoric had "descended" from a place of honor to that of an "academic sweatshop," all because of "the number of students" instructors were asked to teach (189). Haswell mirrors this sentiment in noting that "long hours marking papers is the mark of the composition teacher—the profession's mark of Cain, some would say" (1272). It's this mark, Haswell contends, that leads to persons "fight[ing] tooth and nail to keep out of the

writing classroom” (1272). As the three instructors in this study demonstrate, issues of time and workload always play a role in the response and assessment decisions privileged in a specific classroom. Such decisions, however, do not operate apart from personal beliefs about writing and the teaching of writing, institutional expectations, and ongoing attempts to create pedagogies that, for these instructors, are more engaging, more effective, and more ethical—for themselves and for their students.

Conclusion: Student Orientations, Textual Orientations

Connie’s explanation for how workload has forced her to change her response practices are consequential beyond just characterizing the methods she uses for response. Working alongside her privileging of feminist pedagogical practices such as peer group response, the switch from written response to peer group response shifts her orientation to the text produced by the individual student. In their oft-cited article “On Students’ Rights to Their Own Texts: A Model of Teacher Response,” Brannon and Knoblauch assert that

the teacher’s proper role is not to tell the student explicitly what to do but rather to serve as a sounding-board enabling the writer to see confusions in the text and encouraging the writer to explore alternatives that he or she may have not considered. (162)

As I have demonstrated in this chapter, Dean and Megan desired explicit feedback directed at what they should do in their writing, including correction of what was wrong. Brannon and Knoblauch’s advice does not align with their expectations. At the same time, this advice does not fully align with what I observed from Bertrand and Connie either. Whereas Brannon and Knoblauch maintain a focus “in the text,” Bertrand and

Connie both orient their teaching, including their response practices, toward the individual student.

This distinction between response directed at the student and response directed at the text highlights long-standing questions in our field about tensions between process and product and how growth in writing occurs. Dean and Megan privilege an orientation directed toward the text. For each student, the instructor's role is to tell them "where they are going wrong" *in the text*. Because each student is interested in fixing what is wrong, they assume that which needs to be fixed can be located in the text. Connie and Bertrand position themselves differently in relation to the text. For each instructor, their primary attention seems directed at the student's development as a researcher, reader, thinker, and writer. This focus results from both what each privileges in the writing classroom and the time each instructor has to respond to student texts. Megan's metaphor of the surveillance camera offers a means through which to illustrate these different orientations. When describing response as a surveillance camera, she acknowledged that the teacher would have to not only locate where she is going wrong in her writing but also "relay those messages back to me." Furthermore, to locate the errors, the instructor would also have to spend time analyzing the text.

I do not mean to argue that Bertrand and Connie would provide such error analysis if only they had the time. Time, as I have demonstrated, is only one of many factors that influences the production and reception of response. As my analysis of Bertrand and Connie's teacherly identities demonstrates, further research is needed on the production and reception of response that shifts from the narrow focus on the roles teachers assume when responding to the broader instructor–student interaction in which

response is produced and received. In this chapter, I have focused my attention on how teacher's self-constructed identities shape how they produce response. As a result of my close observations of each instructor's teaching, I expanded my focus from the roles present in comments to how these teacherly identities position response. In doing so, I demonstrated how Bertrand's coaching role and Connie's mother role diverge from Dean's and Megan's expectations for dominantly positioned response directed at error correction. Because of these expectations for response, Dean and Megan were less receptive to how their instructors were reconceiving of service through practices such as conferencing, peer response, and alternative classroom genres such as the I-Search paper.

In the next chapter, I investigate Jane's response to Ashley's first paper. This instructor-student interaction provides valuable insight into the production and reception of response by speaking further to the expectations for correction that Dean and Megan desired. In Jane's response, she does tell Ashley exactly what in her paper is wrong and she does provide Ashley a grade for her paper. Jane also provides Ashley formative feedback directed at the revision of the text she submitted. This interaction between summative and formative response, including the nontraditional grade Jane used, unsettles the expectations Ashley had for the response she received. By investigating the values and beliefs that contributed to Jane's production of response and Ashley's reception of this response, I am able to more fully account for the extra-textual contexts that surround response.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PARATEXTUAL FUNCTIONING OF SUMMATIVE AND FORMATIVE RESPONSE

Although not a single article published in *College Composition and Communication* in the last ten years directly addresses the assigning of a grade to student writing, grading remains a dominant assessment practice in countless composition classrooms. In this chapter, I examine the relationship between grades and the written feedback that accompanies them. I argue the various elements of a response must be viewed collectively, contextually, and from multiple perspectives to account for how competing values shape the circulation of feedback. Using paratextual theory to oppose the tendency to partition comments as formative and grades as summative, I consider how one teacher's synchronous use of comments and grades both reflects the multiple purposes the teacher had in responding and influences the student's reading of the feedback she received. Specifically, I call on Beth McCoy's reading of how paratexts operate in asymmetrical power relations to argue that comments operate in conditions that are "important, fraught, and contested" ("Race" 156). In the classroom-centered story I analyze, I consider how the withholding of the grade by Jane on a paper written by Ashley demonstrates the contested nature of feedback that resulted from the values and beliefs Jane and Ashley possessed. By looking at how Jane produced and Ashley read this feedback, I am able to consider the tensions present between summative and

formative feedback to consider how each operates in relation to the other. In doing so, I problematize our willingness to cleanly separate grading from commenting.

The value gained from applying McCoy's rereading of paratextual theory to commenting scholarship rests in her acknowledgement of competing purposes and ideologies. Even within the most generous reading of teacher comments—that comments are directed toward and successful in facilitating writing improvement—we must remember that such improvement results from the negotiation of values and beliefs by both teacher and student. A consideration of comments and the “important, fraught, and contested” contexts in which they occur advances our understanding of comments in four important ways. First, my approach allows for the consideration of how response functions in relation to the student's and teacher's values, beliefs, and expectations for teaching, writing, and response. Second, by viewing different parts of a response as potentially in conflict with one another, I am able to examine the purposes the teacher had for these components and how the student read the comments in relation to these purposes and her own investments. Third, my analysis extends beyond the consideration of what students like, prefer, and use in the comments they receive by considering these elements as they relate to and shape a specific classroom context. Finally, I am able to account for response's completeness by focusing on how the use of both summative and formative feedback illustrates the tensions present when teachers produce and students read feedback. By positioning the grade as a form of paratextual response, I analyze how comments and grades function symmetrically and asymmetrically and how this functioning informs the classroom situation in which the comments are produced and read.

Comments as Paratexts

Grard Genette defines the paratext as a “threshold” constituting “a zone between text and off-text, a zone not only of transition but also of transaction” (2). Viewed as a literary production, paratexts include “typefaces, titles, prefaces, and other marginal elements of book culture that nevertheless greatly influence the reading of the text they accompany” (McCoy, “Paratext” 604–05). Situated alongside response practices, paratextual theory offers a lens through which to consider the differences that exist between a teacher’s production of comments and a student’s reading of these comments, including how such differences are shaped by power relations. To do this work, McCoy’s cultural reading of paratextual functioning must be introduced into Genette’s structural reading.

For Genette, “the main issue for the paratext [is] to ensure for a text a destiny consistent with the author’s purpose” such that “the correctness of the authorial ... point of view is the implicit creed and spontaneous ideology of the paratext” (407, 408). In “Race and the (Para)Textual Condition,” McCoy revisits paratextual functioning to examine the collision of race and paratexts in “works emerging from the African American freedom struggle” (156). Closely examining the paratextual functioning in Frederick Douglass’s *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* and James Allen’s exhibition of lynching photography *Without Sanctuary*, McCoy asks how paratexts “have been deployed to transact white power” and “what is gained and lost” when paratexts “are deployed to resist that power” (157). By focusing specifically on the transaction of meaning across power differences, she complicates Genette’s preference for paratextual categories based in illocutionary and authorial force. Whereas Genette views the paratext

as a deferential “accessory of the text” and, therefore, “undisputed territory” (410, 407), McCoy views the paratext as “important, fraught, and contested” and, therefore, worthy of being viewed as doing more than merely “getting the text read properly according to the author’s designs” (“Race” 156).

The peculiarities of the relationship between student-writer and teacher-commenter help explain why McCoy’s reading of paratexts as “fraught” provides a useful lens through which to investigate dominant views of commenting. When we discuss student texts and teacher comments, we imagine students and teachers occupying the role of both author and audience. The teacher writes the assignment prompt. The student reads and responds to the prompt. As Anis Bawarshi has demonstrated, this reading and response requires the student to acknowledge the assumptions conveyed in the prompt and “situate [his/her] writing within the writing prompt without acknowledging its presence explicitly in their writing” (134). After the student submits the paper, the teacher reads and responds. The student not only reads these comments but, in doing so, also explicitly or implicitly rereads his/her own writing in relation to these comments. The student may also revisit the assumptions he/she has made about the class and the instructor as a result of the comments received. This production and reception cycle, then, features paratextuality and intertextuality as well as a shifting author function.

Although previous scholarship has paid attention to the purposes teachers have with their comments (Probst; Sommers; Stern and Solomon; Straub and Lunsford), students’ preferences for (Beedles and Samuels; Reed and Burton; Straub, “Students’”) and reading of comments (Auten “A Rhetoric;” Straub, “Students’”), and how different types of comments function (Batt; Connors and Lunsford; Richardson; Smith), little

scholarship accounts for how these issues are informed by and inform the teacher's and student's values as they relate to a particular classroom. In their work, "Direction in the Grading of Writing? What the Literature of the Grading of Writing Does and Doesn't Tell Us," Bruce W. Speck and Tammy R. Jones highlight the "indiscriminate use of terminology" associated with grading and attempt to "untangle" the differences among evaluation, grading, assessment, commenting, and responding (20). The definitions they provide help us understand the tension surrounding Ashley's withheld grade while also illustrating how this tension relates to the multiple purposes Jane juggles in her response. Having defined evaluation as a term that "implies measurement" and leads to "a grade or a score," Speck and Jones establish the problematic relationship between summative evaluation, which measures a "final product," and formative evaluation, "which helps students achieve the goals" and consists of "comments or feedback" (20–21). Grading is both the "technique" or "strategy" a teacher uses "to arrive at those grades students will receive" and "the process used to calculate, measure, or determine a grade" (21). Grading is fully removed from commenting, based on their definitions, because "commenting does not involve measurement" (21).

These definitions create categorical distinctions between common response, evaluation, and grading practices, but they do not allow us to fully consider the overlap among practices (and terms). Speck and Jones do begin to bridge this divide by considering how Peter Elbow's distinction between ranking and evaluating in "Ranking, Evaluating and Liking: Sorting Out Three Forms of Judgment" is actually a distinction between summative and formative evaluation (21). From this point, they reposition grading as referring exclusively to summative evaluation and turn to Catharine Lucas's

definition of formative evaluation as “internal continual feedback to the performer-in-action” to more fully distinguish formative response from measurement (Lucas 1; qtd. in Speck and Jones 21). In analyzing Jane’s production and Ashley’s reading of feedback on the first writing project, I consider the possibility that the tension present in this feedback results not simply from Jane’s use of both summative and formative feedback but also from the multiple purposes Jane introduced in her feedback as well as the expectations Ashley brought to her reading of it. Although the synchronous use of summative and formative feedback does play a role in this story, to tie the resulting tension narrowly to Jane’s use of both feedback types is to view comments as fully reflective of both authorial intent and categorical distinction. By blurring the line between summative and formative feedback, I position grading as possessing the potential to be summative in a given moment while also allowing for the formative response Lucas describes. Similarly, such blurring positions commenting as not removed from measurement but, instead, as one “important, fraught, and contested” portion of a teacher’s response to and measurement of a student’s writing.

Jane’s Production and Ashley’s Reception of Feedback

When Jane returned the students’ first writing project with her feedback, students found four types of response on their papers. This feedback included a discursive cover letter, a table at the end of this letter accounting for the work they had submitted up to that point in the class, an alphabetic grade that was handwritten and circled under the table, and a small number of in-text, marginal comments (see fig. 3.1). Seeing as the alphabetic grade Ashley received was the nontraditional “NG” (no grade) designation

Jane used because of citation issues in Ashley's paper, this withheld grade situated itself at the center of Ashley's reading of Jane's response.¹ When discussing this feedback in our meeting after Jane had returned these writing projects, Ashley said, "The only thing I got frustrated with [was] when I wrote my first paper, and I didn't get a grade back on it. But I got [the paper with the grade] back today." Combined within this one statement are three points that continuously permeated our conversation: (1) Ashley's frustration with not initially receiving a grade, (2) the importance she placed in the grade, and (3) the role receiving a letter grade played in alleviating her frustration.

Ashley received her first paper back with a "NG" designation because of what Jane concluded to be citation issues present in her paper. Jane made mention of these problems at three points in her rather lengthy response cover letter (see fig. 3.1).² The initial reference occurs in the first paragraph, in which she subordinates the citation problems—"although you have some citation problems (see my in-text comments)"—in favor of focusing on Ashley's "clear and balanced application of the source-integration skills we have discussed in class." The second reference occurs at the beginning of the second paragraph where Jane reminds Ashley of the citation issues almost as an aside. Here, she positions her other revision suggestions as existing "besides revisions of your citations." The final reference encompasses the entire third paragraph:

Because of the citation problems listed above, I have recorded a "NG" (no grade) in my grade book. Once you have fixed the citations, I will give

¹ Jane used the "NG" grade for other purposes beyond citation issues. For instance, Ava's second writing project was originally graded "NG" because it both concluded abruptly and did not meet the minimum length requirement. Ava did not disagree with Jane's use of this grading category nor did she find it to be inappropriate for her submission.

² The response extended to approximately 450 words in length.

you a grade with no penalty, but if the citations are not fixed before the end of the semester, then the NG will become a 0. I'd recommend revising according to my suggestions above in the next week or two, so that I can give you a grade and you can decide if you'd like to revise again before the end of the semester.

Although Jane's comments do not focus solely on the citation problems, such concerns do encompass a significant portion of the letter and are positioned as the most pressing issue for Ashley to address. I position the citation problems as the most pressing issue because they explain the "NG" designation, they are the only portion Ashley *must* address to receive a grade, and they are the driving force behind the recommendation for Ashley to submit a revision within the next two weeks. Not surprisingly, Jane's decision to withhold a grade until specific parameters were met featured prominently in the conversation I had with Ashley on the day the paper was returned to her with a grade. At numerous instances during our conversation, Ashley articulated a belief that she should have received a grade. Furthermore, she wanted and felt she deserved to receive a grade. She was surprised that Jane "didn't grade it," seeing as "she thought it was a good paper." She was "bummed" she didn't get a grade because she "worked so hard" on the paper. She did not consider the citation issues to be "a big deal," so she expected Jane to "just give me a grade and then just tell me what I needed to do." Ashley appeared uncomfortable with the challenge posed by navigating the positive response she had received and a grade that did not align with this response:

Hi Ashley,

It's clear from this essay that you've done a good amount of research that has enabled you to discuss the effects of PTSD on women in a meaningful and thorough way. Although you have some citation problems (see my in-text comments), your use of the sources, especially the book sources, demonstrates a clear and balanced application of the source-integration skills that we discussed in class. Additionally, the overall structure of your essay presented your ideas in a thoughtful and logical manner.

The primary revision suggestion I have, besides revision of your citations, has to do with what you commented on at the end of the essay yourself – specifically, I think you could do a good deal more in terms of explicitly connecting your argument statement to the body of the essay. That is, because the body of the essay tends to explain the problem but not argue why it matters, I'm not entirely clear how or why the problem is important. However, you've indicated in the first paragraph of the essay that this problem is a problem because it is commonly “misunderstood by the public.” I think you could do much further reminding your reader(s) about this in each paragraph of the body of the essay.

Because of the citation problems listed above, I have recorded a “NG” (no grade) in my grade book. Once you've fixed the citations, I will give you a grade with no penalty, but if the citations aren't fixed before the end of the semester, then the NG will become a 0. I'd recommend revising according to my suggestions above in the next week or two, so that I can give you a grade and you can decide if you'd like to revise again before the end of the semester.

As you start thinking about WP2, I'd keep your eye out especially for articles that discuss the effects or consequences of the way the medical community and/or public (mis)understands PTSD as “man's” or “war” problem. Or, you could take a step back from that and look for debates surrounding whether or not the medical community and/or public actually misunderstands PTSD. Or, alternatively, you might find disagreements surrounding who is affected most by the problem – is it the women themselves? Their families or partners? Or, you might find disagreements about the definition of PTSD – that is, there may be some parties who would argue that PTSD should not be called that when it comes to war, or that there should be a new name for the disorder when it affects women. These are all just guesses about what you might find – you should, of course, keep your mind open as you explore the possibilities.

	Credit?	Notes and Recommendations
RE1	Y	I'm sorry you didn't receive comments on your work this week. Worth revising further. Very good, overall.
RE2	Y	
RE3	Y	
Overall		
Peer Group Response	Y	You provided a good response to [another student's] work, and I appreciate the fact that you conducted a quick search on his behalf to help him with his research.
Overall:		
# Absences	1	1/14

NG

Figure 3.1: Jane's Cover Letter Feedback to Ashley's Writing Project 1

I mean, she says that I did a good job, so that's why I thought she would at least put a grade on it and then tell me things that ... because I felt like it was really minor. It wasn't even that big a deal, like not big enough of a deal to say, "You have to fix this first, then turn it into me, and then I will give you a grade."

These selections from our conversation are telling in how they present Ashley's consistent articulation that she felt the citation issues were minor enough to not warrant the "NG" designation.

Ashley's reaction to not receiving a grade and her opinion on why she should have received a grade illustrate beliefs regarding the particular work grades do and the roles students and teachers occupy in classrooms in which grades operate. Ashley's desire for a grade is especially worthy of investigation because of how her values and expectations closely align with Jane's priorities as an instructor and grader. The clearest articulation of this overlap occurs in Ashley's stated wish that Jane "would just tell me what I needed to do." This statement points toward an expectation for explicit feedback. "Explicit" is the term Jane regularly used to describe how she has approached her role as teacher, including the role of commenter. To better understand Ashley's frustration, to trace what this frustration meant for her as a student in the class, and to consider what this frustration might say about how grading operates, we need to look more closely at Jane's beliefs about grading and how these beliefs played out in this specific class.

Understanding Jane's approach to teaching, response, and grading begins with a consideration of how she situated explicitness in her teaching:

I want to be as explicit as possible. I don't want to hide things from my students. I don't want it to be a mystery how to succeed in the class. I also feel that sometimes because I am always looking forward and looking backward, if I don't make it explicit I will just assume ... If I don't make it explicit, I forget that it is not explicit.

Jane's investment in explicitness stemmed from both her teaching experiences and, more specifically, conversations with a colleague particularly interested in and attuned to the intersections of pedagogy and socioeconomic class. Jane's argument that "those of us who are middle or high class and have had this, you know, there's a lot of stuff that you are socialized to pick up on" positioned her thinking directly alongside matters of class. Referencing the common parenting and teaching practice of posing statements as questions to illustrate what she sees as nonexplicit teaching, Jane drew implicit connections to Lisa Delpit's "Educating Other People's Children." In her article, Delpit argues academic practices privilege students who come from middle- and upper-class sociocultural backgrounds because these students have been socialized in the values and beliefs privileged by these discourse practices. Applying this concern with unfair expectations of student behavior specifically to English and writing classes, Jane noted, "There's this sense that you should be able to read between the lines. ... I think that's a particular class and particular culture not every student is going to be privy to." To illustrate this point, Jane drew my attention to the grade breakdown she included at the bottom of her response to the first paper. For Jane, her choice to use this grade breakdown illustrated a difference between past-teaching Jane and current-teaching Jane:

I haven't actually done this before this semester, where I'm giving them a breakdown of how well they're doing or not well—this specific kind of response. And I was like, "Why am I not doing this?" ... In my mind, I mean, in my "before teaching like I do now" mind, I tend to think "they should just know" because clearly, to me, they're not doing it. But then I'm like, "Why would they know? Like, why, why am I thinking that they would know?" So that's why I am doing that kind of explicit move. Because it's something I take for granted a lot of times and students aren't like me.

In our conversations, Jane was quick to trace how her teaching has changed since she first entered the composition class. As "current-teaching" Jane, she views her explicitness as related to but not limited to the directive comments and corrections she offers students. Her explicitness and use of directive comments (see Brannon and Knoblauch; Ransdell; Straub, "Concept") extend from not only the values she possesses about writing and writing classrooms but also her own expertise. Beginning with the semester previous to my data collection, Jane said she emphasized to herself "again and again" the expertise she possesses given her academic training and preparation. Doing so had allowed her to more fully understand her use of directive comments, the role explicitness and expertise should play in her comments, and the larger purposes she has for her comments. At the beginning of the semester, she articulated her major purposes "throughout the semester with my comments" would be to help students see where to go next with their work and to pose questions the students could ask of their writing to move in these directions. Given this foundation Jane brought to her comments, her explanation

for the “NG” designation she provided to a number of students on this first writing project is not surprising:

There are things that need to be corrected. The reason why some students got “no grade” is because what they were doing was plagiarism, and they need to fix that. Like there is a way to fix it; there are things to do. There are quotation marks and parenthetical things they need to do so they are not plagiarizing.

As I will demonstrate when I offer an alternative reading of Jane’s comments, this explanation for the “NG” designation operates apart from Jane’s emphasis on writing improvement and formative feedback. Given how she explained what Ashley needed to do as a matter of “fix[ing]” the writing, this explanation begins to illustrate the multiple and competing purposes Jane navigated when composing her comments. At the same time, although her explanation for the withheld grade may operate apart from her investment in writing improvement, this separation cannot be maintained in a single response. Although I am beginning my analysis with Ashley’s investment in receiving a grade, I later turn to this alternative reading to consider the multiple purposes Jane had when commenting. As these multiple purposes are represented in a response that makes use of both summative and formative response, my attention is directed toward considering how values and beliefs shape how this response was produced and received. Paratextual theory allows us to consider Jane’s purposes not merely as requiring fixing or as facilitating improvement but as possibly accomplishing both goals. Viewing response paratextually also forces us to accept that these purposes, when represented as written

comments, were filtered through the values and beliefs Ashley brought to her reading of this response.

In working to understand how Jane and Ashley “read” these comments differently, it is important to remember that Ashley and Jane valued grades similarly. Describing her frustration, Ashley admitted, “I was just annoyed because she wrote all this stuff about my paper—like critiquing it I guess—and then like there was like one minor mistake about my citations, and she didn’t grade it. I like wanted a grade, so I [could] fix it and turn it back in.” For Jane, grades operate as part of this broader sense of explicitness described previously. In this class, Jane’s explicitness fits into her larger purpose to aid students in finding success:

I don’t think there is any reason why it should be a big mystery how to pass this class. It’s like you’re jumping through hoops; you’re just doing work. And you’re doing writing work for a semester. And you’re doing research for a semester. ... They only have a certain amount of time, and I want them to be able to be efficient, because I think that’s one of their goals, probably.

Jane’s desire to make explicit how a student would pass her class motivated Jane’s decision to withhold Ashley’s grade. As Jane articulated, Ashley and some of the other students who received a “NG” needed to address the plagiarism issues in their writing to receive a grade on their writing projects. The simple narrative created here is that Ashley’s withheld grade resulted from these plagiarism issues. Given these issues that needed to be fixed, Jane’s comments were directed at helping the student address these issues. From this perspective, we can imagine an “authorial intention” reading of Jane’s

feedback, such that the comments, when read by Ashley alongside her own paper, would aid her in addressing these citation issues.

Although this is the reading Ashley privileged, another reading exists. This perspective positions Jane's reading of Ashley's writing project and the suggestions she offered as more primary than the citation issues she also noted. This alternative reading—a reading constructed from Jane's discussion of her own commenting practices—illustrates the “fraught” nature of comments. Specifically, this alternative reading illustrates that instability exists not merely between the teacher's production and the student's reception of comments but also between different components of a response and in the purposes Jane forwarded in her comments. By recognizing these multiple levels of instability, we are forced to reconsider Genette's view of the paratext as “only an assistant, only an accessory of the text” (410). In fact, this rereading asks us to consider the relationship between not only paratext and text but also one paratext and another paratext.

An Alternative Reading of Jane's Comments

To analyze comments categorically is to consider how each portion of the response functions. From Genette's perspective, this analysis should always be conducted from the author's vantage point given that any paratext “is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it (more pertinent, of course, in the eyes of the author and his allies)” (2). As I have already established, such authorial, categorical analysis is problematic because of the shifting author function associated with in-progress student writing and the inability for categorical analysis to account for the

cumulative purposes present in feedback. As the comments' author, Jane imagined specific purposes for each type of comment and a cumulative purpose when the comments are viewed collectively. As I outlined previously, Jane's comments featured three elements—the discursive letter, the grade, and the in-text citation. For this first paper, Jane also included the chart that articulated the student's standing in the class. By imagining Jane's response read differently by Jane and Ashley in relation to both the feedback as a whole and the separate components of the feedback, space opens to more fully understand how competing values shape the circulation of feedback, especially when this feedback includes both summative and formative elements.

Up to this point in the chapter, I have paid particular attention to the comments that directly address the withheld grade. These comments account for only a portion of the feedback Ashley received. As Jane explained in the think-aloud protocol she completed when commenting on Ashley's second writing project, she constructed her response cover letter with a purposeful structure in mind. This purposeful structure included a first paragraph intended to acknowledge what the student had done well. Acknowledging the strengths she saw in Ashley's paper, Jane wrote to Ashley:

It's clear from this essay that you've done a good amount of research that has enabled you to discuss the effects of PTSD on women in a meaningful and thorough way. Although you have some citation problems (see my in-text comments), your use of the sources, especially the book sources, demonstrates a clear and balanced application of the source-integration skills that we discussed in class. Additionally, the overall structure of the essay presented your ideas in a thoughtful and logical manner.

The phrases “good amount of research,” “meaningful and thorough way,” and “clear and balanced application of the source-integration skills” demonstrate evaluation as Elbow defines the concept. In this section of her response, Jane focuses on the strengths apparent in Ashley’s paper. She demonstrates further positive evaluation in the assignment overview grid included at the end of the response, which articulated to Ashley that her response essays had been “very good, overall” and that she had provided “a good response” to a classmate’s work. More important than Jane’s demonstration of evaluation in her response is Ashley’s awareness of this evaluation. She demonstrated this awareness in noting that Jane “says I did a good job.” This inclusion of evaluation alongside a letter grade reaffirms Speck and Jones’s critique of Elbow’s distinction between ranking and evaluating as nothing more than a distinction between summative and formative evaluation. Simply, Jane’s response demonstrates, as we already know, that summative and formative feedback can appear on the same page, and, more important, the definitional differences between the two do not hold up completely when considered within actual classroom contexts. To accept that such definitional differences could be separated and maintained is to privilege a categorical reading of response and not McCoy’s “important, fraught, and contested” reading that asks us to be open to the role competing values and beliefs play in complicating the transaction of meaning between teacher and student.

At the risk of oversimplifying a surely complex transaction, I want to focus specifically on one tension that exists between Jane’s purposes in responding and Ashley’s reading of the response Jane provided. When she articulated the frustration she felt at not receiving a grade, Ashley made direct reference to how hard she worked on the

paper and her belief that this hard work should have earned her a grade. Her desire for a grade was so absolute that she preferred receiving an “F” on the paper rather than the “NG” she received. For Jane, the grade would not be awarded until the citation problems were addressed. Looking at these two beliefs side-by-side, an incongruity exists between Ashley’s expectation of a grade based on effort demonstrated and Jane’s distribution of grades based on expectations met. The interview material, including what I have presented in this chapter, makes clear that Jane felt her withholding of a grade grew from her privileging of explicit teaching, highlighted what a student needed to do to succeed in the class, and took into consideration what she felt was students’ desire for efficiency.

An alternative reading of Jane’s comments can be constructed that offers a different perspective on Jane’s purposes with her comments and the resulting frustration Ashley felt when she read these comments. Earlier in this chapter, I argued that Jane’s discussion of the citation issues “encompasses a significant portion of the letter” and that these issues are “the most pressing issue for Ashley to address.” Jane’s response letter can also be read as primarily privileging the successes of the document and suggestions for further improvement while placing the citation concerns at a secondary level. As previously established, Jane focuses on the paper’s strengths in the first paragraph. In the second paragraph, Jane offers a “primary revision suggestion” that Ashley “could do a good deal more in terms of explicitly connecting [her] argument statement to the body of the essay.” Although the third paragraph explains the “NG” designation and outlines what Ashley should do to receive a grade, the fourth paragraph moves away from the “NG” grade by posing questions Ashley can consider when she “start[s] thinking about [writing project] 2.”

In our conversation on the day she received the paper back with a grade (see fig. 3.2), I asked Ashley to articulate how Jane's responses demonstrated what she valued in student writing. Ashley answered by comparing what she believed to be important before her writing project was first returned to her with what she came to believe after her paper was returned:

Before I didn't know if the actual writing was more important or like the citing and all the technical things. So I didn't know really what's more important in the class, like the writing you're doing or all the technical stuff.

When asked to define the difference between the writing and "all the technical stuff," Ashley struggled to do so, ultimately offering that the writing is "just the way you word things" whereas the "technical stuff" is "how to construct a paper, or like the introduction, or your argument statement—all those technical things." Given Ashley's voiced expectation that she should have received a grade, I can conclude that she felt, before her paper was returned, that the writing aspects were more important than the technical aspects. Having had her grade withheld, Ashley questioned that assumption as well as how she viewed the relationship between grades (summative response) and comments (formative response) in Jane's class. After having her grade withheld, Ashley began to reconsider what Jane privileged in the class and what actions she would have to engage to receive traditional grades on her writing projects as well as the semester grade she desired, which was an "A." Because Ashley's assumptions about the class resulted, at least in part, from the comments she received, it is telling that her perspective shifted

Hi Ashley,

You've made some good adjustments to your primary thesis statement, as well as transition sentences within paragraphs to emphasize more clearly exactly how the body paragraphs of your essay "make sense" in the context of your larger arguments. Although some of the revisions to individual sentences could be revised even more so that they run more smoothly (see the 1st sentence of the 2nd paragraph on page 1, and the last sentence of the 1st paragraph on page 3), and although I think you could have gone even further in terms of making the connections explicit (and possibly even in the final paragraph), I think that generally, the changes you made to this already-strong paper are rhetorically effective.

I have some minor comments on pages 1 and 3 about your citations, which are still a little off—but the difference between this draft and the previous one is that I can at least follow your citations from the body of the essay to the Works Cited page, and there aren't any missing from the list. See me if you have any questions about my new comments—I know it can be confusing!

A

Figure 3.2: Jane's Cover Letter Feedback to Ashley's Resubmitted Writing Project 1

again during her reading of Jane's response to her second paper, which I engaged through a think-aloud protocol. Ashley's navigation of the feedback she received illustrates both the "important, fraught, and contested" nature of response and how this navigation is an ongoing process through which a student comes to better understand how writing is positioned in a given classroom.

This instructor–student "interaction," which at first appeared to be a difference in opinion of whether Ashley deserved a grade on her first submission, can now be seen as either a difference in opinion or as a difference in the reading of the comments provided. The second option allows for the possibility that the comments do not clearly represent a well-established, primary purpose. Take for example the beginning of the second paragraph where Jane offers her primary revision suggestion. In offering this suggestion, she announces it as the primary suggestion she has "besides revision of your citations."

Whereas best-practice commenting scholarship champions the need for clear and specific feedback, Jane's response demonstrates the competing purposes teachers may bring to their responses. Whereas the consideration of comments through taxonomies imagines a possibility of function following form, Jane's comments and Ashley's reading of these comments highlight how competing values and beliefs shape the production and reception of written comments.

McCoy's rereading of Genette's structuralist analysis accounts for culture's influence on "the way and means of the paratext" by considering how a paratext's "situation of communication" depends on both the "sender and addressee" and also "facts of contextual affiliation," which shape how a paratext is both produced and read (Genette 3, 8). Although these are Genette's terms and phrases, it is McCoy's work that fully considers how the sender, addressee, situation, and affiliations interact across power differences. The roles Jane and Ashley occupied as instructor and student are major facts of affiliation that must be accounted for when considering Jane's production and Ashley's reception of response. Of particular importance is Jane's ability, in the role of instructor, to define what counted as revision considering that Jane's response centered on the expectations she had for what students would "fix" and "revise."

Ashley's conclusion that "all the technical stuff" was most important in her writing developed from her reading of the response she received. What she was not privy to and what may have also shaped the feedback she received were Jane's uneasiness with composition's investment in revision and her own expectations of what revision should look like. As I explained in the project's introduction, Jane's class was scaffolded such that the larger essays (what she called "writing projects") developed from smaller writing

prompts (what she called “response essays”). Furthermore, students were expected to incorporate material from the previous writing projects into subsequent writing projects. Ultimately, the course culminated with a final portfolio that included revised weekly response essays, the two earlier writing projects, and the final writing project that both considered solutions to the problem the student was investigating and included material from the previous writing projects. Within this class structure, revision took the form of students “reseeing” the approaches they took in their response essays and developing ways to use prior writing to construct the later writing projects.

Jane’s use of this scaffolded approach arose from many factors, including her uneasiness with composition’s privileging of “essay” revision. On multiple occasions during the semester, Jane voiced the belief that she was “out of step” or “out of touch” with our field’s common beliefs about and practices toward revision. Explaining this uneasiness, she said, “I feel that if someone can pull out an ‘A’ paper on the first draft they turn in, then that’s great. I don’t see why I should force them to revise. I feel the revision should really be about the process of revision.” Her resistance to revision stemmed also from an understanding that students see the revision process as being about “getting it right or not right” such that the revision students do “is usually about fixing rather than really reseeing.”

Jane’s resistance to required revision seems to have played a role in her use of the “NG” designation as well as how she structured her comments. As I’ve previously outlined, the response included suggestions for improving the current essay (writing project 1), instructions on how Ashley could earn a grade, and questions Ashley should consider when moving onto writing project 2. Because Ashley was not required to revise

the essay apart from the citation issues, Jane appeared compelled to address the citation issues, the essay-specific suggestions, and the suggestions that would help Ashley move from writing project 1 to writing project 2 all within the same response. Telling, then, is the response Ashley received to her resubmitted essay (fig 3.2). In this response letter, Jane uses the first paragraph to acknowledge what Ashley has accomplished in the revision and to highlight areas calling for additional revision. She does not address Ashley's citation revisions until the second paragraph. With this second paragraph, Jane follows a similar structure as that present in the first paragraph. She acknowledges that some of the citations "are still a little off" while also acknowledging Ashley's successes—"I can at least follow your citations from the body of the essay to the Works Cited page, and there aren't any missing from the list."

The Value of Paratextual Perception

The tension I have examined surrounding the "NG" Jane initially provided to Ashley's first writing project is only one portion of a larger narrative. This larger narrative expands what I have investigated in relation to Jane's production of and Ashley's reading of the comments provided to Ashley's first paper. When Ashley submitted her second writing project, both Jane and Ashley participated in think-aloud protocols meant to illustrate each person's thought process as the comments were composed and then read. As the comments in Figure 3.3 demonstrate, Jane used three paragraphs to convey her response to Ashley. The first offers Jane's reading of Ashley's work, whereas the second and third paragraphs each offer a suggestion Ashley could consider to improve this essay and her writing more generally.

Hi Ashley,

In this essay, you've done a lot of work to explain why a focus on the effect of PTSD on children is more problematic than PTSD's effects on adults. This implicit argument is an important one in relation to your previous writing project, in which your focus was primarily the effects of PTSD on women. I think that overall, you've done a nice job supporting this argument with sources that each explain, using different kinds of evidence, how children suffer the consequences of PTSD more strongly than women or adults. Also, although some of your source material is quite dense, I think you've made a solid effort to explain and support your understanding of these sources in a way that is useful for your purposes. I have two primary suggestions for revision, which you might keep in mind as you continue writing, and/or if you choose to revise this essay.

First, although I think you are making an argument in this essay, at this point, your own perspective is never explicitly stated, and so I had to work more than I should have, as a reader, to make the connections between each source and your larger point that I think you wanted me to make. Specifically, although you have written a convincing introduction to the essay, I think the essay as a whole would be clearer if you stated explicitly in the first paragraph that you intend to use these different sources to demonstrate, ultimately, that our focus should be on children, rather than adults, when it comes to the issue of PTSD. Although this argument is implicit throughout, you haven't yet done enough to make these connections explicit in a rhetorically effective way. Related to this, I was surprised, when I came to the end of the essay, that you didn't synthesize your sources in a separate paragraph (before the conclusion) so that I understood how, exactly, you saw them relating to your larger argument. If you were to revise, I would encourage you to compose an explicit argument statement in the first paragraph, and develop/synthesize your ideas about the sources (talk about them together) in at least one paragraph toward the end of the essay.

Secondly, as you write about each source, although you've generally done a good job explaining each one, I had a hard time remembering how the individual sources related to one another, as I got caught up in each paragraph. It would be interesting, and more effective, to read your explanation of each source while also understanding how you see the source relating to (being similar or different) the other sources you're describing. In other words, why is it important that Armsworth and Holaday take a more general approach (toward explaining the different effects of PTSD on children versus adults), while Rowe and Jackowski are more specific in their approaches toward explaining the effects of PTSD on children? Do you see Rowe adding to, or justifying, or simply confirming, Armsworth and Holaday's claim that the effects of PTSD on children are more consequential than on adults? Or do you see Rowe in a different light? Mainly, I just want you to remind me in each paragraph how you see each source building upon the previous sources, which will ultimately contribute to your larger argument.

B+

Figure 3.3: Jane's Cover Letter Feedback to Ashley's Writing Project 2

Happy to have received a grade on this new submission, Ashley turned her attention again to the division between “my writing” and “technical aspects” she had put forth in our previous discussion. She noted that the comments on the last paper were “a lot about citation,” whereas the comments she received on her second writing project were “more about my writing.” She traced this change, at least in part, to including correct citations in her paper. “I felt like I did it [citing] right this time,” she said. “I was pretty confident I wasn’t going to get a ‘NG’”. Getting a “NG” on her first writing project did stress for her how important citation is, both in general and in Jane’s class, although Ashley, weeks after receiving the grade, felt that the “NG” problematically emphasized the citation issues over the other revisions Jane suggested. At the same time, the “NG” did convey to Ashley “what’s important in the class” while also leaving her to continue to work out what “good writing” was in Jane’s class.

Comparing the comments she received on her first two papers, Ashley tentatively concluded:

It kind of makes me feel like my last paper was better writing since she didn’t really comment that much on my paper. I mean, I did fix some things, so I don’t know if I just missed something and that’s why I have more comments on my writing. I don’t know. I mean, was she, since I got my citations right this time she could focus more on, I don’t know.

Given Jane’s articulation of the purposes behind her commenting, the conclusion Ashley establishes for why she received more comments on her second writing project appears to be on target. Since she had “fixed” her citations, more room opened up for comments on what she would call “my writing.” Such a conclusion, however, problematically

oversimplifies the choices Jane faced when composing her comments. The simple narrative we can construct is that Jane prioritized the citation issues over the revision suggestions and probing questions directed at future writing projects. The alternative reading I have offered complicates this narrative. The more convincing conclusion we arrive at is that teachers often bring multiple and conflicting purposes to their comments because of the competing values and beliefs circulating in and around their teaching.

As a significant body of commenting scholarship has focused on the clarity of comments and students reading of comments, a valuable question we can ask is: Given that Jane typically structures her comments to emphasize her reading of a student's work and her suggestions directed at improving the student's writing and writing practices, are we to conclude that there is a clarity issue given that Ashley's reading of these comments focused primarily on the grade she did not receive and Jane's explanation for this decision? Approaching this question from McCoy's reading of paratexts as "important, fraught, and contested" allows us to not so much avoid this clarity question as reshape the question to consider the multiple, competing contexts in which this feedback was produced and read. How did Jane's focus on explicitness shape her purposes when commenting? How did Ashley's significant interest in receiving a high grade on her writing influence how she read the comments she received? How does the inclusion of a grade, especially a withheld grade, operate alongside discursive comments? What role did Jane's resistance to traditional views of revision play in what she included in her comments and how she organized the comments?

In this chapter, I have suggested some answers to these questions. More importantly, I demonstrated how comments, when viewed as paratexts operating within

competing contexts, can be seen as both contributing to and addressing the tensions and challenges that arise in the writing classroom. From a “best practices” perspective, Ashley’s repetitive use of “I don’t know” to explain how she made sense of Jane’s comments should leave us troubled. But examined in relation to the multiple and competing values and beliefs shaping the production and reception of these comments, Ashley’s “I don’t know” leads us not to easy conclusions but to challenging questions. Are we to view Ashley’s ongoing uncertainty regarding what aspect of her work—the “technical” or the “writing”—Jane most privileged as symptomatic of issues present in the feedback? Are we, seeing this situation differently, to value this uncertainty as representative of Ashley and Jane’s navigation of writing and the response to writing as “important, fraught, and contested?” Although the story I have investigated is particular to the contexts Jane and Ashley occupied, my hope has been to put forth paratextual theory as a means through which to more fully account for the “fraught” nature of response while also productively blurring the line between formative and summative assessment. Viewed paratextually, Jane’s production of feedback and Ashley’s reading of this feedback help us to better understand the interactions that occur between grades and comments due to the values and beliefs circulating in and around the composition classroom.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CHALLENGES OF RESPONSE TO THE CUMULATIVE SEMESTER PROJECT

In each of the previous two chapters, I have closely examined feedback provided from an instructor to a student. Chapter 3 focused on the multiple purposes motivating Jane when she responded to Ashley's first writing project. The second chapter considered how Bertrand's feedback to Megan's second paper did not match the response Megan desired. Both of these responses are worthy of further study because of how, in each response, the instructor, either explicitly or implicitly, draws connections across multiple texts. When responding to Ashley's first writing project, Jane provided feedback that was intended to help Ashley as she moved from writing project (WP) 1 to writing project 2:

As you start thinking about WP2, I'd keep your eye out especially for articles that discuss the effects or consequences of the way the medical community and/or the public (mis)understands PTSD as "man's" or "war" problem. Or, you could take a step back from that and look for debates surrounding whether or not the medical community and/or public actually misunderstands PTSD. Or, alternatively, you might find disagreements surrounding who is affected most by the problem – is it the women themselves? Their families or partners? Or, you might find disagreements about the definition of PTSD – that is, there may be some parties who

would argue that PTSD should not be called that when it comes to war, or that there should be a new name for the disorder when it affects women. These are all just guesses about what you might find – you should, of course, keep your mind open as you explore the possibilities.

When responding to Megan’s second essay, Bertrand provided Megan the following feedback:

The part of your paper that intrigues this reader the most is when you write, “Third, I am picking up on a common theme among the nurses of [_____], and it all revolves around job stress and difficulty dealing with the elderly. How these individuals handle it is really up to their discretion, however, I know very well that these employees cannot vent out their frustration to residents for fear of being fired, sued, or even arrested.” You have located a tension within the culture and it seems to surprise you and disturb you. I think your conclusion could “think” about this a lot more than presently. What questions can you raise about this tension? But that is your call to make.

The primary contrast between these two responses is the degree to which each instructor draws distinctions between individual texts. The excerpt I have included from Jane’s response occurs after she provided both direction on how Ashley can address the citation issues that led to the “NG” grade and further suggestions were Ashley to revise this specific assignment (see fig. 4.1). As described in Chapter 3, Jane provided Ashley what she called “explicit” feedback to help her resolve her citation issues and further revise her

Hi Ashley,

It's clear from this essay that you've done a good amount of research that has enabled you to discuss the effects of PTSD on women in a meaningful and thorough way. Although you have some citation problems (see my in-text comments), your use of the sources, especially the book sources, demonstrates a clear and balanced application of the source-integration skills that we discussed in class. Additionally, the overall structure of your essay presented your ideas in a thoughtful and logical manner.

The primary revision suggestion I have, besides revision of your citations, has to do with what you commented on at the end of the essay yourself – specifically, I think you could do a good deal more in terms of explicitly connecting your argument statement to the body of the essay. That is, because the body of the essay tends to explain the problem but not argue why it matters, I'm not entirely clear how or why the problem is important. However, you've indicated in the first paragraph of the essay that this problem is a problem because it is commonly “misunderstood by the public.” I think you could do much further reminding your reader(s) about this in each paragraph of the body of the essay.

Because of the citation problems listed above, I have recorded a “NG” (no grade) in my grade book. Once you've fixed the citations, I will give you a grade with no penalty, but if the citations aren't fixed before the end of the semester, then the NG will become a 0. I'd recommend revising according to my suggestions above in the next week or two, so that I can give you a grade and you can decide if you'd like to revise again before the end of the semester.

As you start thinking about WP2, I'd keep your eye out especially for articles that discuss the effects or consequences of the way the medical community and/or public (mis)understands PTSD as “man's” or “war” problem. Or, you could take a step back from that and look for debates surrounding whether or not the medical community and/or public actually misunderstands PTSD. Or, alternatively, you might find disagreements surrounding who is affected most by the problem – is it the women themselves? Their families or partners? Or, you might find disagreements about the definition of PTSD – that is, there may be some parties who would argue that PTSD should not be called that when it comes to war, or that there should be a new name for the disorder when it affects women. These are all just guesses about what you might find – you should, of course, keep your mind open as you explore the possibilities.

	Credit?	Notes and Recommendations
RE1	Y	I'm sorry you didn't receive comments on your work this week. Worth revising further. Very good, overall.
RE2	Y	
RE3	Y	
Overall		
Peer Group Response	Y	You provided a good response to [another student's] work, and I appreciate the fact that you conducted a quick search on his behalf to help him with his research.
Overall:		
# Absences	1	1/14

NG

Figure 4.1: Jane's Cover Letter Feedback to Ashley's Writing Project 1

argument statement. Having provided this feedback, she then turns to Ashley's next writing project, and, in doing so, she shifts her tone to one that is more suggestive than directive. This paragraph includes numerous references to what Ashley "might" do. With this approach, Jane creates separation between the already-written text and the upcoming text in terms of her response's focus and tone. The form of her response also reflects this separation; a clear paragraph break exists between the response addressing the already-written text and the upcoming text.

The excerpt from Bertrand's response represents the majority of his two-paragraph response to Megan's second paper (fig. 4.2). The first paragraph offers positive evaluation of her work, whereas the end of the second paragraph asks her about the "lack of secondary sources" and provides her imaginary and process grades. In this excerpt, Bertrand situates himself as a reader interested in one particular idea present in Megan's writing. From this particular focus, he offers a broad suggestion, one that, although situated in response to her conclusion, may also speak beyond this single text. That is to say, I don't read his pushing her to "raise questions" about the workplace stress she has observed to be directed narrowly and exclusively to a revision of her essay's conclusion. The suggestion, when read within the assignment sequence present in his class, appears to extend beyond the already-produced text, even if his presentation of the suggestion does not demonstrate the suggestive or textual explicitness present in Jane's response to Ashley.

Taken together, these two responses offer a starting point to further consider an overlooked element of response scholarship. Although attention has been given to formative response directed at revised individual essays (Yagelski; Ziv) and collections

Megan – Excellent field work. Excellent presentation of interviews. Excellent reflection about what it all means. As far as your concerns about sentence structure and language, I think the paper is very well-developed on both counts. If you think you have problems with the transitions I would prefer to conference about that in class so you can point to specific places you considered troublesome.

The part of your paper that intrigues this reader the most is the when you write, “Third, I am picking up on a common theme among the nurses of [], and it all revolves around job stress and difficulty dealing with the elderly. How these individuals handle it is really up to their discretion, however, I know very well that these employees cannot vent out their frustration to the residents, for fear of being fired, sued, or even arrested.” You have located a tension within the culture and it seems to surprise you and disturb you. I think your conclusion could “think” about this a lot more than presently. What questions can you raise about this tension? But that is your call to make. I also wonder about your lack of secondary sources. If you explained to me already, I apologize for not remembering. They are required for the paper, though. Excellent work in all other areas! Process 100/100 Imaginary Grade: B+ (if it presently had secondary sources) with potential for A+. Let me know if you have any questions.

Figure 4.2: Bertrand’s End Note Feedback to Megan’s Second Paper¹

of texts in the form of portfolios (Principe; Richardson; Thelin), little attention has been paid to the production and reception of response within what I call a “cumulative semester project.” As I describe further in the next section, the cumulative project is distinct from both formatively revised essays and cumulative portfolios because of the content shared among the multiple writing assignments that comprise the cumulative semester project. This shared content allows instructors to establish sustained investments and processes not only across assignments but also across response(s) to student submissions. Yet, such response also introduces new challenges that relate to the purposes instructors have for response, how they present themselves as respondents, and how they conceive of the relationships among multiple texts, including how such texts are viewed to be distinct from one another. Furthermore, such textual distinctions depend,

¹ As Bertrand had students use “track changes” to account for their revisions, the underlined portion represents Bertrand cutting and pasting a section Megan had previously added to her paper.

to some degree, on what purposes an instructor privileges in the first-year writing classroom. Taken collectively, these tensions ask us to consider the complexity present when instructors respond to a local, already-produced text and an ongoing semester project, a project that includes this individual text but is also bigger than this single text.

One approach to further investigate response to the cumulative semester project, including challenges associated with such response and student reception, is through what Elaine Lees calls response that functions as “assigning.” Lees uses this term to consider how response can speak back to what a student has written through the initiation of a new writing scenario:

Creating another assignment based on what a student has written is one way to assure that the students’ revisions are just that: ways of re-seeing a subject, ways of using what has been said already to discover how to say something new. (372)

Lees claims response is “seldom regarded” in the manner she describes (372). Writing in 1979, Lees may have been responding to pedagogical limitations present during this time period. Yet, I argue that the idea of response as “assigning” has not been applied in all its possible iterations, especially in studies of response. Although knowledge of the classroom context may not be necessary to consider how instructors respond to the cumulative semester project, observations of the participants’ classroom engagements, including the establishment of the cumulative semester project, allows for a better understanding of both the relations among texts and the participants’ production of response to these texts, especially response that functions as “assigning.” In possession of a broad understanding of how these participants are producing and receiving response, I

am able to offer a perspective in which I consider the interrelations among texts and how the production and reception of response to the cumulative semester project functions. Because the cumulative semester project results from the purposeful relations created among multiple texts, it offers the ideal location to consider how response can operate as “assigning,” including the limitations that may result because of factors present within specific classroom contexts. The production and reception of response to the cumulative semester project redefines how we imagine the relations among multiple texts; because an instructor’s response always results from how he or she is defining the text being read, including how this text overlaps and exists apart from other texts, the production and reception of response to the cumulative semester project offers a rich context that allows for a better understanding of how response functions in writing classrooms.

Textual “Circumscription,” Formative Response, and Culmination

In the previous chapter, I cited Speck and Jones’s definition of formative response as “comments or feedback” that helps students “achieve the goals” apart from summative measures (20–21). Speck and Jones offer Lucas’s definition of formative assessment as “internal continual feedback to the performer-in-action” as the basis for their separation of grading from response (Lucas 1; qtd. in Speak and Jones 21). Horvath’s conception of formative response as, among other characterizations, “recognizing that what is being responded to is not a fixed but a developing entity” offers an important addition to these definitions because of her resistance to limiting formative response to the single text (137). Although Horvath does connect formative response with “a text,” I argue that her

definition can be read more broadly, given her use of the vague “what” and the undefined “developing entity” (137).

This distinction between formative response directed at the single text and formative response imagined more broadly matters for more than mere semantics. By allowing that formative response directed at the “ongoing process of skills acquisition and improvement” does not need to be limited to the revision of a single text, we are able to consider what formative response might look like as it occurs across multiple texts (Phelps 51). Such differing conceptions of formative response are at the heart of Louise Weatherbee Phelps’s work in “Images of Student Writing: The Deep Structure of Teacher Response.” In this article, Phelps considers how instructors “circumscribe” texts from one another, how instructors relate texts to other texts, and how the attitudes an instructor brings to the reading of a particular text—a reading that is fundamentally shaped by how instructors imagine the text being read in relation to other texts the student has and will compose—shape his/her reading of this text (48). For example, she describes the “formative” reading of the “evolving text” as one in which the teacher reads the text to understand “what it may point to in the way of unrealized intentions” (51). She further defines such reading by noting two variations, one in which teachers read a text as being “one in a set” that evolves across “fairly fixed stages” and one in which textual circumscription is erased as the text is situated in an “ongoing process of evolution” (51). By establishing this “formative, evolving” category, she separates this particular reading attitude from the “evaluative” reading of “closed” texts” and the “developmental” reading of a “portfolio of work” (49–54). The terms Phelps uses to define the text being read—“closed,” “evolving,” and “portfolio”—reflect the spatial confines we typically apply to

singular texts and collections of texts. For example, the closed text, defined as a text not imagined for revision and, therefore, free of relation to other texts, accounts for a single product (49–50). The portfolio, although often read as a single text representing a student’s development across a semester, can also be viewed as a collection of individual texts. Yet, the portfolio always includes a multiplicity that will never be present in the closed text. The closed text, as Phelps puts it, “has neither past nor future” (50). The portfolio, on the other hand, includes texts that (most often) have been revised. Furthermore, the portfolio points toward what the student has accomplished and to what the student may be prepared to accomplish (53–54).

Phelps, through these categories, accounts for how instructors imagine and read texts in relation to other texts. Although she accounts for both the formatively revised text and the cumulative portfolio, neither of these constructions fully account for what I am calling the cumulative semester project. By cumulative semester project, I mean a pedagogical approach in which students engage across multiple writing assignments such that the individual writing assignments contribute not only to the “next” writing assignment but, more important, to a culminating assignment. The semester project is differentiated from the portfolio by its distance from explicit assessment practices. Whereas the cumulative portfolio’s primary purpose is to allow a means through which to gauge the quality of the writing a student has composed and revised across a semester, the cumulative semester project’s primary purpose is to allow for a level of engagement not available in classrooms settings where the major assignments are significantly or completely unrelated in content.

Jane, when asked to speak more to her course design, described both the limitations of the “unit” approach and the benefits of the “cumulative” approach:

I want things to build into each other. I don’t like, I mean personally I just couldn’t, could not teach another course where students were writing a different paper every three weeks. I just can’t ... it’s so boring, and I don’t get good writing because students haven’t had enough time to think out their ideas. ... I’m much more interested in making a course where students are working toward small goals the whole time, and at the end, they look back and they say, “Wow. I did a lot of work and my thinking has changed in these ways or my writing has changed in these ways.”

Jane’s use of the term “small goals” requires further clarification because this phrase does not fully articulate the type of sequenced writing that interests me in this chapter. Speck and Jones’s formative definition includes all comments and feedback directed at helping students “achieve the goals” of a given writing course. Jane’s use of the term points in a new direction. The goals she describes are textual in nature: smaller writing assignments that lead to larger writing assignments. Through these structured relationships—the growth from the smaller response essays to the larger writing projects and from one writing project to the next writing project via additional response essays—students are able to make the sustained engagements that, as Jane implied, leads to good writing. Bertrand’s class featured a similar ongoing assignment in the form of the fieldworking notebook. Students were expected to collect observational notes throughout the semester and then use these notes to help construct the major essays. Jane responded on a biweekly basis to her students’ response essays; Bertrand did not respond to the fieldworking

journal, although he did read them for credit. He attributed his inability to respond to a lack of available time.

The cumulative semester project engaged by Jane's students and by Bertrand's students can be explained by a more thorough explanation of the relationship between sequencing and culmination. In "From Simple to Complex: Ideas of Order in Assignment Sequences," Elizabeth Rankin distinguishes between courses that are serially ordered and those that are cumulatively ordered (129). The serial sequence "involves a number of separate, discrete assignments," whereas the cumulative sequence "is one in which the later assignments 'grow out of' or subsume earlier ones" (129–30). By designing courses in which students work through related content throughout the semester, Jane and Bertrand hoped students would be able to do more of what they considered academic work and to do this work with greater investment. Jane asked students to investigate a social issue and ultimately propose a solution; Bertrand asked students to observe and participate in a culture so they could provide an ethnographic analysis of an important aspect of that culture. Although the classes were quite different in content, each instructor's course design shared the common feature of a sustained engagement with expanding, related content and processes across the semester.

As the responses provided at the beginning of this chapter demonstrate, such cumulative response may differ substantially. Those two examples represent merely a small slice of response directed at a cumulative semester project that occurred in both classes. The purpose of this chapter is to more fully consider the occurrence of, possibilities for, and limitations of response directed at the cumulative semester project. Earlier I situated such response as fulfilling what Lees refers to as response functioning

as a type of “assigning.” In turning to Lees to help make sense of how response to the cumulative semester project is produced and received, I am not intending to cancel out other purposes that might be present in a given response nor am I claiming that the response to the cumulative semester project supersedes attention to the already-produced text and possible revisions of this text. As the previous chapter demonstrates, response often involves the constant negotiation of multiple purposes on the part of the instructor. Furthermore, as Bertrand’s response to Megan’s second paper demonstrates, response to the cumulative semester project might be intertwined with response directed at a suggestion or issue localized within an already-produced text.

This chapter concludes with more open questions than closed ends.

Understanding how response to the cumulative semester project operates is difficult to establish because of the constant negotiations, either known or unknown in nature, instructors make when responding to a student text and students make when composing. These negotiations only multiply when a text is placed in relation to other yet-to-be composed texts, given the content relations these instructors construct between assignments. Although the multiplication of such complications may be offered by some as reason enough not to attempt what might be viewed as an unnecessary complicating move, Jane’s articulation for why she favors the culminating semester project also should be viewed as possessing merit. Jane argues that sustained engagement allows for better writing because students maintain focused engagement for an extended period of time; in turn, this engagement helps students move from “simple to complex” (Rankin 126). Jane argues that through sustained engagement with a topic, students produce better writing—

writing, she implies, that is better in quality, demonstrates greater development of ideas, and is more interesting.

This chapter brings together the concept of assignment sequencing with formative response to better account for how assignment relations shaped the production and reception of response. I would argue that this is valuable research because of the degree to which textual definitions shape how we conceive of response. Said differently, the very idea of “the text” functions as a powerful force in how we imagine the possibilities for response. Offering advice on response to an audience imagined to be novice teachers, Straub suggests:

Keep an eye always on the next work to be done: the next draft, the next paper, the next issue of writing that the class or this student will take up. Make comments that are geared toward improvement, not simply the assessment of the finished text. (“Guidelines” 361)

Straub’s advice, although accounting for the next text, does not account for all the possible textual relations present within the cumulative semester project. Although the “next draft” is surely spatially attached to the previous submission, he gives no indication that “the next paper” may also be (nor does he eliminate this possibility). Such a trend—to imagine formative development outside the cumulative semester project—is clearly evident across response scholarship. Response has been conceived of as relating to many different contexts, including not only the individual text and the student’s writing processes but also “the student’s development” (Connors and Lunsford 213), the student’s “ongoing work as a writer” (Straub, “Concept” 233), and the student’s earlier work in the class (Lunsford and Straub 182). Although scholars’ perspectives of response

do point forward, these perspectives are often divided into two camps: the revision of the current text and writing development defined amorously. In fact, it is Straub (apart from Phelps) who comes closest to imaging all the possible iterations for how response may operate.

In his richly detailed but unfortunately hypothetically situated work, “Reading and Responding to Student Writing: A Heuristic for Reflective Practice,” Straub maps the many overlapping contexts instructors consider when responding. He includes the need to account for “the student’s work in the class,” and further defines this context with the following explanation:

The ways we read student writing are also influenced by how we envision the “text” of the course. How much are we going to look at the student’s writing discretely, as separate projects? How much are we going to look at the writing in terms of the student’s ongoing work in the course in light of his other writings, the strategies he has been working on, and his development as a writer? How does this paper stack up against the other papers the student has written? Is there some quality of writing that he’s been working on that should be addressed? (32)

Straub offers additional questions we should consider when responding before acknowledging that “these prior texts” provide an important context instructors should refer to when responding (32). Straub goes so far as to question the discreteness of different writing, a move that closely mirrors Phelps’s consideration of textual circumscription. He also acknowledges the position of the text in relation to “ongoing work” and “development” (32). What he does not consider is the possibility that teachers

respond while imagining a cumulative semester project of which the text being read is only a portion. In such response situations, the instructor faces the challenge of navigating response to an already-produced text that may be revised and that, as a result of being written, contributes to an ongoing, content-based project that builds from the writing students complete across the semester.

Initiating the Cumulative Semester Project

The class observations conducted as part of this study allow for a better understanding of how Jane and Bertrand introduced the cumulative semester project. I presented a brief overview description of each instructor's cumulative semester project in Chapter 1. Jane asked students to locate a controversy and establish that the controversy existed, consider multiple perspectives on the issue, and examine solutions for the controversy, including offering a preferred solution.² Bertrand built his class around fieldworking and a final ethnographic research essay. Students were to speak to their experiences observing a culture by speaking to questions arising from their research (observational and secondary). To build to this work, students completed a descriptive essay, an analytical essay, and an annotated bibliography related to their fieldwork.

Jane introduced students to the cumulative semester project through various practices during the first four class meetings. When working students through the syllabus, she summarized the "section description" material from the syllabus by

² Ava and Ashley often simplified the sequence to locating a problem, presenting possible solutions to the problem, and offering a solution to the problem. Based on Jane's discussion of the assignments and the assignments themselves, the students appeared to oversimplify this work, at least in how they described the assignments. This oversimplification may explain some issues each had with the sequence, although I do not have evidence to definitively support this view.

discussing how students would research a “social issue” of their “choosing” that would facilitate “investment, not boredom.” The section description from the syllabus states:

In this section of English 102, you will conduct an extended research project in which you will examine a social issue (of your choosing) that carries local, regional, national, global (or some combination thereof) consequences. Throughout the semester, you will read (and reread), write (and rewrite), and think (and rethink) about your chosen topic in a variety of ways, concluding the semester with a well-researched analytical essay that proposes a meaningful intervention to a specific audience (chosen by you) who has a stake in the issue.

Jane’s description of the course work points toward what I am calling the “cumulative semester project.” The phrases “extended research,” “throughout the semester,” “concluding the semester,” and “well-researched analytical essay” all point to writing investment that is larger than one writing assignment, although only later in the syllabus are the particular writing projects briefly described. Jane also introduced the cumulative semester project by helping students develop appropriate research questions during the second class meeting and by explaining why the students would need to shift their thinking from “topic” to “controversy” in the fourth class meeting. But it was in the fifth class meeting that Jane explicitly introduced students to the interwoven nature of the different writing projects. Jane’s discussion of the cumulative semester project during this class period intersected with her discussion of the first writing project. Although she had previously distributed the first writing project in the third class period, it was in the fifth class period that she drew explicit connections among the different writing projects.

Jane's explanation of the larger cumulative project followed an exercise in which the class discussed what they were being asked to do for writing project 1. Working from language volunteered by students, Jane offered that the students were to "make a case that there is a problem" before telling students that she had wanted to "give you a sense of where you are going" in the class. Typing the students' ideas into Microsoft Word and then projecting this material on the overhead, she generated the following descriptions:

WP2: explaining multiple points of view that surround the problem →
take a position in relation to these multiple points of view

WP3: proposing a solution to the problem/examining the various solutions
that have been proposed and take a stand → or you might come [up] with
your own solutions.

Before moving to student questions—the only one asked focused specifically on writing project 1—Jane reminded students that the semester work asked them to work with a problem, to establish to whom the problem matters, and to consider the possible solutions for the problem.

Bertrand also initiated the cumulative semester project across multiple class periods. In the first class period, he focused most heavily on the portfolio requirement, although he did provide brief descriptions of the four projects that comprised the portfolio. Furthermore, he told students they were expected to "become an expert on [a] subculture" by focusing on the question of what makes a particular place a subculture. The class, as Bertrand described it, asked students to "come up with a hypothesis" and then use "primary and secondary research to support the hypothesis generated in the

field.” The following three classes focused extensively on the topic and practices of fieldworking, including the need for students to generate and narrow a list of possible research sites. These class periods featured class discussions during which students shared their research interests, the examination of both professional- and student-authored texts that demonstrated the “ethnographic research essay,” and the introduction of the double-entry journal, which students would use throughout the semester to record and analyze their observations. To introduce the double-entry journal and provide students the opportunity to practice both observation and analysis of their observations, Bertrand shared a video documentary on moonshining, on which students were to take notes as if they were working in the field. Explaining the value of the right-side reflections on the observations, Bertrand described this material as the beginning steps to forming a hypothesis and research questions.

These first four class periods introduced students to the content and practices of fieldworking. During the fourth class period, Bertrand introduced students to the first essay assignment. In a similar fashion to Jane, Bertrand also projected forward to writing that would occur later in the semester. He shared with students a sample paper from the *Fieldworking* textbook to help them situate what they were to do as fieldworkers. “This is not paper 1,” he said when introducing the sample paper. “This is the culmination of the semester, paper 4.” Bertrand followed the distribution of the first essay assignment with a discussion of the course outcomes and how fieldworking satisfied these outcomes in the fifth class period. Then, in the sixth class period, Bertrand narrowed the class’s focus back to the first essay assignment by reminding students of the importance “thick

description” occupies in this assignment. To reiterate this point, he shared a student-authored sample text.

Across these first six class periods, Bertrand narrowed and expanded the focus of his material, and, in doing so, he introduced students to fieldworking, briefly highlighted the role primary and secondary research would play in the class, situated the first essay assignment, drew student’s attention to where the semester would culminate both textually and pedagogically, and brought the focus back to the observational and writing practices necessary for the first essay assignment (and subsequent assignments). Although he did not outline the purposes and details of each individual assignment, he did initiate the cumulative semester project by drawing students’ attention to the texts and processes students would engage across the semester.

Examining the initiation of each cumulative semester project helps explain the distinction between response as “suggesting” and response as “assigning.” In her accounting for the different forms response can take, Lees establishes suggesting as “offering editorial suggestions outright” (371). Suggesting can also be viewed as falling under the umbrella of “facilitative” response. From this perspective, a suggestion is less forceful and less explicit than what we know to be directives. Our understanding of facilitative response, including the use of suggestions, situates such response as being most often directed at the revision of an already-produced text or the development of writing skills defined broadly. Yet, suggestions can also be directed at what I am calling the cumulative semester project. Although much of the response I examine in this chapter can be considered to be suggestive in nature, I am choosing to view it as a form of what Lees calls “assigning” because of the explicit relations that exist between the different

writing engagements that comprise each instructor's cumulative semester project. The term explicit refers to both the purposeful relationships each instructor has constructed among the assignments and the articulation of these relationships early in the semester.

Understanding these early classroom interactions as contributing to the "initiation" of the cumulative semester project helps establish my argument that the response provided to the cumulative semester project can be understood to be a form of what Lees calls "assigning." Yet, the introduction of the cumulative semester project may also ask us to change how we view Lees's definition of response as "assigning." In her definition, she offers that "creating a new assignment based on what a student has written" allows for the student's revision to allow for "re-seeing" and the creation of "something new" (372). The explicitly created and articulated cumulative semester project shifts these textual relationships in two ways. First, response to the cumulative semester project, as I will demonstrate, can account for not only what has been written but also, just as important, what will be written. Second, this "new assignment" already exists because of the purposefully designed nature of the cumulative semester project. These shifts ask us to modify our understanding of formative response so the responses the instructors produce, no matter what mode they take, are understood as being situated in relation to an already-formulated assignment, be that assignment the next in the sequence or the cumulative semester project conceived of more broadly. Such feedback, as my analysis will demonstrate, often takes the form of "process" response directed at recommended behaviors and practices the student should consider engaging to help facilitate the continued development of the cumulative semester project.

Before accounting for and analyzing the production of response directed at the cumulative semester by both Jane and Bertrand, one additional feature of the cumulative semester project from Jane's class needs to be presented because this feature contributed heavily to how Jane responded to the cumulative semester project. As I noted in my description of Jane's class presented in Chapter 1, students were required to complete weekly response essays. These response essays represent assignment sequencing that extended beyond the three major writing projects. The entirety of Jane's class was sequenced such that small assignments led to other small assignments, multiple small assignments led to the individual writing projects, and all of the earlier work in the class (both response essays and writing projects) contributed to the subsequent writing projects. Figure 4.3 includes brief summaries of the response essays, including when the essays occurred in the class.

This sequencing within the response essay assignments demonstrates what Malcolm Kiniry and Ellen Strenski refer to as "fine gradations of difficulty" (195). The escalation of difficulty in the writing projects mirrored that of the writing projects. For example, students began their research on the Internet because Jane felt they would have the most familiarity with this research process. Response essay 4 reflects this increasing complexity as it asks students to complete the same activity they had completed for response essays 1 and 2, but instead of working with the Internet and the library catalog, they were asked to work within the library databases. For this assignment, students were asked to engage a more complex (or unfamiliar) site of research while also "recursively" engaging a practice they had called upon previously in the semester (Kiniry and Strenski 192). Beginning with response essay 5, students focused their attention more specifically

RE #	Due Date	Description
1	Jan. 15	Internet research related to research interests
2	Jan. 22	Library research process, including library catalog
3	Jan 29	Analysis of book introduction or chapter
		Writing project 1 due Feb. 11
4	Feb. 19	Locating material in library databases and describing process
5	Feb. 26	Journal article summary
6	March 5	Reading against previous summary
		Annotated bibliography for writing project 2 due March 9
		Writing project 2 due March 23
7	March 26	Optional revision of early response essay
8	April 2	Propose solutions including finding new sources
9	April 9	Draft proposal for writing project 3
10	April 16	Detailed outline for writing project 3
		Final portfolio due April 27

Figure 4.3: Jane's Response Essays (Including Due Dates)

on the reading of secondary texts and the composition of their own writing projects.

Figure 4.4 presents the assignment for response essay 3. Ashley's submission for this assignment and Jane's response are considered in the following section.

Response to the Cumulative Semester Project in Jane's Class

In the previous chapter, I examined what Jane referred to as her "explicit" response practices. The concept of explicitness helps to further explain her cumulative response practices. The third paragraph of Jane's response to Ashley's first paper and the fourth paragraph of her response to Ava's first paper illustrate the clearest examples of response to the cumulative project present in Jane's class. The response to Ashley's paper was reproduced at the beginning of the chapter, and the response to Ava's paper follows:

Response Essay 3

Due: Friday 1/29 before 5pm

Via: Blackboard discussion forum (under “Response Essay 3” thread)

Check email: after Saturday 1/30 at noon for reading due 2/2 and 2/4

Peer Group: A (see below for pairings)

For this response essay, read and take notes on the introduction section OR a selected chapter of a book that you plan to use for Writing Project 1 (it can be the same book as you wrote about in RE2, or you can choose a different one). After you’ve done this:

1. Compose an *interpretation* of the reading that considers some of the following questions and that *includes support from the text* for your interpretation: What argument (or arguments) does the author seem to be making? How does the author go about making this argument – in other words, how does the author develop his/her point and/or lead up to it? What evidence and what *kinds* of evidence are provided? How does the author seem to be addressing your particular research question?
2. The remainder of the RE should be spent responding to the essay as an interested reader (that is, a reader who may have chosen to read this text outside of class and is therefore responding as a person who cares about and feels invested in the social issues at hand). In this section, pay particular attention to specific moments in the text that stuck out to you or that troubled/bothered you, and use these moments as points of departure for your personal response. What do you agree or disagree with? Why? What surprised you? Why? Did anything make you angry or confused? If so, why? What were you able to relate to? Why? What personal experiences informed your reaction? What questions do you have for the author? What do you think the author hasn’t yet considered or deliberately seemed to leave out? Why do you think the author may have taken the approach that he/she did? As in the first section, be sure to *include support from the text* that helps ground your response in the reading and your interpretation of it.
3. At the end of your response, pose one or two questions related to your interpretation and personal response that you’d like the class to discuss/consider. Also, cite one or two sections of the text (concepts/ideas, specific sentences, or entire paragraphs) that seem related to your response but which you didn’t cite earlier.

Figure 4.4: Jane’s Response Essay 3 Assignment

As you move toward WP2, I’m sure you will be looking for debates surrounding whether or not children can be blamed for their activities as child soldiers. However, I think that, beyond these debates, you might also look for disagreements about why the problem exists in the first place, what the effects are on the children themselves and/or the community they terrorize, and/or even how rescued or recovered child soldiers can best be

supported. Keep your mind (and eyes) open for the difficult kinds of debates that might exist along these lines, as well as the debate you seem to be most aware of at this point.

These responses appear to fall in line with the purposes Jane saw herself privileging in her response practices. Describing the goals she saw for her comments, Jane responded:

Hopefully they [help them] develop their ideas or lead them, help them figure out what to do next, especially since this is a research-oriented class and a lot of students are overwhelmed with the fact that they can pursue one research area for the whole semester. That's something that really is foreign to them because they are used to doing so many papers about so many different subjects. They're not used to writing deeply or knowing something very well. So basically, probably my intention throughout this semester with my comments is going to be to help them with where to go next and possible questions they could keep asking.

Jane's goal of helping students find out where to go next runs parallel with another goal she has for her response, which is to speak to "what they've already done." The intersection of speaking to what a student has already written and what they should keep in mind to do next is illustrated in Jane's comments to Ava's first paper (fig. 4.5). In the first paragraph, Jane accounts for her reading of what Ava has already written. She first acknowledges Ava's paper in broad strokes—that she has "provided a logical overview of the problem of child soldiers"—before accounting for the paper with more specificity.

Hi Ava,

In general, you've provided a logical overview of the problem of child soldiers; not only have you provided a sense of the extensiveness of the problem, but you've also considered whether or not the children can be blamed for their actions, and you've also discussed the psychological implications of the childrens' involvement in these inhumane and troubling activities. You've also given a sense for the complexity of the problem, and I am looking forward to reading about your continued research on this issue.

I have two suggestions for your revisions: First, although you've used your sources to support some of your points, I was surprised to find that some of your body paragraphs did not include any support from your sources, and you only used each source once or twice. Part of the challenge of this writing assignment is figuring out how best to use your sources to support each of your points, and how to distribute this support evenly throughout the essay (instead of relying too much or too little on your sources). I think that a revision along these lines would improve your credibility as a researcher, and make your argument more convincing.

Secondly, although this is a more minor point, your argument statement, which I found at the end of the first paragraph of the essay, presents your perspective on the issue instead of making an argument that, quite simply, the problem exists. I was pleased to find that the body of the essay didn't continue with the argument at the beginning of the essay, as this would have been inappropriate for the writing assignment – but your introductory paragraph was misleading as a result. I would revise this paragraph so that your argument statement accurately reflects the purpose of the essay, and also so that it forecasts the overall structure of your essay, so I will know what to expect as I read.

As you move toward WP2, I'm sure you'll be looking for debates surrounding whether or not children can be blamed for their activities as child soldiers. However, I think that, beyond these debates, you might also look for disagreements about why the problem exists in the first place, what the effects are on the children themselves and/or the community they terrorize, and/or even how rescued or recovered child soldiers can best be supported. Keep your mind (and eyes) open for the different kinds of debates that might exist along these lines, as well as the debate you seem to be aware of at this point.

B		Credit?	Notes and Recommendations
	RE1	Y	Worth revising, especially in response to [a classmate's] quite thorough comments to your work. Quite brief and oftentimes vague. In the future, see what you can do to develop your ideas more in these REs.
	RE2	N	
	RE3	Y	
		Overall	
	Peer Group Response	LATE	Although late, this response to [a classmate's] work was respectful and thorough. Good work.
		Overall:	
	# Absences	2	1/7, 2/4 (1/7 won't hurt your grade, but still counts as an unexcused absence)

Figure 4.5: Jane's Cover Letter Feedback to Ava's Writing Project 1

Jane references Ava's consideration of the children's blame within the problem and her discussion of the "psychological implications." Furthermore, Jane communicates to Ava that she's successfully articulated the problem's "complexity," before stating that she is "looking forward" to Ava's "continued research." Following this accounting for what Ava has done, Jane offers "two suggestions for revisions" via the explicit structure I examined in the previous chapter. Following the two suggestions—both focus narrowly on the revision of the already-produced text—Jane provides a paragraph intended to help direct Ava as she moves forward with writing project 2.

Within Jane's response, the first sentence of the last paragraph wraps back to the beginning of Jane's response. Having acknowledged Ava's consideration of "whether or not the children can be blamed for their actions," Jane states with certainty that Ava "[will] be looking for debates" on this issue as she moves forward with writing project 2. Jane then pushes Ava to consider other questions, as demonstrated by the words "why," "what," and "how." In this last paragraph, Jane pushes Ava forward with questions, an action that reflects her goal of offering "possible questions" the student "could keep asking." These suggestions appear to be completely removed from the two suggestions Jane offers for revision of the already-composed text. Although Jane's reading of Ava's work—the material she presents in the first paragraph— matters for both the suggestions directed at revision of the already-produced text and the development of the next writing project, the suggestions for revision do not intersect with the implied questions that are meant to help Ava "move toward WP2."

In addition to responses to the first writing projects, Jane also provided important cumulative response to the weekly response essays. As described previously, these

weekly response essays were intended to help students complete “small goals” as they worked toward the major writing projects and as they transitioned among the writing projects. Figure 4.6 contains Ashley’s response essay 3, and Figure 4.7 contains the feedback Jane provided her.

When reading the introduction to my book, “Trauma and Survival,” I discovered that the argument was that women are involved more with the link of abuse and physical health than men are. There are many reasons for this but a few are because women tend to internalize their problems more and men normally speak about their problems. Another reason is that women usually are victims of abuse more often than men are and the book gives the history of the role of women. It states that women were not viewed as important and were treated disrespectfully. A lot of this information was from psychological researches and studies. The author goes on to talk about the different disorders that women face caused by abuse and the reasons why they develop these disorders.

Many of the reasons why women develop these disorders I have learned about in previous classes. The psychological stand point of it all I am currently learning in my Psychology class. I learned that women are more susceptible to depression because they keep all their emotions inside and just the way women think differently than men cause these disorders. Also, in the introduction the author briefly covers the history of the role of women which I also learned in a previous class. When I was studying about it, it was really disturbing and absurd. In the medieval days women were basically treated as nothing more than something to have intercourse with. They did not have any rights and were abused and women could not do anything about it. Now, it is not like that at much but it makes sense that women are more often abused than men. Men are stronger than women and it is harder for women to defend themselves. In the introduction it also talks about the different things that women suffer from like anorexia and bulimia and PTSD. I think the author’s argument and the things she used to back up her argument were factual and statistically true.

Although this book is mostly dealing with women, I would also like to know a little bit more about the main reasons how men suffer from abuse and why. In my book it says, “females account for more than 60% of admissions to outpatient mental facilities,” and it states that most of the time these accounts were completely ignored. I would like to know more on why females with severe mental disorders are just ignored and not taken seriously.

Figure 4.6: Ashley’s Response Essay 3

The assignment for response essay 3 was presented earlier in the chapter. Jane’s response to the response essay is oriented differently than her responses to the writing

projects in that she addresses Ashley's ongoing research, including what she should prioritize in writing project 1, before addressing the specific evaluation and suggestions for this particular response essay. In her consideration of how this book might contribute to Ashley's ongoing research, she points beyond writing project 1 when she suggests continuing a specific line of thought "as you continue to research beyond WP1."

Hi Ashley,

Although you state at the end of this RE that you'd like to know more about how men suffer from abuse, I would say that at this point, your focus on women and PTSD is probably plenty and, as such, this book source should help you stay on track with this focus. I agree that eventually, it might be useful to find a way to compare the effects of abuse on men versus women, but for now, you've probably got plenty of information to construct WP1. The quote you've mentioned at the end of this RE seems particularly interesting to me, given your interest in the misconceptions surrounding PTSD as a male-only or military-driven problem – do you think these misconceptions might drive physicians or other health care providers toward ignoring the symptoms of PTSD in non-military women? This would be a connection worth exploration as you continue your research beyond WP1. As you move toward WP1, your next step should be to brainstorm about what else you will need (if anything) to explain the problem effectively.

As for your discussion of the text and integration of quotes/paraphrases into this RE, I notice that you never mentioned the author of the book, and in the one quote you provide at the end of the RE, you haven't provided a page number. Also, it seems that you're paraphrasing some of the author's main points, but when you do bring up a specific point, you haven't provided a page number after the fact, and this is something that I'll be looking for in WP1.

Figure 4.7: Jane's Response to Ashley's Response Essay 3³

The responses Jane provided to the first writing project and to the response essays provide the clearest examples of response to the cumulative semester project in her course. Jane accounted for the absence of such response from the feedback she provided to the second writing projects by explaining how and when she decided to provide such

³ The submission and the response were posted to the course's Blackboard page. Because of a computer error, I lost access to this page, so I cannot reproduce the response visually as it appeared on the screen.

response. Available time and a sense that a student would face some challenges moving to the next writing project were the prime factors that motivated Jane to provide feedback directed beyond the evaluation or revision of the already-composed text. Later in the chapter, I'll consider how a limited knowledge of each student's research focus may have also played a role in how and when Jane decided to respond to the cumulative semester project.

A third occurrence of response to the cumulative semester project exists alongside Jane's response to the first writing projects and the weekly response essays. This third occurrence of response to the cumulative writing project does not demonstrate the explicitness present in the other two examples, and it would have probably remained unexamined were it not for the think-aloud protocol I conducted with Jane when she was responding to Ashley's second paper.⁴ During this think-aloud protocol, Jane noted a change in Ashley's research focus within the first paragraph of Ashley's paper. After concluding her reading of this first paragraph, Jane commented on the long sentence to highlight its complexity and how it represented a shift in the problem Ashley was investigating. When discussing this shift, she drew explicit connections to both writing project 1 and writing project 3:

What she's doing here is she's justifying why she's focusing on children here instead of adults which is what, in her previous writing project, what she was writing about – women, like adults. So she's changed her focus and, here, she's doing something that needed to be done, which is

⁴ For all the limitations of think-aloud protocols I explained in Chapter 1, they remain useful because, as scholars such as Anthony Edgington ("What") have demonstrated, they allow us insight into what instructors are thinking *as* they respond to student writing. Jane's reading of Ashley's second paper demonstrates this usefulness.

explaining why she's talking about children here – because it's actually, in her mind, more important. Which is good that she's doing that because in writing project 3 she can continue to focus on solutions directed toward a specific population. So that's actually a really good move.

In the next paragraph, Jane stopped halfway through the paragraph to offer a summary of what she saw Ashley to be doing in the paper so far: “This paragraph is focused on sort of the explanation of the side effects ... and I think this is justification for her focus on children instead of adults.” As she spoke she flipped back to the submission's first page. Although she did not articulate aloud her purposes for returning to the first page, this action seemed to imply that Jane was working to better connect her reading of Ashley's paper with the switch in topic she had noted.

The remainder of Jane's reading of Ashley's paper remained confined within particulars of the already-composed text. Although the majority of her reading focused on the evaluation and formative revision of the already-produced text, the influence of Jane's awareness of both writing project 1 and writing project 3 is evident in the response Jane provided to Ashley. Understanding the role the cumulative semester project played in Jane's reading of Ashley's second paper helps us to better understand a new dimension of what I have been calling response as assigning. Figure 4.8 presents Jane's response to Ashley's second paper. Unlike with her response to the first writing project, Jane did not provide explicit suggestions for Ashley to consider when transitioning from writing project 2 to writing project 3. Instead, Jane's reading of and response to Ashley's second paper demonstrate how the student's construction of an assignment within the cumulative semester project may contribute to the instructor's response. In noting Ashley's shift

from PTSD in women to PTSD in children, Jane constructs her response to help Ashley further understand and articulate this point of focus—including proposed solutions to the issue she is addressing—so she can address some of the issues Jane notes in the already-composed text *and* position herself to successfully complete WP3, which asked her to propose a solution for the issue. As represented in Jane’s response, the idea of response as assigning within the cumulative semester project functions not via response that separately addresses the already-produced text and the next assignment in the cumulative semester project but via response that addresses the current text so further development can happen. Such development would occur both through the revision of the already-composed text and the continued focusing of the research controversy. Said differently, Jane’s response seems directed at both the already-composed text and the textual connections contained within the cumulative semester project.

Given the small participant population in my study, I am unable to ascertain how Jane’s responses to other students in her class align with the responses she provided to Ashley’s writing and Ava’s writing. In the case of the two participating students, Jane provided explicit feedback directed at the next writing project in the cumulative sequence to both Ashley’s first writing project and Ava’s first writing project but not to either student’s second writing project. As Jane established in our conversations, her production of response directed at the next writing project depended on both the amount of time available to her and the degree to which she expected a student would face challenges moving from one writing project to the next.

This limited analysis of Jane’s response practices directed toward the cumulative semester project highlights three locations where such response occurred: near the end of

Hi Ashley,

In this essay, you've done a lot of work to explain why a focus on the effect of PTSD on children is more problematic than PTSD's effects on adults. This implicit argument is an important one in relation to your previous writing project, in which your focus was primarily the effects of PTSD on women. I think that overall, you've done a nice job supporting this argument with sources that each explain, using different kinds of evidence, how children suffer the consequences of PTSD more strongly than women or adults. Also, although some of your source material is quite dense, I think you've made a solid effort to explain and support your understanding of these sources in a way that is useful for your purposes. I have two primary suggestions for revision, which you might keep in mind as you continue writing, and/or if you choose to revise this essay.

First, although I think you are making an argument in this essay, at this point, your own perspective is never explicitly stated, and so I had to work more than I should have, as a reader, to make the connections between each source and your larger point that I think you wanted me to make. Specifically, although you have written a convincing introduction to the essay, I think the essay as a whole would be clearer if you stated explicitly in the first paragraph that you intend to use these different sources to demonstrate, ultimately, that our focus should be on children, rather than adults, when it comes to the issue of PTSD. Although this argument is implicit throughout, you haven't yet done enough to make these connections explicit in a rhetorically effective way. Related to this, I was surprised, when I came to the end of the essay, that you didn't synthesize your sources in a separate paragraph (before the conclusion) so that I understood how, exactly, you saw them relating to your larger argument. If you were to revise, I would encourage you to compose an explicit argument statement in the first paragraph, and develop/synthesize your ideas about the sources (talk about them together) in at least one paragraph toward the end of the essay.

Secondly, as you write about each source, although you've generally done a good job explaining each one, I had a hard time remembering how the individual sources related to one another, as I got caught up in each paragraph. It would be interesting, and more effective, to read your explanation of each source while also understanding how you see the source relating to (being similar or different) the other sources you're describing. In other words, why is it important that Armsworth and Holaday take a more general approach (toward explaining the different effects of PTSD on children versus adults), while Rowe and Jackowski are more specific in their approaches toward explaining the effects of PTSD on children? Do you see Rowe adding to, or justifying, or simply confirming, Armsworth and Holaday's claim that the effects of PTSD on children are more consequential than on adults? Or do you see Rowe in a different light? Mainly, I just want you to remind me in each paragraph how you see each source building upon the previous sources, which will ultimately contribute to your larger argument.

B+

Figure 4.8: Jane's Cover Letter Feedback to Ashley's Writing Project 2

the responses she provided to writing projects, as the central focus of her responses to weekly responses essays, and implied within the formative feedback directed at the already-composed text. The distinct occurrence of such response—especially as demonstrated in the first two types of response—offers additional usefulness in this chapter because this explicitness offers a lens through which to consider Bertrand’s response to the cumulative semester project, as his response does not demonstrate this explicitness.

Response to the Cumulative Semester Project in Bertrand’s Class

At the beginning of the chapter, I offered a portion of Bertrand’s feedback to Megan’s second essay. In this response, Bertrand notes both a point of interest that caught his attention in Megan’s paper and a localized point in Megan’s paper where she could revise by paying greater attention to this point of interest he establishes. The point of interest is “the workplace stress” Megan had noticed during her observations. From Bertrand’s perspective, Megan could use this material to “further develop” her conclusion. At the same time—as I discussed in Chapter 2—he calls on a nondirective tone to note that the decision of how she will develop her paper is for her “to make.” Although this feedback may seem to be limited in focus to the revision of this already-composed text, my discussions with Bertrand alongside my understanding of how this assignment is situated within the cumulative semester project offer a more developed understanding of how response to the cumulative project operates in Bertrand’s class, including limitations and possible contradictions contained within such response.

A discussion of the response he provided to Megan's second paper occupied a large part of my third meeting with Bertrand. As part of our conversation, I was interested in coming to understand how Bertrand positioned this response in relation to other assignments Megan had previously engaged and would later engage in the class. Asked to speak to how his response to Megan's paper was situated among the work Megan had completed and would complete in the class, Bertrand responded:

Now they've gotten to the point where, you know, they've had so much peer review, they've done so much research, they've written so much, they should be able to go back to papers 1, 2, and 3 and find ways to truly revise them as they work on paper 4.

Attempting to ascertain the relationship between his response, the individual assignments, and the course trajectory, I asked Bertrand for his take on the idea that his response was "doubly formative." By doubly formative, I meant the possibility that his response was directed at both a revision of the current text and the student's continued engagement with the cumulative semester project. As we worked through this possibility together, we considered both the directionality of the response and the relationships present among the assignments. From the semester's worth of data gathered from my conversations with and observations of Bertrand and his teaching, two points became evident. First, Bertrand privileged a portfolio pedagogy because such a pedagogy allows for "practice" over a full semester that both results in significant revision and limits assessment to the end of the semester when it has to matter. Second, the four assignments Bertrand gave his students were intended to be understood as individual atoms of a larger project that, although cumulative in nature, were best accounted for by the semester-concluding portfolio.

Bertrand's privileging of the portfolio pedagogy has valuable implications for better understanding how he produced feedback to the cumulative semester project. According to Bertrand, his feedback was intended to help the student revise that particular text for inclusion in the portfolio. This intention can be seen in his description of the purposes for his response, which he articulated in our first meeting:

I'm hoping—I'm not sure I'm always successful with this—but I'm hoping that my comments encourage rethinking and reseeing what they've written. That's mainly what I'm hoping they do, that they start to see the paper more holistically in terms of what they're trying to accomplish within the given rhetorical situation. So my comments, I'm hoping, encourage that, that further processing of it as much as possible. After that, you know, I'm trying to still teach with my comments in terms of teaching how, through questioning ..., to teach them new ways of thinking about what they've already taken on.

Bertrand's reflection on his own commenting purposes demonstrates the attention he gives to the individual text and the larger project "they've ... taken on." Absent, or only implied, in this description is any attention given to the course portfolio. In our conversation regarding the possibility that his response is doubly formative, Bertrand articulated the hope that his response "is formative all the way back, so that it is formative on the portfolio." With this statement, Bertrand positions his response in a particular and peculiar way in relation to time. Alongside the earlier statement that he hopes the feedback he provided to paper 3 allows students to "go back to" earlier papers, the idea that the response to a particular paper will "go back ... on the portfolio" offers

the possibility of a more complicated relationship than one in which a given response speaks merely to the revision of the current text and/or the continued development of the cumulative semester project. Bertrand's approach highlights the intertwined nature of the forward development of the cumulative semester project and the revision of an already-produced text both contained within this project and destined for the course portfolio. His perspective is one in which the development of the current text might only be possible as a result of a student's continued engagement with his/her site of research.

Considering how Bertrand's response would look and function if it were to be produced in an explicit construction similar to Jane's response practices helps us better understand this nuanced relationship in which the revision of the already-produced text may result from the continued engagement with what it is that "they've already taken on." If Bertrand's response were reshaped to fit the explicit structure Jane privileges in her writing project responses, the suggestions directed at the need for Megan to further develop her conclusion would proceed and be separate from the response directed at the next essay in the cumulative semester project or the cumulative semester project conceived of more broadly. In this arrangement, the processes students would engage would be mostly distinct from one another. The revision of the already-produced text would be focused to the textual product already created, with little or no consideration given to how the research work students did later in the semester could contribute to this revision. The suggestions provided to a student for consideration as he/she moves to the next portion of the cumulative semester project would relate little to the revision of the already-produced text. Bertrand's response collapses these distinctions in that the

revision of the already-produced texts is viewed to be wrapped up in the continued engagement with the cumulative semester project.

Seeing as Bertrand's response to Megan's second paper represents only one instance of response from his class, it is worthwhile to examine how (or if) this collapsing of response to the revision of the already-produced text and development of the cumulative semester project occurred in his responses to other texts, including those produced by David and Martin. Bertrand's response, especially in regard to mode, differs much more significantly than Jane's response, so it is more difficult to trace a pattern across his responses. Bertrand's response modes varied across response occasions in two significant ways. First, written response and the oral response provided in conferences operate differently, as I discussed in the Introduction. Second, although Bertrand responded to all the second papers in written form, his mode varied. He used end comments when responding to David and Megan, but he used the Microsoft Word "insert comment" function when responding to Martin. When asked about this difference, Bertrand attributed it the fact that Martin's paper was submitted late, so he responded to this paper at a different time and, when doing so, used a different response approach. Bertrand's written response to David's second paper (see fig. 4.9) most closely mirrors the cumulative response approach described previously.

This response presents clear differences from the response Bertrand provided to Megan's second paper. Two significant differences include Bertrand's focus in his response and the specificity of the suggestions he offers. When responding to Megan's paper, Bertrand focuses his response on one particular section that piqued his interest. He highlights this section to push her to develop questions arising

Hi David:

I have read your memo and your peer's comments. I think all three of them gave you some good feedback, especially Hank and Katie. I see you added some of what Katie suggested but I wonder why you did not add even more description of the store, because there is a lot of stuff in there in terms of products and displays and posters, and just the way each listening station is set up. So maybe work on even thicker description. I think you have done a very good job of staying focused on the question of whether a music store can survive in today's downloading culture, but I also think you have taken on a very complex question that you should try to dig even deeper into if possible. How? One way would be to talk to some of those people you described in the store. I think that you gave some secondary sources on the store's recent developments but what about the people? As a reader, I want wanting to hear even more after you shared what you overheard. Next field trip maybe introduce yourself and ask these questions. Also, you give us some of your position when you say you decided to go back to the store and see how it was doing after the announcement. You shared that "the experience was beautiful" and gave some description of the various consumers who were there, but could you go into more detail about why you thought it was beautiful? Is there anything you can share from your background, from your life that would help the reader to understand a little more why you made this comment? This will give us a better picture of why you position yourself this way. I think the paper at present gives you a solid platform to present your ideas about this question you have formed on the store's survival. I do not expect you to answer the question definitely but I would hope you explore it further as you go back in the field [field] and revisit the paper between now and the next you have time to do so. Let me know if you have any questions about this response.

Thank you for working/thinking hard!

Bertrand

ps

The process grade is 100/100. Please track all changes next time so I can see the revision work you do. As far as the imaginary grade, if this paper goes in the portfolio as is, it would receive a C+ because of its potential to share your thoughts on this question. To get to the A/B range please consider your peers' responses again and my responses, as well.

Figure 4.9: Bertrand's End Note Feedback to David's Second Paper

from the "tension" she had observed. In his response to David's paper, Bertrand focuses on the need for thicker description of the music store in which David was conducting his research. Having begun his response with an evaluative suggestion relating to an underdeveloped aspect in the paper, he then shifts to acknowledging strengths in the paper, including David's ability to remain focused on his research question. At this point

the response mirrors the response Bertrand provided to Megan. Bertrand pushes each student to dig deeper into the questions and observations that are guiding their work. Yet, following these similar textual sections, the two responses deviate again, as Bertrand offers David a specific suggestion. Bertrand suggests that David “introduce yourself and ask these questions.” His suggestion to Megan seems to be that she should “raise questions” about workplace stress, but he does not offer specific suggestions to guide her with this process.

Those differences and similarities carry through, at least to a degree, in how Bertrand draws relations between multiple assignments. In his response to Megan’s paper, he highlights both a moment from the singular text that catches his attention and highlights an aspect of the text—the conclusion—that is in need of further development. Although implicitly constructed, his inquiry into what questions she can raise about the workplace stress she has witnessed points her forward in such a way that the already-composed text can be developed through further engagement at the research site. When responding to David’s paper, Bertrand shifts more often and explicitly between responding to the already-produced text and the cumulative semester project. His suggestion for David to interact with the people in the store appears to be generally oriented; such an action might help develop this paper while also contributing to the larger cumulative project. His desire to hear more about what in David’s background might have led him to establish that “the experience was beautiful” and the question he uses to motivate this work appear to be directed at a revision of the already-produced paper. At the end of his response, Bertrand folds the singular paper and the cumulative semester project together when he writes, “[B]ut I would hope you explore [the question]

further as you go back into the field [field] and revisit the paper between now and the next time you have to do so.” Although the “next time you have to do so” reference is undefined, I took Bertrand to be referencing the need for David to revise the paper for the semester-concluding portfolio. Here, at the end of his response, Bertrand pushes David to continue to investigate his question about an independent music store’s ability to survive in a digital world by returning to the fieldwork site. Back at the research site, David might complete additional observations, ask more questions, and interact with customers. These actions, in turn, should help David not only move forward with the larger project but also, just as important, allow him to return to this specific paper.

For whatever differences may exist between the responses Bertrand provided to Megan’s second paper and to David’s second paper, Bertrand’s interweaving of the continued development of the cumulative semester project and the individual essay functions as the greatest similarity between the two responses. It is worth noting that these similarities exist in responses to the same assignment within a series of sequenced assignments. Furthermore, the responses Bertrand provided to his students’ second essays represent the only written responses he provided to students during the semester. How did Bertrand navigate between the singular, already-produced text and the cumulative semester project when responding orally in one-on-one conferences? This question is hard to answer, both as a result of the conference format and because of the types of assignments he and the students discussed.

The question Bertrand asked of Martin at the beginning of his first conference—“So what do you want to talk about?”—helps explain how the conference model affected how Bertrand responded in conferences to already-produced texts and the ongoing

cumulative semester project. Bertrand, as I explained in Chapter 2, experimented with conferences because he wanted to engage in real-time, scholarly conversations with students. Bertrand was also motivated by a desire to allow students greater control over the discussions of their work. The question Bertrand directed toward Martin represents an attempt at shifting the power structure of the conference because he was genuinely interested in allowing students a degree of control over the conversation. For Martin, this control meant a desire to discuss his conclusion and ways of “wrapping [his essay] all up.” Martin and Bertrand discussed his conclusion before later shifting to a broader conversation regarding Martin’s ongoing research collection. Martin’s comment about wanting to add “a lot” to his first paper precipitated this shift. Referencing all the data Martin had collected, data that included a significant amount of video recordings, Bertrand asked him, “What are your goals in terms of research?” From this point in the conversation, the two participants touched on both the next assignment and the larger, cumulative semester project. Martin’s response to Bertrand’s question, that he was interested in what “separates these people from mainstream music,” led Bertrand to point out the assumptions Martin had developed about his research population. Although implicitly constructed, this statement appears directed at both the upcoming second essay, which asked students to explore their positionalities, and the ongoing questions driving Martin’s work. Later in the conversation, when Martin asked about the need for description, Bertrand responded that “thick description is everything.” This statement, given as a response to a question itself detached from a particular text, appeared to be directed at all of the individual essays that comprised the cumulative semester project.

The conference setting makes it more difficult to distinctly establish the relationships Bertrand is drawing among the already produced text, upcoming assignments, and the cumulative semester project in its entirety. Much of this first conference between Martin and Bertrand actually focused on Martin's decision to turn in a written text because the two of them had previously discussed the possibility of Martin submitting a digital video text. Because the conference setting allows for the live interchange of ideas between participants, the instructor's control over the conversation's focus lessens. Viewed as two writers having a conversation about one of the writer's ongoing work, this first conference between Bertrand and Martin demonstrates the least-obvious degree of what I have been calling response as "assigning." In the two places I've highlighted—the reference to assumptions and the need for thick description—Bertrand implicitly offered suggestions for Martin going forward—namely, that he should use his assumptions to "break new ground for writing" and that the writing he produces should feature thick description. Yet, the only explicit suggestion or direction Bertrand offered was for Martin to let him know "how [he] he can help."

Bertrand's conference with Megan in which they discussed the third paper, an annotated bibliography, illustrates how the conference setting allows for attention to the already-produced text that, in turn, leads to a broader discussion of the cumulative semester project. After acknowledging some of the revisions and additions Megan had made following peer review, Bertrand shifted his focus to the specific citations and annotations she had included. He commented on specific issues in the document, including the absence of a journal title and the need for her to make use of a "hanging indent." Appearing uneasy with his attention to such particulars, he clarified his point

about the hanging indent by calling it a “very minor detail,” before reminding her that “what I am more concerned about is the evaluation of your sources.” Bertrand pushed Megan to include a “sentence or two” offering assessment of the source’s value to her project within each annotation. Megan, sensing a need to address Bertrand’s recommendation that she include this material in each annotation, turned her attention to her first source and its focus on stress in the workplace. After she said that she would have to think more about how stress relates to her project, Bertrand asked her, “Have you seen the nurses stressed at [the assisted-living home]?” Megan did not respond at first, so Bertrand asked her to think more about what the nurses had told her. Megan then remembered a conversation with one nurse about the struggles she had with getting one patient to eat. After Megan had recounted this story, Bertrand responded: “There you go. You’ve got the fieldwork and what others have said.” Recommending that she should draw connections among her observations, her interviews, and her secondary research, Bertrand told Megan that the conversations she had had with the nurses had “helped you sharpen your lens of what you observed in your fieldwork.” Following this exchange, Megan asked if she should continue to narrow her project, to which Bertrand responded, “Base it around nurses and stress, instead of more broad.” He then continued, “You see, you know where you are heading.” The conference concluded with Bertrand reminding Megan of the need for her to evaluate her sources in terms of how they would benefit her researched writing.

Bertrand described this batch of conferences as being “very directive.” He accounted for his directiveness by explaining the challenges he knew students experienced with secondary research. These challenges include finding appropriate

sources, having the time to critically read the sources, and successfully analyzing how the sources related to their research interests. As his conference with Megan illustrates, the annotated bibliography assignment forced him to address specific aspects of the annotated bibliography genre and its relation to the larger cumulative semester project. In our conversations, Bertrand articulated a need to help students formulate the annotated bibliography assignment and continue to move forward with the cumulative semester project. Within this particular conference, we witness his movement between the already-produced text, needed revisions of this text, and the continued development of the culminating semester project. Megan's noting of the one source's discussion of workplace stress is valuable because it presents conflicting material on student and teacher awareness of the culminating semester project. On one hand, Megan seemed unprepared to draw connections between her secondary research and her fieldworking observations. On the other hand, she appeared not only to have included this source in her bibliography because it addressed her research interests but also to have purposefully brought it into the conversation to acknowledge that she knew why the source was valuable to her project. As I will demonstrate when I examine students' reception of response directed at the culminating project, Megan possessed very specific awareness of how Bertrand's response was providing her a "lead" or "pattern" on how she should continue to "narrow" her research and writing. Given Megan's preference for directive feedback—be that response directed at the already-produced text or the culminating project—her willingness to defer to Bertrand's leading role in the conference should not come as a surprise. At the same time, Bertrand's ability to deftly move between different aspects of the culminating project seems limited by her passive role in the conference.

Although she received response on what she desired most, which was the corrective attention needed for the already-produced text and further direction for the culminating project, she received little feedback on how her long-standing interest in workplace stress could help her further her focus within secondary scholarship.

Response to the Cumulative Semester Project as Textual Negotiation

These contextual moments from Jane's and Bertrand's classes demonstrate how these instructors may have responded to student writing with the cumulative semester project in mind. As the prior analysis of the production of response generated within the cumulative semester project demonstrates, instructors have various approaches available to them when negotiating the intersection of the cumulative semester project and the already-produced text as respondents. The responses provided by Jane and Bertrand offer at least three possibilities for such response. First, there is the response directed at the next step in the project. As such response offers process-based suggestions directed toward texts that will be composed in the future, Jane's decision to present such response visually separated from the response directed at the already-produced text makes sense. Second, there is response, such as Bertrand's end note to Megan's second paper, that folds together the already-produced text and the cumulative semester project. In the case of Bertrand's response, this folding happens both in the visual presentation of the response and the orientation of the already-produced text and the cumulative semester project. For Megan to think more about her conclusion, she may have to return to her fieldworking site with new questions and assumptions in mind. Finally, there is the least obvious example, which is the role the cumulative semester project plays in how the reader orientates himself/herself to the student's text. In Jane's response to Ashley's

second paper, she only makes passing reference to the previous writing project, and she does not explicitly reference the ongoing cumulative project at all. Yet, as I demonstrated in my analysis of this response, Ashley's shift from a focus on PTSD in women/adults to a focus on PTSD in children matters to how she will proceed with her research. In turn, the changing nature of her research due to her shift in focus matters also to Jane's reading and response to the already-produced text. Although there is not any firm evidence to steadfastly support the following claim, I think we should remain open to the idea that the sequenced nature of Jane's writing projects influenced the response she provided to the already-produced text. Although the shift in focus matters more to Ashley's work going forward, the questions Jane asked of Ashley's sources (see fig. 4.7) and her writing about these sources may help Ashley better understand the material she is locating. An increased understanding would benefit both Ashley's revision of the already-produced text and her engagement with sources that she will make use of in writing project 3.

The differences in presentation of response directed at the cumulative semester project matter to how we account for the occurrence of such response. Lesa Stern and Amanda Solomon, in updating and extending Connors and Lunsford's research on the characteristics of teachers' rhetorical comments, note that only 6% of their sample papers included what they label "scholarly advice" (36), which they define as "references to additional sources of information" and "advice on how to continue on with a line of research" (36). Additionally, they establish this category to include "references ... to future lines of thought and inquiry" (36). The responses Jane and Bertrand provided to the cumulative semester project appear to be rare, even if we accept that some forms of these responses, such as Bertrand's evaluation of Megan's conclusion, may fall within

other descriptive categories. My sense, however, is that content analysis, the method Stern and Solomon used to categorize and label their sample comments, does not allow for a robust accounting of “scholarly advice.” The very amorphous nature of the categorical definition—that such response can suggest additional sources, provide advice on the continuation of a research project, or offer new “lines of thought”—leads me to question our current knowledge on how and when response to the cumulative semester project occurs. The data from Jane’s class and Bertrand’s class make clear that in addition to scholarly advice providing ideas on “future lines of thought and inquiry,” it can also draw intersections across assignments such that distinctions between past and future blur.

Stern and Solomon further describe scholarly advice as “reflect[ing] a great deal of thought and personal investment by the faculty members” (36). As they note, the required investment necessary for this type of response may explain its low rate of occurrence. Their commentary also leads to necessary questions regarding Lees’s following claim:

Of the seven kinds of responding I’ve examined, the first three—correcting, emoting, and describing—put the burden of work on the teacher; the next three—suggesting, questioning, and reminding—shift some of that burden to the student. The last mode—assigning provides a way to discover how much of that burden the student has taken up. (372)

Response directed at the cumulative semester project appears to unsettle such a claim because of its doubly textual nature. As Bertrand and I discussed, the response is not designed merely to “keep the next assignment” in mind. For Bertrand, his response

always seemed to be directed at what the text contributes as a member of the course portfolio. Because his portfolio was comprised of revised essays and because the portfolio resulted from the students' semester-long investment in fieldworking, his response navigated between and intersected with the individual text, the portfolio, and the cumulative semester project. As a result of this ongoing negotiation, each instructor assumed a greater burden as a respondent. They chose to not decontextualize the assignment from the larger work of the class and, in doing so, made themselves accountable to responding to more than just the already-produced text. Even Jane's explicit response structure demonstrates an additional burden. The paragraph directed at the next writing project represents additional words offered to the students, additional thinking on Jane's part, and, ultimately, additional time spent on that single response. At the same time, both instructors valued what accounting for the larger class context offers to students—even if this accounting merely takes the form of positioning a student's work within the assignment sequence while reading—so whatever burden may be added to the response activity may also be cancelled by how this larger context helped facilitate meaningful response.

A critic could argue that my analysis oversteps the bounds of the instructor's intentions for their responses. The conversation with Bertrand speaks to this criticism. Although he did not dismiss the role the cumulative semester project plays in his response, he also maintained that his primary focus remained on the potential the paper had relative to his expectations for the semester-concluding portfolio. Bertrand's reading of a student-authored text with the portfolio in mind reflects the temporal awareness at the center of Phelps's analysis. He is reading the text knowing that his later purpose will

be to “construct a speculative portfolio of the writer’s developmental history and current maturity” (53). Such construction occurs, Phelps tells us, because the reader chooses to collapse the student’s writing into “a single text in the process of evolution” (51). Such collapsing has important implications for how we view response that intersects with the cumulative semester project. If we consider the cumulative semester project as an ongoing “initiation” that stretches across the semester, then we can also consider the project as the collapsing of the smaller assignments into one assignment that evolves across the semester. But what this chapter and previous chapters have demonstrated is that such collapsing does not operate cleanly apart from the attention that remains directed at the individual paper, be that attention for the purpose of summative assessment or for the purpose of making this larger cumulative project operational within the expectations students bring to the class, the time constraints placed on the class, and the necessary structure instructors must give to the class to maintain student interest and make the larger project functional within the complex and sometimes contradictory nature that is the first-year writing classroom.

In the earlier analysis of response directed to the cumulative semester project in Bertrand’s class, I included two quotations from my discussions with Bertrand that help explain the textual negotiations and priorities that influence such response. Bertrand highlighted three priorities for his response: encouraging “rethinking” and “reseeing” what students have already written, pushing students to see their writing more holistically and as situated within rhetorical situations, and providing additional teaching that will help students generate new questions that will, in turn, “teach them new ways of thinking about what they’ve already taken on.” Bertrand, as I discussed earlier, positions his

response within time such that the response to a particular text will be formative “all the way back ... on the portfolio.” Bertrand’s use of “back” to describe how students will move forward toward the portfolio highlights the role formative response (as traditionally conceived) plays in the practices and expectations students and teachers bring to the production and reception of response. By considering the construction of formative response as feedback that “helps the student achieve the goals” or as response “intent on helping students improve their writing abilities,” we are able to better understand the (perceived) fundamental role the individual text continues to play in cumulative semester projects such that this text may never—at least within the assignment sequences used by Jane and Bertrand—be fully “subsumed” by later assignments (Speck and Jones 20–21; Rankin 130). Similarly, it would be inappropriate to say that either instructor wished for the individual texts to be fully subsumed in a way such that each text would lose its discreteness. Jane asked students to bring forth material from previous writing projects into subsequent writing projects. She also graded each project individually, and she focused her response first on what the students had done. In her own words, her primary focus in her response was to speak to “what they’ve done.” In doing so, she focused her response first on the revisions needed and/or suggested for the already-composed text before offering suggestions for the subsequent writing assignment, if such suggestions were given at all. This type of response was limited in the responses I studied, although formative response that seemed directed at an already-composed text may also be considered to be directed at a subsequent text when analyzed within the larger class context, including Jane’s explanation of her own commenting practices.

Although Stern and Solomon's concept of "scholarly advice" seems to mirror, at least in name, Lees's category of suggestions, the relation between the responses I've examined and the concept of "assigning" is best explained by Stern and Solomon's characterization of such response as "advice on how to continue with a line of research" (36). Lees's concept of response as assigning centers around the creation of "another" assignment meant to force students to "[use] what has been said already to discover how to say something new." This definition seems to closely mirror both Bertrand's suggestion for Megan to raise new questions about the workplace stress she had witnessed and Jane's paragraph of questions intended to help Ashley move forward to the next writing project. What seems most important about these responses is how they exist in contradiction to Stern and Solomon's findings. According to their research, 23% of the papers included *only* "negative global comments" (24). Forty-nine percent of the papers included comments directed at word choice and awkward phrases (34). Twenty-four percent of the papers contained a comment related to spelling (34). Only 6% seemed to step outside the text and imagine the larger purposes the paper was intended to address. By purposes, I mean less the students' purposes and more the purposes of the writing classroom. Arguing for an understanding of response as a transactional exchange, Probst reminds us of limitations presented by popular response practices:

If schooling leads students to expect only the hostile reader, or only the reader who serves as proofreader, or only the reader who serves as the gatekeeper, then writing will come to seem less a pursuit of meaning than a survival exercise. (78).

Bertrand, the self-described writing coach, mirrored this sentiment with his hope that his formative response practices extend beyond the final summative comment on the portfolio. Jane wants to work against “boring” writing that results from students not having enough time to “think out their ideas.”

The term we use to describe response to the cumulative semester project—be it suggesting, assigning, scholarly advice, or some other term—matters little as long as we acknowledge the primary value such response has. This primary value is that response directed toward the cumulative semester project offers the process-based feedback scholars have argued is most important but that rarely, if we believe the large-scale studies that have categorized and named response, appears on student papers. At the very end of his summative list of “general principles” for response, Bean reminds us to

think of your commentary as personal correspondence with the student, something that makes your own thinking visible and permanent. Try to invest in your commentary the tone of a supportive coach—someone interested in the student as a person and in the improvement of the student’s powers as a writer and thinker. (253)

Offering a similar perspective, Straub also references the importance of establishing a dialogue with students:

Look to engage students in an inquiry into their subject by treating what they have to say seriously and encouraging them, in turn, to take their ideas seriously. Turn your comments into a conversation with students, a

real dialogue that encourages them to read the comments and respond to your responses. (“Guidelines” 358).

Without undermining either suggestion’s importance, I want to point out what might be a more important argument made by both scholars. Bean tells us to remember that we are investing in the “improvement of the student’s powers as a writer and thinker.” Straub reminds us that our intention is to engage “students in an inquiry” by demonstrating that we take their work “seriously.” This message reflects the long-standing tension between process and product, a tension reflected in the gap between suggested response practices and the responses that appear on students’ papers. Victor Villaneuva, in commenting on Donald Murray’s “Teaching Writing as a Process, not a Product” within a broader discussion of the process movement, concludes that, although we might consider “writing as a process ... [,] that doesn’t mean that at the end of the process there won’t be a product” (2). A portfolio pedagogy, according to Peter Elbow, allows us to “pay better attention to the writing process” even if we accept that the end goal is the “the hard text themselves, ‘the real thing,’ the bottom line” (“Will” 41). In an early-semester conversation that occurred in the minutes before his class began, Bertrand spoke to the role a “high-stakes portfolio background” played in his pedagogy. Noting that it is “hard to get past product” because of the expectation that students should “know how to do it” before getting to upper-level courses, Bertrand was keenly aware of what such pressure meant for his own teaching. Bertrand voiced frustration with the viewpoint that first-year writing was a space where students learned what was necessary to then engage upper-level writing requirements, instead of viewing first-year writing and these upper-level writing courses as “part of the [same] process.”

As respondents, Jane and Bertrand use response to the culminating process to unsettle the perspective of writing as merely preparation for what comes later in students' academic careers. Jane's explanation of why she allows students to choose their own research topics illustrates this investment in making writing more than just preparation:

One thing I believe about writing ... I hate being forced to write about stuff I'm not interested in. And when it comes to research, I know a lot of students are not excited about research or they have this sort of feeling that it is a particular thing that can't be exciting. So I want them to be choosing a topic that they will be excited enough about that they will be able to be motivated to keep research it through the whole semester. And I know that my own ideas about what's interesting or not are not the same as my students'.

Furthermore, I would argue that each instructor's use of responses directed at the culminating semester project demonstrates an investment in what Bertrand called "real academic conversations." By choosing to develop textual associations across assignments, Jane and Bertrand provided space for students to engage writing and scholarship at a level not possible with a "serial" sequence comprised of "closed texts" (Rankin 129; Phelps 49). Calling on Lees's terminology, I have positioned this response as a form of "assigning." Such assigning does not function free of complications, nor is it removed from other response purposes. Jane's primary attention to what the student "has done," offers one complication—namely, that she must navigate from what they've already done to what they might do in revision to what they might consider doing as they continue with the cumulative semester project. She pointed toward the response essay

assignments as one tool she used to help students (and herself as respondent) navigate these different textual dimensions.⁵ Bertrand's use of response directed at the cumulative project must be considered alongside his privileging of a final cumulative portfolio. Although these aspects of the class are different in that one speaks to assigning and one speaks to assessment, they are also overlapping in that the response provided to one text may speak to the ongoing cumulative response, a revision to be included in the portfolio, and the writing/research practices students will engage to complete the cumulative semester project and the final portfolio. Much of what I am calling response as "assigning" illustrates, as I have previously established, a distinction between product and process. As there is often a product at the end of the process, response as "assigning" does speak to a future product, often the next text in the assignment sequence, but it also speaks to the processes students will need to complete to engage a revision of the already-produced text or the ongoing work of the cumulative semester project. This is not an easy balance to strike, as the responses produced by Jane and Bertrand reflect.

Students' Reception of Response Directed at the Cumulative Semester Project

In the previous section, I referenced Megan's explicit awareness of how Bertrand's response assisted her in moving through the cumulative semester project. Reacting to the written response she had received to her second paper, she "noticed how he, pretty much, took one of my paragraphs verbatim and said how that intrigued him about how I managed to locate the tension within the culture." At first, she did not have a

⁵ In hindsight, I wish I had spent more time with students discussing the response essays. As I demonstrate in the next section, Ashley's articulation of how she used the response essays shifted across the semester. Ava's interaction with the response essays was hampered the motivation issues I discussed in Chapter 1.

response to what she took from this portion of his response, but then further in our conversation, she articulated both what she thought Bertrand would want her to do with this feedback and how the feedback benefited her:

Well, I think, now that I have managed to find this pattern, he'd definitely want me to expand on it. And that's one of my goals for the next paper. I'm glad he gave me this lead, because it kind of saves my time from having to pick through what I have to go through on this paper [essay 3]. ... I can brainstorm my questions around what he pointed out, so when my third paper is due I can kind of talk about this [tension].

Curious to see if she saw the feedback having applications for both papers 2 and 3, I asked her to further explain how she saw herself applying this feedback. In her response, she positioned the feedback exclusively in relation to the next essay. To explain the feedback's usefulness for the next assignment, she commented on how she "did" her second paper:

When Bertrand conferenced with me for my first paper, I don't remember exactly what he said, but I think he found it intriguing how I talked about the nurses and everything in general, so he told me that, you know, about expanding more on the nurses and covering more about them. So that's what my second paper was dedicated to—you know, getting the nurses' side of the story out.

For Megan, getting the nurses' story out included acknowledging the job stress they faced as well as the strategies they learned to cope with the stress. Following her explanation of

the first conference's role in her composition of the second paper, she continued by describing how writing the second paper would help her move forward to the annotated bibliography assignment. This forward advancement would result, according to her, as a result of her current knowledge about the research available on job place stress for nurses. Speaking more broadly about the role Bertrand's feedback played in her engagement with the cumulative semester project, Megan provided a useful summary that accounts for how response across multiple texts can benefit student writing, especially in researched writing courses:

I think the feedback Bertrand has given me has shaped a lot more into my research, you know. Honestly, when I was doing this fieldworking thing, when I first started out, it was very broad and expansive. I didn't have a specific target, per se. I was just, kind of, writing down my observations of what I saw the staff members doing [and] what I saw the residents doing and, you know, how they were going about their daily lives. It was almost like a diary type of entry, in a way. [The] second paper was narrowed down to nurses, you know, listening mainly—almost exclusively—to their side of the story. And I think this third paper will be narrowed down furthermore by focusing on the nurses' job-related stress.

The narrowing down Megan describes was evident in her third conference, which I discussed previously. Yet, in her discussion after the conference, Megan turned her attention to what she saw to be the valuable "leads" Bertrand had provided her as well as the limitations of these "leads." She judged the conference to have been "very informative" because Bertrand had offered her "leads" on how she should improve her

paper, including the need for her to include a paragraph for each annotation evaluating its contribution to her research. Later in our conversation, Megan voiced frustration with reading journal articles by comparing the task of working through these articles with the task of cleaning a “really messy room.” The challenge, she said, was finding out “where to start,” and starting would be easier if she had a “lead” on “how to get going.” I asked Megan to describe what type of lead would be most helpful to her. In her response, she expanded the conversation’s focus beyond this issue of secondary research to speak to the feedback she desired more generally:

I really want to know where I am going wrong because, like I said, I want to be the best I can be, and the only way I can be the best is if you tell me where I am going wrong because I know I am not going to write perfect papers. They are going to be far from perfect, and I’ll need that lead.

During our conversation about her second paper, Megan offered contextually defined application of the relationship between what she was calling leads and a revision of this paper. Specifically, she referenced the lack of “a lead” on “where I should focus my second paper” as the motivating factor behind going to her dad or “some other adult” to obtain another perspective on her work. Megan saw the limited feedback she received on paper 2 as offering little help with a revision of this paper because “he [Bertrand] didn’t say anything that he found not good about the paper.”

Megan’s assertion that Bertrand didn’t point out any flaws in the second paper illustrates Megan’s desire for feedback that tells her “where [she] is going wrong.” Earlier in the chapter, I argued that Bertrand’s feedback to Megan’s second paper could be read such that she could accomplish the further development of her conclusion that he

recommended through continued engagement with her fieldworking site. Megan's reading of the feedback is telling in that not only did she not draw a connection between the need for her to further develop her conclusion by returning to her fieldworking site and her notes from this site but she also did not recognize Bertrand's more general suggestion for a further developed conclusion either.

Megan's various uses of the word "lead" illustrate different orientations to the texts she had and would compose. As I examined in Chapter 2 (and above), Megan primarily desired corrective feedback directed at the already-produced text. Yet, as her accounting of how she was tracing different aspects of nursing stress across multiple assignments demonstrates, she also readily picked up on the formative feedback Bertrand was directing toward the composition of subsequent texts. Given these two orientations, her decision to not revise a single word in her second essay is of importance. A number of possible explanations for this lack of revision exist, including Bertrand's announcement to the class that papers 3 and 4 "will carry the most weight," Megan's tendency to procrastinate, and the lower priority she placed on this class compared with her science classes. A misreading of Bertrand's feedback such that she did not notice the attention he recommended she pay to her conclusion could be another explanation.

Although Megan acknowledged the cumulative response she received and seemed to successfully build her cumulative project across multiple assignments, she had reservations about this pedagogical model. On one hand, she appreciated how the approach allowed her to dive deeply into her research. On the other hand, she would have preferred a more "user-friendly" portfolio model in which "we write a paper, we get feedback, we put it in the portfolio, like one at a time." She described this model as the

one she was familiar with from high school and acknowledged that by “fix[ing] it and [doing] all the necessary changes” before moving to the next paper, the task of putting together the portfolio would be “more quick and efficient.” Megan also referenced high school when explaining why she privileges feedback focused specifically on where she is going wrong in her writing:

Maybe because it’s been ingrained in my mentality from high school and elementary school and even with my parents. They always say, “Try keeping yourself grounded. Make sure to focus on the negatives [more] than the positives in whatever you do because that’s the only way to help you grow.” You know, if you keep focusing on the positives, you’re stopping yourself from improving further.

Megan’s reception of response directed at the cumulative semester project appears to have been highly influenced by her expectations of what Bertrand’s response should focus on as well as who should direct her ongoing work. Megan privileged response that was directed at the text she had composed, not on the processes she had engaged to produce these texts. Megan desired corrective feedback, and she wished Bertrand would provide these “leads” explicitly. She seems to have willingly received the process feedback directed at the semester project because it was feedback coming directly from Bertrand. Even though she had already instigated a specific trajectory for her research, Megan tended to give Bertrand credit for providing the direction for her work. Given these predilections, Megan’s inability to effectively apply the feedback she received on her second paper does not come as a surprise.

Earlier I mentioned Megan's procrastination as one factor that may have influenced her decision not to revise her second paper. Time played a different role in Ashley's reading of the feedback Jane provided to her second paper. Ashley engaged a think-aloud protocol for her reading of these comments to allow for a better understanding of how she was receiving Jane's feedback. Because I wanted to limit my artificial intrusions into the classes I was observing, I conducted this think-aloud protocol after Jane returned the second writing projects during a regularly scheduled class period. That is to say that the reading Ashley offered in the think-aloud protocol was not her first engagement with these comments. During her reading of Jane's comments, Ashley voiced the worry that Jane was misreading her research trajectory, such that Jane seemed to incorrectly assume Ashley had changed her focus from PTSD in adults to PTSD in children. When pushed further to explain this concern, she said she would have to sit down and look more closely at the comments alongside her submission.

During our conversation after the submission of her final course portfolio, which included the only version of writing project 3, Ashley articulated that she first reread the comments for writing project 2 the previous day, which was also the day she revised writing project 2, finished composing writing project 3, and revised the response essays that were to be included in the portfolio. Although it is impossible to establish that different practices would have led to different results, I am able to establish Ashley's continued struggle with blending together her research on PTSD in both women and children. Specifically, Ashley felt challenged by Jane's requirement that students include materials from previous writing projects in subsequent writing projects. Explaining her need for a creative solution, Ashley acknowledged that her solution was "two solutions

for two different groups of people.” As a result of this focus on two different groups, she had to generate a creative way not only to bring the two groups and solutions together but also to do so while incorporating material from her first two writing projects.

Ashley appeared to figure out much about her research and what she had learned from her research late in the semester. She acknowledged that her goal in revising her response essays was to “articulate to Jane” that her “topic changed a lot throughout the process.” Rereading her responses essays illustrated for her where she “would get an idea and then completely change it.” Gently pressed to describe when she had come to understand these shifts in her research, she acknowledged that she had really come to understand the connections “yesterday.” I do not want to make too much of this detail because to do so would be to undervalue the implicit development purposefully embedded in Jane’s assignment sequence. At the same time, Ashley’s decision to not look at the response she had received on writing project 2 until the day she revised the essay highlights the textual circumscription she applied to this response—the feedback provided to writing project 2 was meant to be applied to writing project 2.

Students’ receptions to response directed at the culminating project varied widely. Ava wished for greater information about what each writing project would entail at the start of the semester. She found herself worried later in the semester that her topic, the use of child soldiers, did not lend itself well to considering different solutions. Ava pointed to the feedback she had received on her first paper as a source of worry for her. As Ava recounted, Jane’s feedback focused on Ava’s argument statement and how “it presents my perspective on the issue instead of making the argument that the problem exists.” Having presented her perspective in this first paper, Ava was confused about how

she should approach her third writing project. Ashley's conflicting responses on how she made use of the response essays makes it hard to fully account for how useful the assignments and Jane's responses to these assignments were. Ashley articulated the benefits of the response essays to be the purpose they served in providing a starting point for her research and reassuring her she was on the right path. Yet, at different points in the semester, she talked in differing ways of how often she referred back to these assignments. In our discussion of our second paper, she said she "didn't go back to [them]," but she remembered the feedback she received as "overall good stuff" that let her know she was "on the right track." In our final meeting of the semester, she said she went back to the response essays often and used them to construct her writing projects. These conflicting responses can be explained by considering the different ways in which Ashley could have returned to these texts, including the possibility that the responses were helpful to her even if she did not return to the actual texts. For instance, she referenced response essay 5 as having been particularly useful to her in our last conversation. For Ashley to remember this assignment and Jane's response to the assignment, something about her engagement with the task (or the response she received) must have stuck with her.

Ashley's conception of Jane's response to the response essays as functioning as "reassurance" aligns with David and Martin's reception of the feedback they received from Bertrand. Both David and Martin accounted for the response in broad terms, often applying the same practices to revisions of already-produced texts as well as the ongoing cumulative semester project. David regularly spoke of the need for him to "provide more detail" and "expand further" when discussing both past and future compositions. This

collapsing of the feedback he received into one global category seems to have served him well in Bertrand's class based on his revision of all four assignments for the culminating portfolio. Of specific interest is his addition of interactions (and even photos) of customers at the local music store, additions that resulted from Bertrand's suggestions in both his written and oral response for David to include more "thick description" in his writing. Of the students in the study, Martin seemed most detached from needing directive response from his instructor. When asked to describe what was useful about Bertrand's responses to his submissions, he responded that the feedback "always gave him the reassurance that he was on the right track." Rarely did Martin draw specific connections across multiple texts.

It is impossible to cast a net over these student-participants to fully account for their reception and application of response directed at the cumulative semester portfolio. There is one common characteristic, however, that might help us begin to understand students' reception of such response, including their sometimes limited application of the responses. Every participant, at varying degrees, articulated a desire to receive marginal feedback on their writing. For most of the students, this desire aligned with the related desire to receive feedback that was as specific as possible. David articulated the advantage of marginal feedback in our first meeting as allowing for the instructor to point out strengths and weaknesses at particular points in the text. Similarly, Ava stated that she would "rather have someone, like as they're reading through [her text], write down what thought comes to them as they're reading it, instead of just at the end." Her preference related to the fact that "the more structured" the response, "the easier it is for me to follow." Ashley established a preference for marginal comments while also

hedging back toward an acceptance of end notes. Pushed to explain further, she responded:

Honestly, when teachers write stuff at the end of papers, I don't really like that. So if they just did without that. ... I really like when teachers go through specific things and write comments on the side so, I mean, it doesn't bother me when they write it at the end, but, if I had to choose, I'd say don't do that.

The preferences for marginal comments reflect Edgington's findings when he collaborated with students to decipher their commenting preferences ("Encouraging"). Ashley's dislike of end comments, interestingly, resulted from a concern that teachers who use end comments use what Nancy Sommers calls "rubber-stamped" comments (152). As the semester progressed, all of the students voiced satisfaction with the comments they received. As I accounted for in Chapter 2, a number of the participants voiced a strong appreciation for the one-on-one conferences they had with their instructors. Ashley appreciated the investment Jane put into her comments, but she also continued to desire for Jane to point out "a specific part" of her writing that was well done via marginal comments or underlining.

In my attempt to account for students' reception of response to the cumulative semester project, three major characteristics have arisen. The first is Megan's desire for corrective feedback directed at what she has done wrong. This desire aligns with other student-participants' desires for attention to what needs to be "fixed" or "changed." Second, there is the last-minute return Ashley made to Jane's comments on her second paper. Her articulation of her end-of-the-semester revision focus was mirrored by some,

but not all, of the participants. David, to offer a counterexample, claimed to have revised his work daily over the last two weeks of the semester. Finally, there is the desire from most of the participants for marginal comments. Although students varied in the focuses they desired in written feedback, all desired comments that were closely connected to specific portions of their texts.

This desire for response closely attached to the text, although not fully explanatory of how students made use of response directed at the cumulative semester project, does offer a beginning point for further research on this topic. The students' descriptions of the benefits of marginal comments all focused on what those comments could offer to the text in front of them. To be fair, students came to accept (and appreciate) various commenting modes as the semester progressed. Furthermore, they also came to understand (and appreciate) how a response directed at one text may also be directed at a subsequent text. Based on their explanations of their revision processes and my reading of the work they submitted, these students appeared to be most successful at applying the responses they received when the response was clearly directed at either the already-composed text or a subsequent text that had not yet been written. This is not to say that they always were thrilled with the response an instructor offered. Ashley, for instance, thought Jane offered "too many suggestions" in the paragraph of her response to writing project 1 when she offered possible directions Ashley could use to move forward with writing project 2. Yet, as the data in this chapter primarily demonstrates, students acknowledged and responded favorably to response to the cumulative project that helped them to move forward toward the next major writing assignment. There are two specific outlier cases, which are examined in the conclusion.

Conclusion: Conflicting Assumptions and the Classroom Context

In the cases of Megan's hands-off approach to revising her second paper and Ashley's continued struggle with focusing her research, the response directed at the cumulative semester project seemed not to help advance their writing. As I established earlier, others may argue that I am reading these responses too freely. My response would be that given my information on the participants and my embedded role in the classroom, I feel as if both of these readings are plausible within these classroom contexts. Jane did acknowledge that Ashley's argument "is an important one in relation to your previous writing project, in which your focus was primarily the effects of PTSD on women." Furthermore, she commented that Ashley had "done a nice job of supporting this argument with sources that each explain ... how children suffer the consequences of PTSD more strongly than women or adults." Bertrand's response, although not the most clearly articulated, does invite Megan to approach him with any questions she might have. These exchanges demonstrate the challenges of response to the cumulative semester project, especially when such response falls outside the students' privileged expectations for response.

Response to the cumulative semester project that functions as assigning introduces new challenges to the first-year writing classroom. As the semester progressed for Jane, she came to feel tension relating to her decision to allow students to research their own topics of interest. Although she believed that such research would lead to greater investments by students, she also came to understand the limitations of her choice:

The one thing I'm not comfortable with is the way the class is setup. It would have been more successful, I think, if all of their research surrounded one broad topic, and they were all reading the same stuff every week. That would have been more successful. It would have been much more of an open question, you know, [an] exploratory process of figuring out how to read research [and] how to make sense of it as a group.

Jane also came to understand the limitations she faced as a respondent when her students were researching individually chosen topics. What I am reading as a suggestion in her second response to Ashley resulted from her critical reading of Ashley's paper and speculation about the research she was finding. As someone who works hard to offer students explicit feedback without taking control over their ideas, Jane seemed to understand the limitations posed by her distance from students' research. In fact, she felt some of the directive feedback she offered for writing project revisions compensated for her not being able to fully facilitate a student's movement through his/her research. Likewise, Bertrand was critical of the internal "scaffolding" present between and among his assignments. Feeling an obligation to meet the departmental expectation for students to compose at least four discrete assignments, he prioritized the annotated bibliography at a level he disliked and, in doing so, he felt he undermined students' organic investment in their fieldwork.

Rankin's examination of approaches to sequencing writing assignments includes a consideration of how "conflicting theoretical assumptions" undermine assignment sequences (131). Although I would stop short of arguing that response to the cumulative assignment sequence in the form of assigning fails because of conflicting assumptions

between students and an instructor, I would argue that the complexities present in such response result from conflicting assumptions between these participants. The very use of response in this manner represents what Phelps would term response at “increasing theoretical depth” (39). As veteran classroom teachers who also possess a high level of theoretical teaching knowledge, both Jane and Bertrand have adopted a response style that challenges the privileged viewpoint of the “closed” text, and, in doing so, they open up new possibilities for students, their writing, and their research practices. Yet, such advanced pedagogical practices may also introduce new challenges to the writing classroom. Such challenges relate both to the need for rethinking practices the instructor has privileged (such as self-selected research topics) and the need to successfully introduce these sequencing practices to students who have their own beliefs and values about what writing is and how it functions. I hope that at no point in this chapter I have presented a perspective that response directed at the cumulative semester project was unsuccessful in either of these classrooms. The writing that students in each class completed was extraordinary; to insert my own opinion, both Bertrand and Jane accomplished Bertrand’s goal of meshing first-year writing and upper-level writing if for no other reason than each instructor’s students successfully engaged writing, researching, and revising practices more often found in upper-level writing classrooms.

What I wanted to demonstrate in this chapter is best introduced by Phelps’s contention that, although choices “facing teachers in circumscribing text are not mutually exclusive,” all such choices “[offer] the possibility of enlarging the object that is being read by extending its spatial and temporal boundaries” (49). Response to the cumulative semester project offered these instructors options for expanding their reading and

response practices by allowing them to imagine connections across texts not possible with either the “closed text” or “the formative portfolio.” At the same time, the cumulative semester project, although an addition to the text’s spatial and temporal confines, did not cancel out the functioning of a given text in the traditionally understood closed and formative constructions.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESPONSE, CLASSROOMS, AND THE DOMINANT TEXT

At the time I was moving this project to its conclusion, a “new” debate relating to response surfaced. This debate, unlike previous examinations of what response is and how it functions, arose not within our discipline of rhetoric and composition but within the larger educational apparatus. Most centrally, this debate centered on the question of whether computers could evaluate student writing as well as teachers do, and it grew out of both the development of massive open online courses (MOOCs) and the ongoing, national implementation of the Common Core State Standards across K–12 education.¹ Not surprisingly, the word “response” has taken a back seat in this debate, with the focus instead on grading. The March 2012 Reuters article “Robo-readers: The New Teachers’ Helper in the U.S.,” announces the development of “computers programmed to scan student essays and spit out a grade.” An April 2013 *New York Times* article paints a similar picture. The author, John Markoff, describes the computer-graded process as one in which students are provided a grade “instantly,” thanks to the “essay [being] scored by a software program.” Furthermore, because of this instantaneous feedback, a student could “rewrite the test to try to improve [his/her] grade.”² These are not isolated

¹ The *Comppile* database shows research on the computer grading of writing goes back nearly fifty years and is, therefore, hardly new.

² Markoff’s use of the phrase “let you rewrite” is telling, as it places the control in “the system” and not the choices and actions of either students or teachers.

references to grading found in these articles. Stephanie Simons, who authored the Reuters article, cites an ongoing competition intended to develop computer programs that “give each essay the same score a human grader would.” Writing a year after Simons, Markoff notes that those people actively developing such programs claim “the software was nearing the capability of a human grading.”

The response to these developments within the discipline of rhetoric and composition was immediate and forceful. The National Council of Teachers of English released a position statement in April 2013 entitled “Machine Scoring Fails the Test.” To accompany the dispersal of this statement, Douge Hesse represented our field with a May 2013 publication in *The Washington Post* entitled “Grading Writing: The Art and Science—and Why Computers Can’t Do It.” In this article, Hesse provides a shortcut to the larger argument put forth in the position statement. Reflecting the position staked out by the professional organization, Hesse demonstrates the challenges of reading and evaluating student writing through a three-question quiz that asks the newspaper reader to decide, for each question, which of two writing excerpts is better. Working from these examples, Hesse demonstrates the challenges of reading and assessing student writing due to questions relating to audience, purpose, and conventions, among other criteria. Speaking in the terms currently framing the debate over “robo-readers,” Hesse focuses primarily on the task of grading, while also noting the roles that reading and response play in writing assessment. He notes the teacher’s role as judge of quality, achievement of purpose, and convention. But, near the end of his article, he draws explicit connection between grading and response and, in doing so, mirrors other writing scholars who have

established the limitations of seeing the reading and response to writing merely as a matter of assessment:

However, writing is a fundamental human act. We write for each other, in various guises for various reasons, and teachers have the important responsibility to help students do it well. This means maintaining high standards, but it also means acting as a trusted reader and coach.

Responding to writing requires not only a sense of good writing, but also a sense of individual students, their interests, abilities, needs, and trajectories. The real art of grading blends communicating not only a student's achievement—however good or wanting—but also his or her potential, with a map of how to get from one to the other and encouragement to make the trip.

This difference in perspective between those actively working to design computer-reading programs and a prominent scholar-teacher in rhetoric and composition is illustrated by two concepts well considered in writing scholarship. The first is the teacher's role. Hesse demonstrates how the privileging of the "judge" role perceived to be most necessary in writing education overlooks other important roles such as "trusted reader," "coach," and encourager. The second concept is that of growth. Whereas the newspaper articles on computer grading illustrate how these technologies privilege improvement demonstrated by a better grade, by "the quality of their answers," and by, as the founder of Coursera puts it, "resubmitting the work until they get it right," Hesse considers not only the "student's achievement" on a single task but also possibilities for continued improvement on subsequent assignments (Markoff). Although Hesse uses the

dominantly privileged term “grading” to explain this complicated process, those with disciplinary knowledge of how the teaching of writing works know to read his message as much more than merely the “scoring” of student essays privileged by these developing technologies.

This tension between the “grading” of student writing and the production of response directed at the development of increased writing abilities expands beyond questions of the teacher’s role and the relationship between “instant feedback” and growth (Markoff). The tensions at the heart of this conversation are the same conversations our field has wrangled with since its inception. These tensions include the uneasy relationship between process and product; the various pedagogies that can be privileged in writing classrooms, including social and formalist approaches; and the purposes for writing education. While noting the multiplicity of tensions present in questions about how best to respond to/grade student writing in an era of accountability, standardization, and fast capitalism (Lu), I conclude this project by reaffirming that, most centrally, the current debate about the use of computers to grade student writing demonstrates the dominant position the singular text plays in how student writing is taught and responded to.

Newspaper accounts that announce the benefits of computer grading commonly define student writing as based in the singular text. In the previous chapter, I expanded prior response scholarship by considering how response functions across multiple texts through what I called response directed at “a cumulative semester project.” Although I do not borrow my terminology direction from Joseph Harris, my use of this phrase aligns with what he calls “an intellectual project” (588), which defines as “a cluster of defining

concerns and interests, a set of questions to address, [and] a point to move forward—that drives [students’] writing through its series of drafts” (588). Harris’s intellectual project, much like my idea of the cumulative semester project, is both fluid and comprised of multiple texts. I intended my work in the previous chapter to demonstrate the pedagogical benefits and challenges of responding to a series of texts that possess both a shared identity and individual circumscription. In constructing this chapter, I placed “the text” at the center of my investigation because of the uneasy position the text—as product, as content, and as that which is most commonly assessed—occupies in writing pedagogy. Noting the text’s dominant position in writing pedagogy holds specific importance when we consider this position alongside the emergent beliefs about the teaching of writing privileged in our field and how these emergent beliefs align with those dominant beliefs that circulate in other cultures, in the institutions in which writing is taught, and in the countless social processes that shape not only how response is produced and received but also how the writing classroom is designed, defined, and modified.

The “text,” as the previous chapters have demonstrated, has been at this project’s center. Megan’s preference for response that functioned as surveillance resulted from her desire for Bertrand to capture every mistake present *in her text* when he read and responded to her work. Dean’s frustration and dissatisfaction with his experience in English 102 stemmed from the absence of a pedagogy focused on the different *forms* of writing privileged by the university. Jane’s decision to give Ashley a “NG” on her first submission came about because of citation issues Jane located *in the text*. Relatedly, Jane included both formative and summative feedback on this writing project because of, among other factors, an uneasiness with how revision so often takes the form of students’

trying to “get things right” in a given *text*. Relatedly, Ashley’s unsettledness regarding the importance placed on “technical” aspects compared with what she saw as more writing-based factors resulted from the “NG” she received on this *first paper*. Megan would have preferred to construct her portfolio *one text* at a time. All the participating students voiced a desire for feedback directed at fixing mistakes found in their individual *texts*. Finally, to conclude this list, which only partially accounts for the central role of the individual text in the production and reception of response, Bertrand seemed uneasy with overly emphasizing response directed at the cumulative project because he wanted to focus primarily on how *a text* could be developed to meet the expectations through which he assessed students’ portfolios. This uneasiness resulted, at least in part, from his awareness that students “should know how to do it” before getting to upper-level classes. The ambiguous “it” Bertrand references, in that this reference points to the creation of the singular text, highlights the contradictory nature of this emphasis on the individual text. The process involved in the creation of this text is multifaceted and complex; yet, this very process can be encapsulated in a single pronoun.

The central role “the text” occupies in the beliefs and practices of both students and instructors comes as no surprise given how dominant views of writing education are built around the singular text. Tuell’s argument that first-year writing instructors are tasked with removing clutter from students’ discoursal closets takes the material form of straightening up the texts students produce (126). Rose’s argument against deficiency approaches in writing education highlights the way in which writing ability has traditionally been assessed through the measurement and “tabulation” of error in student writing (346). Given their responsive relationship to dominant beliefs, emergent

pedagogical strategies are, too, defined in relation to the dominant singular text. In defining formative response, Horvath argues that such response situates the text as “not fixed” but, instead as “a developing entity” (137). Phelps, in tracing how the various ways in which teachers can “circumscribe” texts, centers her analysis around the “spatial boundaries” of the “closed text” (48–49) The role of the closed, autonomous text in Phelps’s categories illustrates the catch 22 our field finds itself in when discussing the singular text or the text as product. Phelps begins her analysis with the singular text because the majority of teachers privilege this text when responding to student writing. Yet, by attempting to trouble the singular text by offering alternative models of circumscription, Phelps both reminds us of the singular text’s dominant position and, furthermore, highlights the complexities of other modes of circumscription compared with the singular text’s relative simplicity.

I can’t claim to be immune to this textual privileging as either a teacher or scholar. Although this project was founded on an argument that more attention needs to be paid to the multiple and competing contexts in which response is produced and received, the resulting text does very much focus on both students’ written texts and the textual responses produced by instructors. This is to say that, although I attempted to contextualize these texts by analyzing them in relation to both classroom practices and those ideologies that shape the production and reception of response, the resulting analysis remained rooted primarily in the texts produced by students and teachers. I acknowledge this textual focus to be one limitation of a project intended to capture the contextual nature of response while also acknowledging that this project demonstrates

what can be gained by studying more than just the production and reception of response decontextualized from the classrooms in which this response is produced and received.

Given the text's lasting dominance, additional research should move in two directions. First, Fife and O'Neill's call for research directed at response practices other than or alongside written comments remains of utmost importance. This project responded to the response practices present in the classrooms I observed while also attempting to not disrupt the naturally occurring classroom and to stay within the methods outlined in the IRB review. The truly ethnographic study of classrooms is possible, as Freedman and Sperling have illustrated. Yet, the ethnographic study of response practices offers a few complicating factors. First, as I have acknowledged, the more practices a researcher observes, the more likely he/she is to disrupt the naturally occurring classroom. Second, the full ethnographic study of classrooms is difficult because of the confines placed on classroom research by the standards put forth by IRBs (Anderson). Because I conducted this study at a university that has a medical school, the internal IRB standards are most directly written with medical and scientific experiments in mind. The IRB review process is not receptive to projects that do not include concrete explanations of methods and subjects; thus, classroom researchers often have to constrain projects or hedge statements to respond to and fulfill IRB standards. Furthermore, researchers interested in contributing to the ethnographic study of the production and reception of response will need to find creative solutions to address promises of anonymity. Two approaches growing in popularity that may prove useful here are rejecting the idea of anonymity so as to give credit to the contributions made by the participant and the practice of true co-authorship between researcher and participants. As

demonstrated, for example, in Cheryl Mellon and Jeff Sommers's analysis of Sommers's use of audio comments in response to Mellon's writing, such an approach extends Newkirk's idea of co-authorship in a way that privileges both ethical research and the authentic capture of classroom contexts.

The third challenge of ethnographic research results from the very textual nature of response. Although I acknowledge and support Fife and O'Neill's call for research that studies all different forms of response, I entered this project interested in written response because I wanted to better understand written comments as the dominantly privileged approach to response. This project was made better by my expanded focus that resulted in the study of written comments alongside other practice, such as reflective memos, assignment sheets, and instructor–student conferences. Having noted this expanded focus, I also note the degree to which the project remained textual in nature and I argue that this textual focus results from, more than anything else, the central role texts occupy in composition classrooms. We should remember, after all, that the production and reception of response does not occur prior to students' completion of assignments tasks, including the production of drafts and final revisions. Because of the text-heavy aspect of writing classrooms, we should continue to develop ethnographic research studies that allow for greater connections to be made between the texts and the contexts in which these texts are produced.

Although possibly paradoxical considering what I have previously written, I argue that additional research also needs to be conducted on how students are making sense of the texts they are writing and how their conception of texts plays a role in the production and reception of response. Paul Prior's research on how teachers and students

conceptualize writing tasks demonstrates one approach that can be used to gain a better understanding of the role the text plays in first-year writing classrooms (“Contextualizing Writing”). The current project focused on the production and reception of response, so attention to the classroom texts was conducted to better understand the responses provided to students’ writing and students’ reception of this response. Yet, as I collected and analyzed the data, it became clear that students’ perceptions of what a text is significantly shaped their perceptions of and expectations for response. For instance, Megan’s desire to assemble her portfolio one text at a time both demonstrates her investment in the singular text and limits the possibilities she envisions for alternatives to this singular text or intersections among multiple texts.

The idea that computers can grade student writing runs afoul of many of our discipline’s privileged beliefs and practices. Probst argues that students will come to see writing as “less a pursuit of meaning” and more as a “survival exercise” if their writing is responded to only by “the hostile reader, or only the reader who serves as proofreader, or only the reader who serves as the gatekeeper” (78). My conversations with students demonstrate that students very much privilege dominant conceptions of writing, including the idea that successful writing matters for “effective communication” and that proficient writing abilities are necessary for career success. Furthermore, their expectations for response, including attention to grammatical correctness, reflect dominant beliefs that circulate about writing, especially in conversations about the relationship between education and job preparation. Because of these dominant expectations, I’m uncertain that discussion of the teacher’s role as reader is enough to demonstrate the distinctions between human reading and computer reading. What we

need is attention to what the intersections of students, teachers, texts, and classrooms mean for how students go about constructing texts. Hesse argues that “responding to student writing requires not only a sense of good writing, but also a sense of individual students, their interests, abilities, needs, and trajectories.” I would argue that we need to extend our attention from our perceptions of students to also include how students are valuing and perceiving texts. Although I am not arguing for a return to a focus on the text simply as a product, I am arguing that we need to more fully account for the privileged role that the text plays in conversations about writing that occur *outside* the academy. As a result of the nature of these conversations, we need to more strongly demonstrate how writing development extends beyond the mere grading of individual student papers.

The students’ privileging of textual production—and often the production of the singular text—speaks also to choices we make in curricular design. Having criticized best practice scholarship earlier in this project, I want to be careful not to present any of my suggestions as edicts directed at specific actions. That said, I’ve found myself considering how we might more fully engage students’ perceptions of writing in the classroom if we agree that the perceptions of writing students bring to the writing classroom shape both the writing they produce in these classes and their expectations for and uses of the responses they receive. As this project illustrates, each instructor constructed their class around a central point of engagement. Bertrand asked students to conduct fieldworking, Connie had students engage academic research methods through a series of I-Search papers, and Jane led students through argumentative research writing situated around an issue of social relevance. My point in recounting these different pedagogical approaches is to illustrate how each approach puts writing at the service of an additional purpose.

These purposes result from the institutional expectation for writing courses that develop students' research practice and from the investments and beliefs privileged by the individual instructors. Each of these courses, to various degrees, troubled students' expectations for the text. This troubling is most evident in Dean's resistance to the I-Search paper, but it can also be seen in how fieldwriting introduced students to what might be seen as a nonacademic genre and in the sequencing and multiplication of texts in cumulative semester projects.

Although these pedagogies may have troubled these expectations, they did not fundamentally ask students to consider their own valuation of the individual text and, in doing so, examine their beliefs that shape this valuation. Having now collected, analyzed, and written up the data included in this project, I find myself convinced of the need to problematize students' perceptions of the text and have been considering different approaches for doing so.

Although surely not the only option, Douglas Down and Elizabeth Wardle's pedagogical approach of "writing about writing" offers one approach for those interested in problematizing students' perceptions of the individual text. Because this approach allows for conceptions of writing to be placed at the center of the student's engagement with and production of writing, adopting a "writing about writing" approach to first-year composition would allow both students and teachers to better understand the beliefs about writing students bring to the composition classroom—beliefs that very much shape the writing they produce, their reception of response, and their use of this response. My argument for a greater consideration of a "writing about writing" approach to class design as a way to allow for the complication of students' perceptions of what writing is, what it

does, and how it does what it does is not meant to challenge the various approaches privileged by the participating instructors. Having students write about their own conceptions of writing (and of response) can operate within pedagogical approaches such as fieldworking, I-Search, and academic argument.

Here, though, is the challenge to the approach I am advocating. Every student in this study mentioned how they appreciated being able to write on topics of their choosing. Response scholarship, such as the work of Brannon and Knoblauch, has argued that teachers should respect student intentions and ideas by not appropriating this student text to fit the confines of the “ideal text” (159). Interestingly, the participating students did not demonstrate a strong resistance to such appropriation. At best, they articulated tensions between the desire for directive and/or grammatical feedback and the desire for teachers to provide response to what Ashley called the “writing” aspects of their papers. What my research did demonstrate was a strong privileging for the freedom to choose their own writing topics; in fact, I would suggest that further research consider how appropriation is negotiated in writing classrooms, including how students view “self-chosen topics” as a desired feature of writing classrooms.

Because of this privileging of self-chosen topics, I am uncertain how successful a “writing about writing” approach might be. And, this seems to be the rub. The emergent ideologies common in our field—practices that are popular but surely not representative of all writing teachers—must constantly be negotiated with the beliefs, values, and assumptions privileged by students, by cultural institutions, and by those social processes that influence what occurs in writing classrooms. The argument for the computer grading of student writing demonstrates an ignorance of and/or an indifference to what happens in

writing classrooms and how these activities contribute to writing growth. Furthermore, the argument for the computer grading of student writing privileges technocratic ideologies of standardization and fast capitalism over what Bernier calls “the process labeled *teaching-learning*” (292). The assessment of textual products removed from the contexts in which these texts are produced undermines the beneficial interactions that occur among teacher, student, classroom, text(s), and response. Additional research on the classroom context in which response is produced and received, including research on alternative response methods and students’ perceptions of texts and writing tasks, would provide a more developed picture of what occurs in writing classrooms.

We need additional research that demonstrates the ideological challenges present in the teaching and learning of writing, including the role response plays in these processes. Such research should not be intended to celebrate such challenges but, instead, should be directed at painting a more complete picture of the contexts in which writing education occurs. The more knowledge we have of how writing occurs in specific classroom contexts, the better we are able to consider the uses and limitations of pedagogical best practices, including the revision of these practices. Fife and O’Neill’s call for a shift in response research practices highlights the limitations with a research agenda focused predominantly on the study of decontextualized texts. Seeing how powerful institutions are pushing more and more for the decontextualized text to become the privileged text in writing education, we would be well served to respond to such initiatives by illustrating the important role the “process labeled *teaching-learning*” plays in the development of writing abilities that extend beyond the creation of a singular text that satisfies an algorithm being used to assess this text’s quality (Bernier 292; italics

original). By focusing on the processes through which teachers and students interact, we can respond to the tradition of viewing texts decontextualized from the spaces in which writing occurs and, in doing so, highlight the human and interactive qualities necessary for writing improvement.

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APPENDICES

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The documents contained in these appendices include those discussed at length in the project. These documents are presented in their original form with a few modifications. First, all name identifiers have been removed, including the names of participants and peer reviewers. Second, I have removed any references in study texts that may announce Hill University's geographical location. Finally, I have traced over some of Jane's feedback to darken the font and increase readability. When a student's text was responded to in written or typed comments, I have replicated the relationship between text and comments to reflect how the paper was returned to the student.

APPENDIX A

COMPOSITION PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Composition Program Outcomes

The Outcomes Statements are intended to provide instructors and students with a sense of what kinds of knowledge students should be expected to acquire and demonstrate by the end of each course. The course outcomes, which were created through the participation of instructors in the Composition Program, are intended to create a sense of common purpose for the courses and clear expectations for the students. At the same time, the Outcomes have been written to maintain the flexibility in the program that allows individual instructors to continue the tradition of innovation and creativity in the classroom that is one of the great strengths of the University of “_____” Composition Program.

English 101

The focus of English 101 is recognizing and responding to different rhetorical situations and developing effective writing processes. A student in English 101 should expect to write and revise essays in multiple genres. Each essay should establish a clear purpose and sense of the writer’s presence and position. A student in English 101 should expect to write four to six papers during the term totaling about 18-20 pages of text.

Outcomes for English 101

Rhetorical Knowledge (responding appropriately to a variety of rhetorical situations)

By the end of English 101, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Focuses on a clear and consistent purpose
- Analyzes and responds to the needs of different audiences
- Employs a tone consistent with purpose and audience
- Uses a variety of genres or adapts genres to suit different audiences and purposes
- Chooses evidence and detail consistent with purpose and audience

Critical Reading and Thinking (analyzing rhetorical positioning of texts)

By the end of English 101, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Identifies the purpose(s) for which a given text may have been constructed

- Identifies the audience(s) for which a given text may have been constructed
- Demonstrates awareness of the role of genre in making meaning from a given text
- Summarizes argument and exposition of a text accurately
- Demonstrates understanding of knowledge and information as existing within a broader context
- Demonstrates awareness of multiple points of view

Processes

By the end of English 101, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Demonstrates through reflection awareness of their own writing processes across multiple drafts
- Demonstrates strategies of invention, drafting, and revision
- Demonstrates ability to critique own work and work of peers

Conventions

By the end of English 101, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Demonstrates knowledge of genre conventions in terms of organization, formatting, paragraphing, and tone
- Demonstrates control of such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling
- Uses conventions of structure and format appropriate to the rhetorical situation

English 102

The focus of English 102 is creating and answering questions through research and writing that draws upon written texts and other sources. A student in English 102 should expect to create research questions, find relevant information to answer those questions, and write longer essays that use the information to create and support a clearly defined position on the topic involved. A student in English 102 can expect to write four to six papers during the term, including at least one extended research essay, totaling about 20 to 25 pages of text.

Outcomes for English 102

Rhetorical Knowledge

By the end of English 102, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Demonstrates rhetorical purpose by creating a position relative to their research

- Analyzes the needs of the audience and the requirements of the assignment or task
- Demonstrates knowledge of genres employed in writing with research
- Provides supporting evidence from research sources
- Employs a tone consistent with purpose and audience

Critical Thinking and Reading

By the end of English 102, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Identifies rhetorical strategies and summarizes main ideas of outside sources
- Places sources in context with other research
- Represents and responds to multiple points of view in research

Processes

By the end of English 102, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Identifies a research question
- Develops a research strategy
- Identifies and evaluates sources
- Uses research sources to discover and focus a thesis

Conventions

By the end of English 102, students should demonstrate the ability to produce writing that

- Integrates sources with one another and with own analysis
- Demonstrates control over conventions of format and presentation for different purposes and different audiences
- Demonstrates an understanding of the purposes and conventions of documentation
- Demonstrates awareness of multiple methods of citation

APPENDIX B.1

INSTRUCTOR CONSENT FORM

Subject Informed Consent Document

The Context of Response: Investigating Intersections between Ideologies and Written Comments in Composition Classrooms

IRB assigned number: 09.0621

Investigator(s) name and address:

Dr. Bruce Horner (principal investigator)
Bingham Humanities Building
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292
b.horner@louisville.edu

Matthew L. Dowell (co-investigator)
Bingham Humanities Building
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292
mldowe01@louisville.edu

Possible Research Site:

Phone Numbers for Subjects to Call for Questions:

Bruce Horner – 502.852.2185
Matthew Dowell – 502.852.5919

Introduction and Background Information

You are invited to participate in a research study. The study is being conducted by Dr. Bruce Horner and Matthew Dowell, a graduate student in Rhetoric and Composition. The study is sponsored by the University of Louisville, Department of English. The study will take place at [REDACTED]. Approximately 12-15 subjects will be invited to participate.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the written comments teachers place on student papers and certain concepts shaping particular writing classrooms. The research subjects will be three English 102 instructors and 2-3 students from each instructor's class. These concepts being researched include the purposes teachers have for comments, how they construct comments, the purposes they see for writing classrooms, how they view student writing (and its

purposes), and how they define what a good teacher is. These concepts also include what students see the purpose of English 102 to be, how teacher comments reflect (or do not reflect) these purposes, how they bring in outside values and beliefs that complicate their reading of teacher comments, and the ways in which they make use of teacher comments. While my focus is on the relationship between written comments and the classroom context in which they occur, my purpose is to come to a better understanding of the written comments in relation to the classroom context.

Procedures

In this study, the student and instructor participants will be the subjects of semester-long classroom observation. This observation will be accompanied by three interviews and one research application in which you orally describe your reactions to teacher's written comments (if you are a student) or your process of composing comments (if you are a teacher). Each session, the three interviews and the speak-aloud application, will last approximately one hour. Four total sessions will be conducted. The interviews will be informal in nature which will allow for a more discussion-based conversation regarding the relationship between written comments and the composition classroom. Participants will make course documents such as student papers including comments and syllabi available to the researcher. These documents will be discussed in the interviews. You are encouraged to have informal conversations with the researcher outside the four official meetings. Such meetings will be facilitated by the participant. The research project and your involvement will run throughout the Spring 2010 semester.

Risks

There are no known risks associated with this study.

Benefits

The information collected may not benefit you directly, but may be helpful to others.

Confidentiality

Information collected from these research activities will be used to complete the co-investigator's dissertation. If any results from the study are published as presentations or in print, pseudonyms will be used. Participants will decide on the pseudonym they wish to be used. Also, the following steps will be used to protect your confidentiality:

- The removal of any identifying information from materials generated from this study including interview transcripts and documents provided to the researcher.

- The use of a pseudonym rather than your given name when referring to information you have provided. A pseudonym will also be used for any persons to whom you refer in any research procedures.

Confidentiality will not be maintained between teacher and student as teacher knowledge of student participants is necessary to study the larger classroom context. Participation will not influence assessment of the student on the part of the instructor. The instructor will have no knowledge of what is discussed between student subject and investigator.

Subjects will have the right and will be encouraged to review any writing that is generated from this study. Disagreement in presentation of the subjects will be resolved by both views being included in the published material.

All confidential research materials will be kept in a secure filing cabinet in the office of the co-investigator or on the co-investigator's password protected computer.

Voluntary Participation

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate, you may decline to participate in any specific portion of the research or decline to answer any specific questions in the interviews. You may withdraw from the study at any time. Withdrawing from the study will not have any adverse effects on assessment of your performance in English 102. Participation in the study will in no way positively influence your assessment in English 102.

Research Subject's Right, Questions, Concerns, and Complaints

If you have any concerns or complaints about the study or the study staff, you have three options.

You may contact the principal investigator at (502) 852-2185.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Human Subjects Protection Program Office at (502) 852-5188. You can discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject, in private, with a member of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). You may also call this number if you have other questions about the research, and you cannot reach the study doctor, or want to talk to someone else. The IRB is an independent committee made up of people from the University community, staff of the institutions, as well as people from the community not connected with these institutions. The IRB has reviewed this research study.

If you have concerns or complaints about the research or research staff and you do not wish to give your name, you may call 1-877-852-1167. You will be given the chance to talk about any questions, concerns or complaints in secret. This is a 24 hour hot line answered by people who do not work at the University of Louisville.

This paper tells you what will happen during the study if you choose to take part. Your signature means that this study has been discussed with you, that your questions have been answered, and that you will take part in the study. This informed consent document is not a contract. You are not giving up any legal rights by signing this informed consent document. You will be given a signed copy of this paper to keep for your records.

Signature of Subject/Legal Representation

Date Signed

Signature of Person Explaining the Consent Form

Date Signed

Signature of Investigator

Date Signed

Bruce Horner – 502.852.2185
Matthew Dowell – 502.852.5919

APPENDIX B.2

STUDENT CONSENT FORM

Subject Informed Consent Document

The Context of Response: Investigating Intersections between Ideologies and Written Comments in Composition Classrooms

IRB assigned number: 09.0621

Investigator(s) name and address:

Dr. Bruce Horner (principal investigator)
Bingham Humanities Building
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292
b.horner@louisville.edu

Matthew L. Dowell (co-investigator)
Bingham Humanities Building
University of Louisville
Louisville, KY 40292
mldowe01@louisville.edu

Possible Research Site:

Phone Numbers for Subjects to Call for Questions:

Bruce Horner – 502.852.2185
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Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between the written comments teachers place on student papers and certain concepts shaping particular writing classrooms. The research subjects will be three English 102 instructors and 2-3 students from each instructor's class. These concepts being researched include the purposes teachers have for comments, how they construct comments, the purposes they see for writing classrooms, how they view student writing (and its

purposes), and how they define what a good teacher is. These concepts also include what students see the purpose of English 102 to be, how teacher comments reflect (or do not reflect) these purposes, how they bring in outside values and beliefs that complicate their reading of teacher comments, and the ways in which they make use of teacher comments. While my focus is on the relationship between written comments and the classroom context in which they occur, my purpose is to come to a better understanding of the written comments in relation to the classroom context.

Procedures

In this study, the student and instructor participants will be the subjects of semester-long classroom observation. This observation will be accompanied by three interviews and one research application in which you orally describe your reactions to teacher's written comments (if you are a student) or your process of composing comments (if you are a teacher). Each session, the three interviews and the speak-aloud application, will last approximately one hour. Four total sessions will be conducted. The interviews will be informal in nature which will allow for a more discussion-based conversation regarding the relationship between written comments and the composition classroom. Participants will make course documents such as student papers including comments and syllabi available to the researcher. These documents will be discussed in the interviews. You are encouraged to have informal conversations with the researcher outside the four official meetings. Such meetings will be facilitated by the participant. The research project and your involvement will run throughout the Spring 2010 semester.

Risks

There are no known risks associated with this study.

Benefits

The information collected may not benefit you directly, but may be helpful to others.

Student subjects will be compensated ten dollars (\$10) per hour-long research session. With four such sessions planned, three interviews and one think-aloud protocol, students will be compensated a total of 40 dollars. Student participants will be compensated at the completion of the study. Student participants who withdraw before the completion of the study will be compensated for the hour-long research sessions completed before withdrawing.

Confidentiality

Information collected from these research activities will be used to complete the co-investigator's dissertation. If any results from the study are published as presentations or in print,

pseudonyms will be used. Participants will decide on the pseudonym they wish to be used. Also, the following steps will be used to protect your confidentiality:

- The removal of any identifying information from materials generated from this study including interview transcripts and documents provided to the researcher.
- The use of a pseudonym rather than your given name when referring to information you have provided. A pseudonym will also be used for any persons to whom you refer in any research procedures.

Confidentiality will not be maintained between teacher and student as teacher knowledge of student participants is necessary to study the larger classroom context. Participation will not influence assessment of the student on the part of the instructor. The instructor will have no knowledge of what is discussed between student subject and investigator.

Subjects will have the right and will be encouraged to review any writing that is generated from this study. Disagreement in presentation of the subjects will be resolved by both views being included in the published material.

All confidential research materials will be kept in a secure filing cabinet in the office of the co-investigator or on the co-investigator's password protected computer.

Voluntary Participation

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate, you may decline to participate in any specific portion of the research or decline to answer any specific questions in the interviews. You may withdraw from the study at any time. Withdrawing from the study will not have any adverse effects on assessment of your performance in English 102. Participation in the study will in no way positively influence your assessment in English 102. Student participants who withdraw before the completion of the study will be compensated for the hour-long research sessions completed before withdrawing.

Research Subject's Right, Questions, Concerns, and Complaints

If you have any concerns or complaints about the study or the study staff, you have three options.

You may contact the principal investigator at (502) 852-2185.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Human Subjects Protection Program Office at (502) 852-5188. You can discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject, in private, with a member of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). You may also call this number if you have other questions about the research, and you cannot reach the study doctor, or want to talk to someone else. The IRB is an independent committee made up of people from the

University community, staff of the institutions, as well as people from the community not connected with these institutions. The IRB has reviewed this research study.

If you have concerns or complaints about the research or research staff and you do not wish to give your name, you may call 1-877-852-1167. You will be given the chance to talk about any questions, concerns or complaints in secret. This is a 24 hour hot line answered by people who do not work at the University of Louisville.

This paper tells you what will happen during the study if you choose to take part. Your signature means that this study has been discussed with you, that your questions have been answered, and that you will take part in the study. This informed consent document is not a contract. You are not giving up any legal rights by signing this informed consent document. You will be given a signed copy of this paper to keep for your records.

Signature of Subject/Legal Representation

Date Signed

Signature of Person Explaining the Consent Form

Date Signed

Signature of Investigator

Date Signed

Bruce Horner – 502.852.2185
Matthew Dowell – 502.852.5919

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONS/TOPICS FOR FIRST STUDENT INTERVIEWS

Questions/Topics for First Interview with Student Participants

Background:

- Educational Background – Writing Background – Educational Influences
- How much do you like school? Success in it? How much like writing?
- How would you describe yourself as a writer?
- Purpose(s) of 101/102 – Your Purpose(s)/Institutional Purpose(s)
- What are your goals as a writer/student in English 102?
- What would you say are the university's goals for you in English 102?
- How important is it to you to be a good writer?
- 101 Experience – Expectations v Actual Experience
- Academically – Who do you feel responsible to?
- Your Role as a Student?
- Teacher's Role?

Current 102 Class:

- What were your expectations for this class when the semester started?
- What's your perspective on Fieldworking / Research / I-Search?
- What do you see as the goals of the course?
- Any goals you have for the class?
- What is your initial reaction to your instructor [insert name]?
- What do you like best about the class? What don't you like?
- What do you think of the portfolio approach? [if applicable]?

Commenting:

- Past experiences with commenting, including high school and Eng 101?
- Purposes of Commenting?
- Response's Role in Class? Teacher Role in Response? Student Role in Response?
- Usefulness:
 - What do useful comments focus on?
 - What form (on the paper) do they take?
 - What form, in terms of content, do they take?
 - What do you find not to be useful?
 - Usefulness versus Preference ("Like")
- How interested are you in reading the comments when you get them?
- So you get a paper back with comments, what do you do?
- How has your view of comments changed, if at all, since entering college? What caused the change? Comments in 101?
- Relationship between commenting and grading?

APPENDIX D.1

DAVID'S SECOND PAPER WITH BERTRAND'S END NOTE FEEDBACK

The Song of The Music Store

David " _____ "

iTunes may very well be the best thing to happen to e-commerce as well as to the people of our day. We want everything instantly and we want it to be of the best quality possible. With obtaining music, quick and efficient is a very possible thing thanks to the internet. All listeners have to do is go online, go to iTunes or Amazon.com, and purchase their music. People can even download a single song from online at a very inexpensive cost. However, what about local music stores? They seem forced to ask themselves why would anyone waste gas money to go to their local music store to purchase music, when obtaining music can be done faster at home?

Comment [e1]: I'm not sure what side of the argument you are taking

Sadly, it is this question that may very well cause many music stores to shut down their doors forever. Music store juggernaut " _____ " is home to various different types of music offered in a vinyl or CD format. They offer Jazz, Hip-Hop, Blues, Metal, Reggae, Techno, and more at " _____ ". They have posters of various musicians like John Mayer, Jimmy Hendrix, and Daft Punk. They have headphones and turntables (albeit a bit small) and CD racks and cases. They even have " _____ " T-shirts for the real " _____ " enthusiasts. However, while all of this is available at " _____ ", all of this is also available on the internet. Some of the things available at " _____ " can even be found a bit cheaper online.

On " _____ " of 2010, " _____ " owner " _____ " held a press conference to talk about a potential closing of the music store (" _____ " Bugle). Not enough people were buying music from the music store and, as a result, changes have to be made. Yes, there are the skateboarder guys that hangout at " _____ " once every few weeks. There are the dedicated John Lennon look-a-likes who believe that vinyl is the only way to go for music.

There are also the ordinary people who just got off from work who browse through the store every once and a while.

"_____", an employee at "_____" felt as though the mp3 (the digital form of music) were having an effect on music stores. "_____" feels that a very large reason for why the mp3 is popular is because it is "instant". However, I was surprised to hear that the vinyl, the music format looked upon as obsolete, is actually seeing an increase in sales. "_____" claims that the reason why the vinyl has risen in popularity is because "People still want that physical thing." Another reason for why vinyl is on the rise, is because vinyl's of today allow users to buy the physical media, obtain a download ticket, go online, and download their bought vinyl online so they can listen to their music on their mp3 players. Thus, the customer will be able to keep the physical media, but also listen to the music. The same thing was said about vinyl when talking to other "_____" customers. Something physical is something digital media cannot provide that "_____" is hoping drives their business out of a bad situation.

I decided to go back and visit "_____" after the announcement of its possible shutting down to see if the music store was still in a rut. To my surprise, I saw an unbelievable amount of customers in "_____" . I saw a few gothic people with a few strips of red dye in their hair browsing for music. I saw a few African Americans in heavy, solid colored coats and shaved heads browsing the hip-hop section. I saw people wearing overly big sweatshirts and gave off a surfer dude vibe. I even saw people wearing solid black and short hats browsing for posters of artists. In short, the experience was beautiful.

Why was the store flooded with customers this weekend? I overheard a conversation between two seemingly 32 year old men with large beards. The tallest one, wearing a black coat, glasses, and jeans said he feared the day music stores went out of business due to iTunes and

Amazon.com. He said that the reason why he was here was to help support these music stores so they won't go out of business, leaving people to only obtain music through the internet.

After the stunning outpour of individuals at "_____", "_____" posted on "_____.com that he was glad for their support, but that there are a majority of other businesses in the same predicament as he is in. Granted, bigger businesses such as Wal-Mart may be to blame for stores like "_____" going out of business (as Wal-Mart also offers music for purchase), online stores like iTunes and Amazon.com are sweeping the nation. Digital Music saw a 12 percent increase over last year (which was another good year for digital music) while the sales for CDs are still low (newsfactor). However, if there was to ever be a way to mix physical media with digital media, which is something the vinyl seems to be attempting to tap into, I'm hoping that music stores as well as online stores can co-exists.

References

http://www.newsfactor.com/story.xhtml?story_id=12200890XS06

[http://www.\[music store's name\].com/home.htm](http://www.[music store's name].com/home.htm)

The [Hill University] Newspaper.

Questions:

- 1) What do you feel should really be worked on in this piece?
- 2) Did you have problems understanding anything?
- 3) Did you get an image of what the store was like when it was being described?
- 4) What would you change to improve this piece?

[Katie]: I'm slightly confused by the purpose/main idea of the essay. You give your personal opinion at the end, but the beginning seems to introduce a factual paper about "_____". I like that you incorporated recent news, but I think it would be more effective if you used samples from tv/newspaper segments to back-up the facts you are saying so it doesn't seem like you're making it up (cite sources in the paper...). Some of the descriptions seem to be somewhat of a stereotype, so maybe you could word the paper differently so it doesn't sound like John Lennon and scene kids are all you're see at the store because that makes it seem like "of course they're closing, no one goes there." From the paper, I still don't know what the store looks like; I just know who's in it. But you evidently went into the store, asked around and observed carefully, which is excellently seen in the paper. Good job! ☺

[Sam]: I though your piece was pretty well written; however, I'm still not sure I know what side of the piece you are taking. Are you wanting online music to be eliminated or are you wanting them both o be able to exist. You mentioned in the last couple sentences :it would be nice if they could both exist," but I don't feel like that is a strong position. There are a great number of details that really complement your paper. I think you have done an excellent job of describing the different types of people that come into the store.

5) What do you feel should really be worked on in this piece?

6) Did you have problems understanding anything?

7) Did you get an image of what the store was like when it was being described?

8) What would you change to improve this piece?

[Hank]

I thought you really described everything very well you knew what you wanted to say and what you wanted to convey to the reader. You described how the music stores are going out of business and why that seems to be. I think in this piece you should maybe add a little bit of how you feel. Do you buy any music on the internet or are all your music of hard formats. I think that you should talk about how people get their music from iTunes also because of iPods and iPhones that need the iTunes app.

I didn't have any problem understanding anything that you wrote.

You described the music store good, maybe you can add if you found out if the customers will continue to go there for years so the store will not shut down or just for that weekend also were the people purchasing any of the items, it is one thing to be in the store but another to be a worthy customer buying items regularly.

I wouldn't change anything in this piece because it is very well written and I do believe that you conveyed your point well.

Reflective Memo on next page

1. The main goal of this piece was to say music stores should be able to co-exist with online music store, but the ease of downloading and ease of access makes this a problem.
2. One of my strong points here is describing some of the people that come to the music store. This was one of my main focuses as well considering it is really something I feel I need more improvement on.
3. This is a position based paper. I feel as though I've only given a little bit of what my position is (which is that music stores and online stores should co-exist, but music stores are struggling in this fast moving economy) . Once I nail this, I'll be gold!

Hi David:

I have read your memo and your peer's comments. I think all three of them gave you some good feedback, especially Hank and Katie. I see you added some of what Katie suggested but I wonder why you did not add even more description of the store, because there is a lot of stuff in there in terms of products and displays and posters, and just the way each listening station is set up. So maybe work on even thicker description. I think you have done a very good job of staying focused on this question of whether a music store can survive in today's downloading culture, but I also think you have taken on a very complex question that you should try to dig even deeper into if possible. How? One way would be to talk to some of those people you described in the store. I like that you gave some secondary sources on the store's recent developments but what about the

people? As a reader I was wanting to hear even more after you shared what you overhead. Next field trip maybe introduce yourself and ask these questions. Also, you give us some of your position when you say you decided to go back to the store and see how it was doing after the announcement. You shared that "the experience was beautiful" and gave some description of the various customers who were there, but could you go into more detail about why you thought it was beautiful? What within you caused you to see this as a beautiful experience? Is there anything you can share from your background, from your life that would help the reader to understand a little more why you made this comment? This will give us a better picture of why you position yourself this way. I think the paper at present gives you a solid platform to present your ideas about this question you have formed on the store's survival. I do not expect you to answer the question definitely but I would hope you explore it further as you go back in the field and revisit the paper between now and the next time you have time to do so. Let me know if you have any questions about this response.

Thank you for working/thinking hard!

Bertrand

ps

The process grade is 100/100. Please track all changes next time so I can see the revision work you do. As far as an imaginary grade, if this paper goes in the portfolio as is, it would receive a C+ because of its potential to share your thoughts on this question. To

get it to the A/B range please consider your peers' responses again and my responses, as well..

APPENDIX E.1
MARTIN'S FIRST PAPER

A Night at the Scene: "_____"
by "_____"
English 102
January 24, 2010

At around 5 pm on Friday the "_____", I logged into myspace to find out what time the show at "_____" was. I saw that the show was scheduled to start at 8 pm but wanted to get there ahead of time to set up my camera equipment and possibly get some interviews or location shots prior to the show. So after about thirty minutes rolled by, I grabbed my backpack, with my audio recorder, camera, and notebook inside, and headed out to my car. I had previously looked up the address to "_____" and logged the address into my my GPS. I had heard of the venue before, but hadn't been to any of the shows. Therefore, this really was a night of exploring new things for me. I headed over to Jimmy John's sandwich shop on "_____" Road to get my notebook lined up and a brief outline of how the field research would unfold throughout the evening.

Once outside of the shop and back in my car, I glanced over to my clock and it read 7 pm. After traveling through the many stoplights that line "_____" Road and making a left turn on "_____", I found myself at the curbside of the destination. "_____" screen-printing business as well as a venue and record label for bands. It served as the venue for three local bands: "_____", "_____", and "_____", as well as the first site for my field research on the indie music scene of "_____" . I was still pretty early so I grabbed some shots from across the street to capture some of the people arriving. There were two guys outside perched just right of the main entrance, smoking and chatting about the bands that were to begin playing in about half an hour. I crossed the street and began a discussion with the two fellas. After I told them about my project and that I am a student at the University of "_____", they informed me that they too are

in a band called " _____ " and would be playing at this same venue later this month. The taller of the two, had very skinny, bright yellow jeans on that complemented his almost neon purple shirt. I figured his attire must have some relationship with the type of music the two play. They handed me a pin with their band's logo on it before heading into the doors.

I walked into the building and a bit of anxiety hit me, as I was still unsure about my topic and the responses I would receive. I continued through and grabbed a few shots of the people at the bar and some of the band members selling albums. Before I headed any closer I noticed the card display just right of the door inside. I browsed through some of the cards. I saw some bands and some businesses. So I grabbed a few for future reference, but one really stood out to me: " _____ ". The card read in italics, "You believe in authority, I believe in myself." I figured that this was a a blog site and made a note to find out some more about this later.

As I continued into the room I glanced back to the buildings front and noticed the two skulls that were mirror images of each other on the main window. These images reminded me of an old Pepper album, were skulls very similar ran down the shoreline. I travelled further into the room and noticed the building was split into two very narrow halls. One was dedicated to the sales and the bar, and the other to the concert hall. The screen-printing shop must have been in the rear of the building. A few guys were at the bar small talking over a beer. It sounded like one group was discussing business matters, which surprised me such a setting. Another two guys seemed to be discussing the line up of bands that were to play, and how they had some far out relationship to each.

The first act up was "_____", and his performance was about as insipid as a cheese bagel. It was a solo experiment and I hoped it would remain in its temporary form, as his voice was very high pitched and his guitar chords seemed to ring out longer than they should have been aloud. The man playing was short and had a very long wiry beard. I thought to myself, "He must be having an Amish experiment as well". Before too long I closed up my tripod and headed into the bar hall again to capture some more of the crowd.

Once in the other side of the building, I headed over to the album sales table and met "_____", the stand up bassist for the band "_____". His rather large "_____" shirt hung low on his chest, but he was in no regard a large guy. He wore a royal blue baseball cap with a short bill nosed upwards. His small framed glasses gave him a bit of seriousness, but he was his personality was comical than this characteristic. He asked me what I was doing with a camera at the show and I told him about my fieldwork project for school. That led us into a conversation about the bands that made the line up for the evening. He told me that his band "_____" was about to go on, and that they consider themselves of the Americana genre of music and that the band to play after them, "_____" is more of a standard rock band. He advised me to stay for both shows to capture the audience of two different bands. As I was about to leave the table he grabbed my attention again and asked if me if I wanted an album. "_____" explained that the show was for the release of the album, which I already knew. With a desire to hear what the band sounded like in the studio, I purchased an the album entitled "_____". The album art work was clashed, but fit well with the title, as the package was most likely recycled material. It was brown with a rough texture and feature a girl with

long dark hair and dress which hit above her ankles reaching for a large leaf hanging from a tree.

After making the purchase I glanced back towards the bar and saw that it was busier than earlier. There was a crowd lined around the bar counter that continued up into the concert hall part of the building. Some were ordering beers and others got Ale's. The people were in groups and all chatting back and forth. People were still arriving at this point and they were greeted by their friends once they first paid the entry fee and got their hand stamped. I moved in closer to the bar and started talking to two guys near the front of the crowd.

One of the guys had a shaved head, although he came off very soft spoken, due to his rather large smile and peaceful persona. The other man also seemed laid back but spoke much less. We broke into a conversation, and they educated me on how you can turn a bicycle into a motorcycle that gets well over a hundred miles per gallon. As I was a bit skeptical, they informed me that this subject was actually their business. They said you could take any bike with a large opening in the middle, install a small motor and you can go over a hundred miles on one tank of gas.

After talking to the motor bike guys for a good while I headed back into the concert hall room because "_____" was setting up stage. The band started playing and the lead singer's voice carried throughout the room. The people in the crowd seemed a lot more into this band as opposed to the "_____" experiment. Conversations began to cease amongst the crowd as more listened. I figured that most of the people had arrived now and for only this and the next band. The lighting in the concert hall gave a

warm red glow to the musicians, which were a nice touch to the ruminative lyrics and prominent bass lines.

After "_____" played their line of songs, the crowd started to dwindle down as the audience moved toward the bar for drinks and to congregate again. "_____", the last band for the night began to set up stage, but the audience did not fully return. The band played a few songs that were full of distorted guitar riffs. It was probably good that the crowd had decreased for this band, because people started to move around quite a bit more due to the style of music.

When the band finished off the show I began to pack up my equipment and noticed people still congregating and discussing what their plans were after the show. As I walked out of the front door, I thought about my assumptions prior to arriving. I thought the audience would be more reclusive towards each other and especially me, but I was proven wrong. After studying the culture for a few hours I found that the indie music scene in "_____" actually serves as a place for people to meet. People gather to listen to music and discuss personal issues or even business. It is a relaxed setting and the events are usually at night, which makes it more accessible for people to meet others.

Reflection:

Professor " _____ ",

My first paper went fairly smooth, given I am new to field research. I considered myself a very observant person before writing this paper, but had no idea how much goes into taking notes and trying to record all the information seen and heard. Video really helped me out in this area, as I could focus and zoom in on the things and people that caught my attention. I had a difficult time talking to people at the show, because they were preoccupied with their friends and with the music being played. Most people were very helpful when I explained my project, but I didn't want to bombard everyone with questions. This lead me to observe the scenery and people reactions to things as the night unfolded. I actually really enjoyed this approach to the field research, but next time I would like to talk to more people. Overall, I enjoyed the whole experience and can't wait to get back into the scene.

Thank you,

Martin " _____ "

APPENDIX E.2

MARTIN'S SECOND PAPER WITH BERTRAND'S MARGINAL FEEDBACK

My Position on the Indie Music and Subculture
Analysis of the Indie Music Scene and Subculture
by Martin "_____"

My Position on the Indie Music and Subculture

Analysis of the Indie Music Scene and Subculture

As I continue to research the indie music scene in "_____", I bring myself to question why I started headed in this direction. A field researcher must be acknowledge why they were interested in the subject and what their limitations and advantages were doing research. Before I began my research, I had assumptions about the indie music subculture, I thought that the audience at the shows would not be very welcoming and that I would be ostracized at the back of the crowd with my notebook. I also thought that the crowd would be primality made up of young hipsters, kids with tight pants, converses and oversized toboggans. After conduction some field research over the past few weeks, I have found that my assumptions were wrong. I found that the subculture is made up of a diverse group of people and that they are very welcoming. Before I discuss the diversity of my subculture, I will first explain the contributing factors that lead me into the study of the indie Music Scene in "_____".

Comment [MSOffice1]: GOOD POSITIONING EFFORT BUT WHAT IN YOUR BACKGROUND CAUSED YOU TO HAVE THESE ASSUMPTIONS? THIS IS A SUBJECTIVE POSITION, AND NOT AN UNCOMMON ONE, BUT HOW DID THIS POSITION COME INTO BEING FOR YOU? THINKING ABOUT THIS COULD LEAD TO SOME INTERESTING WRITING.

First, I will discuss the fixed positions that affected my decision to go with my study and how played a role in my research. My being nineteen lead me into a study that I could conduct at night and that would result in meeting new people. Although I thought that the subculture would be resentful towards newcomers, I felt that I would meet some people out of it. I came from a small town and had not met all that many people down in the "_____" area yet, and thought it would be a great way to meet new people. Once conducting the research, I found that it was easier being young and able to talk to people around my age. Also being a male affected my research, because I honestly

Comment [MSOffice2]: WHY?

Comment [MSOffice3]: WHY DID OYU WANT TO MEET NEW PEOPLE? TIRED OF YOUR OLD FRIENDS? I AMNOT BEING A SMARTASS, BUT I AM DEMONSTRATING HOW A RADER WILL THINK WHAT THEY WILL IF THE WRITER DOES NOT ELABORATE TO GUIDE THEIR THINKING SOME.

Comment [MSOffice4]: OK BUT NOT ALL MALES WANT TO MEET THE OPPOSITE GENDER SO YOU MAY WANT TO POSITION YOUR SEXUAL ORIENTATION, TOO.

My Position on the Indie Music and Subculture

Analysis of the Indie Music Scene and Subculture

thought I could meet girls out of it. I figured I would go to shows and given my circumstances have to talk to girls, which was certainly a plus.

Comment [MSOffice5]: THIS KIND OF HONESTY HELPS BUILD A CREDIBLE ETHOS.

Being from a small town, I had never experienced a vast amount of local bands and would only venture out to see the large signed bands. I figured early on that there was a huge difference between the large band's and indie subcultures. I made the assumption that the indie subculture would not be diverse based on what I saw at these larger shows and from what I heard from people. I also was not much of a music pioneer, as some would call it. Basically, I would only listen to what was on the radio or on TV and not search much for music that I really liked. This changed recently when I moved to "_____" and met friends that write for the local music blogs, "_____.com" and "_____.com". Seeing these guys write for hours about bands and shows for no pay indicated to me that I was missing out on something and some research needed to be done.

Comment [MSOffice6]: WHAT IS A MUSIC PIONEER AND WHO ARE THE "SOME" WHO WOULD USE THE PHRASE?

Also having started a video production company recently, I have been working with local band and creating music videos. Being a person who like to make quality products, i felt it was beneficial to me and my clients to research more about the bands and the subculture that surrounds them. During my research I started to observe the bands movements onstage and the way they presented themselves as well as their audience. This overall led to better pitching ideas to the bands.

Comment [MSOffice7]: REALLY? HOW DID THIS ATTITUDE DEVELOP?

My Position on the Indie Music and Subculture

Analysis of the Indie Music Scene and Subculture

After conducting research I found that the subculture is welcoming. I have gotten the chance to talk to many people and hear a great deal of odd stories. I have talked to guys that sell motorized bicycles to the bassist of a band about doing a music video. The people at the local shows are a diverse people; some are businessmen and some are parents with their kids. I now research for bands and attend shows on a weekly basis.

In conclusion, my assumptions on the indie music scene in Louisville were wrong and that I should have been more open minded to begin with. I have also learned that there are some major influences that fuel our assumptions and that before any valid field research is done they should be acknowledged. I will continue to get more research throughout the next couple of months so I can obtain a more rounded perception on the subculture of my choice.

Comment [MSOffice8]: THIS COULD USE SOME FIELD WORK TO SUBSTANTIATE THE CLAIM.

Works Cited:

Comment [MSOffice9]: YOU LIST THESE SOURCES BUT WHERE DO YOU INCORPORATE THEM IN THE PAPER? JUST MENTIONING THEM IS NOT USING THE SOURCES TO HELP YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR FIELD WORK.

MARTIN- THIS PAPER HAS A LOT OF POTENTIAL TO PRESENT YOUR EMERGENCE AS A RESEARCHER IN THE FIELD OF INDIE MUSIC. HAVE YOU EVER READ THE BOOK "PLEASE KILL ME"? YOU SHOULD. AT PRESENT THE PAPER IS NOT VERY DEVELOPED EXCEPT AS A FRAMEWORK ON WHICH YOU COULD AND HOPEFULLY WILL CONTINUE TO BUILD YOUR THINKING ABOUT THE CULTURE AND ABOUT YOUR SHIFTING POSITIONS IN REACTION TO IT. PROCESS - BASED ON THE PEER COMMENT, YOU MUST NOT HAVE HAD MUCH OF A ROUGH DRAFT, THERE ARE NO TRACKED CHANGES, AND YOU HAVE NO REFLECTIVE MEMO. 50/100
IMAGINARY GRADE - D BECAUSE OF ITS UNDER-DEVELOPED NATURE. THERE IS PLENTY OF TIME TO REVISE THIS BY THE PORTFOLIO.

"_____", [Local music blog]. (2010): n. pag. Web. 22 Feb 2010.
<http://www._____.com>.

"_____", [Local music blog]. (2010): n. pag. Web. 22 Feb 2010.
<http://_____.wordpress.com/>.

Peer Reviews:

[Student Initials #1]

- (1) a not at
- (2) Give the specific type of camera. Example: Canon R240 HD (whatever model you have)
- (3) The last sentence was funny. I like how you pulled your personality in. This tells the reader a little about you as a person which is interesting to see in the research paper.

[Student Initials #2]

(1) There's not much I have to say (it being a short paragraph and you're doing a video) besides that it is pretty good, after this you'll need to describe the event which I know you know.

Comment [MSOffice10]: THIS WAS THE LENGTH OF THE DRAFT? WHO ARE [SI #1] AND [SN#2]?

APPENDIX F.1

MEGAN'S FIRST PAPER

Megan "_____"

January 24, 2010

English 102-"_"

The Boon and the Bane of Assisted Living Centers

It was 3:00 in the afternoon on January "____", 2010. The weather was blustery, with little rain drops being misted on my face. I was running late on my 1st session as a student observer at "____", a senior assisted living center located in a quiet suburban area on "____" Road.

During the drive to my respective destination, I started to reminisce the very first time I stepped foot inside "____" as a volunteer, which was on Christmas Eve of 2008. I remembered how scared I was by the external appearance of that place. It looked like a cross between a very old ranch house and a funeral home. The monochromatic color scheme of the landscape was dull and somewhat depressing. To top it off, the color of the building reminded me of old, yellowed paper. Bottom-line, I wasn't tempted to step in to that place, although my commitment to volunteering forced me to.

As I hurried inside the nursing home, everything remained the same as I saw it the first time I first saw it-I visited "____". Inside, there is a large foyer, which has a welcome sign, and comfy chairs. At the push of a button, the doors open, where you'll find the pleasant reception staff to your right. As you progress further in, you have a living room space, with sofas, love seats, and a LCD TV. Most of the residents either sit and watch TV or have a decent social hour in this room.

Across the living room is the dining hall, which has a piano and a rack of magazines. Adjacent to the dining hall is a beauty parlor, where the female residents can get manicures, pedicures, and hair treatments. The space before the eating area divides "____" into two wings, which have all the rooms where the residents reside. There are nurse receptionists at both ends of the wings.

Normally, whenever I would come here to volunteer, I communicated with a lady by the name of "____". She is wonderful woman, and she is one of the main volunteering coordinators. "____" usually assigns me the tasks that I have to complete within my allotted time for volunteering. However, today, there was a different woman taking care of the volunteering assignments. Initially confused (having never seen this lady before) I asked her where "____" was. This woman, who had an ~~indifferent~~ ~~uninterested~~ demeanor, replied to me, "Sshe is off today; I am currently running all the shifts. What is your name?" I introduced myself to her, and shook hands. "I am "____". What brings you here today?" I explained that I was a regular volunteer; however, the reason for this visit was to learn more about life in a nursing home. She

Comment [L1]: I hope this introduction is an effective opening to my essay?

I like the word "blustery". I've never heard it before. I like the title too.

I like the introduction...It sets the tone for the next paragraph and gives the reader a good mental picture. -Student #1

Comment [L2]: Do you think these are effective descriptions for the interior of "____"? Or should I add more detail?

You gave a good amount of detail. A little more wouldn't hurt. The first highlighted sentence in this section sounds a little funny to me. Maybe it should be "everything remained the same as when I saw it."? Capitalize "she" in the paragraph below.

The detail is good but may be a little much. I think that you do need to provide information about what it looks like inside but maybe a picture would be a better way to put the reader in the environment. I got a little confused trying to piece together where everything was. -Student #1

allowed me to shadow her for a good 30 minutes before she decided to use me for help. It was a busy Saturday afternoon, and the staff workers were stressed-out, so I won't blame her for jumping at the opportunity. In fact, she assigned me a rather simple job, which was helping one of the residents play Bingo.

Amused at the given task, I happily consented (since it required no physical labor from my part). However, I revoked the contentment as soon as I realized that the lady I was helping (I have kept her name withheld for this particular reason) was a very competitive woman who loved to win at any game. She had a record for winning the most bingo games played at "_____". Sadly, when I went to help her, she was not winning a single game. This not only made me nervous (fear that I was unlucky for her winning strike), but she was getting slightly infuriated with me in not helping her win any game. Sadly, bingo is one of those games which really depend on the odds of receiving a specific number, and coincidentally, my assistance turned out to be quite disastrous! As a matter of fact, she was ~~giving me these~~ ~~gave me~~ dirty looks and started muttering phrases under her breath. It's a good thing I don't have sharp hearing, because I wouldn't want to know what she was really saying.

On my way back home, I was reflecting on my first day as a student observer, and I have learned quite a few things about myself. I realized how much patience I have developed over the years, since I was able to efficiently tolerate the elder woman's anger of not winning a single Bingo game. Consequently, a fear of old people has been created within my conscience. While this may sound weird, and slightly irrational, I will admit that when the elderly lose their temper, it can be very difficult and intimidating to control them.

On day two of my observing at "_____", I decided to start making mental notes about this nursing home at first glance. I don't necessarily mean that I will start describing the internal and external appearance of "_____" (I think I've already accomplished that in the beginning), but rather, I'd like to shed some light on the people of "_____"; specifically, the residents and staff.

Most of the residents in this nursing home appear to be very sad, lonely, and depressed. "Please take me home and "I don't want to be in here" are phrases that I've heard quite often from the mouths of the occupants. It sincerely tugs at my heartstrings to see their devastation, so I go and give them a nice long hug and gently stroke their hair and hands. I also try and remind them that they have people who love them wholly.

About 80% of the residents are wheel-chair bound, and roughly the remainder 20% of the people can walk with either the assistance of a walker or a cane. Some of the tenants are diabetic, and they feel somewhat annoyed when they cannot enjoy the same foods that their non-diabetic counterparts can. I have a slightly humorous story about one particular diabetic resident when I was on duty as a volunteer. It was exactly a month back, on Christmas Eve of 2009. I was given the task of serving two types of holiday cake. The chocolate fudge cake was for the non-

Comment [L3]: Is this a good starter for this paragraph?

This is a good way to open this paragraph. I was trying to think of another way you could word it or open the paragraph but this seems appropriate. --Student #1

Comment [L4]: I'm not exactly sure if my wording or phrasing of this paragraph is good. Did all this confuse you after reading it?

It didn't confuse me.

Comment [L5]: Give me your honest opinion about this paragraph. Does it sound too "elementary"?

You don't always have to use that awesome vocabulary to make a decent paragraph. You still threw some good words in and it got the point across.

Quotation marks on the end of the first phrase in the paragraph to the side.

This is fine. There are only so many ways you can describe things and to vary the complexity of that is a good thing. It keeps the reader interested. --Student #1

Comment [L6]: This is not an actual statistic, but rather, an estimate of the people who are wheel-chair bound vs. people who can walk. Is that okay for this paper?

I think this is fine. You are the observed so your information must be trusted. I don't know if it would be a good idea to state that this is just an estimate made from your observations? Just a thought. --Student #1

diabetics, and the fruit-cake was for the diabetics. Anyway, this particular diabetic hated the food that was always offered to her, so she became crafty and would silently gravitate towards the non-diabetic side of the dining hall. She would also remove her tightly fastened diabetic bracelet in order to fool naïve volunteers (like myself) about her actual condition. As I was serving her the chocolate cake, one of the nurses came by and shrieked out loud "W~~w~~hat are you doing? Giving her that cake will kill her, and we'll all be in trouble!" Startled, I flung the cake on to the floor, and that lady got very angry with me. Luckily, a couple of nurses came by and quickly took her back to her room. I felt terribly embarrassed at that time, but now that I look back, I can't help but see the hilarity in ~~this absurd~~that absurd situation.

Comment [L7]: What do you think about the word choice for this sentence?

Capitalize "what" and the word "flung" gives a sense of urgency so it's appropriate.

Very good. -Student #1

Speaking of absurdity, I still remember the odd and funny looks that I received from all the nurses working that day. They were not hostile or mean, just baffled at what had just happened. One of the nurses then came by to pacify me, stating "She's a different case altogether. The weird thing is that she does that every time she sees a new volunteer serving food. Sometimes, we wonder what is up with the medications she takes, and whether those drugs have anything to do with her delirious and peculiar behavior."

While I'm still on the topic of people at "_____", I have noticed that the nurses have a different story altogether. Listening to what the nurse told me, I became very interested in learning more about these employees, particularly because they experience everything that goes on in a nursing home first hand. Hence, I started to observe them carefully (more than I did with the residents).

Comment [L8]: Is this an effective transition, from the residents to the employees?

It's a good transition, but it could be improved. I don't really know how. I always got counted off on my transitions.

It needs improvement. You can definitely make it better by just not jumping from your embarrassment to the nurses opinion. Maybe relate how the nurses handled the situation to their thoughts about their job, etc. -Student #1

From what I have compiled from my observations, Most of the nurses them appear to be very disgruntled and annoyed with their jobs. A good number of the nurses are chain smokers, and almost all of them communicate with the residents or visitors with a hint of indifference. Seeing this apparent emotional disparity (pain vs. apathy), I couldn't help but interview one of the nurses that day, and I subsequently found out how much these employees wanted to be heard. This particular staff member requested for their name and gender to be withheld, but admitted how much they disliked working here. This person complained about the long hours, and the difficulty of the residents, especially when these individuals threw an emotional tantrum. The nurse went on to saying that "T~~h~~e media keeps hounding us nurses about how we do a bad job taking care of the elderly, but all the stupid media does is point fingers and accuse. I'd like to see one of their staff workers handle my job. Then they'll realize why we are so upset, but despite all that, we still attempt to take decent care of the elderly." Hearing all this instantly grew my respect for the nurses. It hurt me very deeply to see how much emotional abuse these employees were forced to tolerate; they deserve so much better.

Comment [L9]: In my view, I didn't want to cut this quote short, because it had substantial information. What do you think? Should I shorten it or keep it at this length?

Capitalize "the". I like the full quote. I'd rather read the full quote rather than one that's cut up and shortened and doesn't really flow.

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As I went back home that day, I thought about many things involving care-taking, such as the joy as well as the difficulty. I was able to relate to the nurses in terms of nursing an elderly person; throughout my middle school and freshman year of high school, I was given numerous opportunities to look after my very frail grandmother. She was a joy to be around when she got

what she wanted. At the same time, if her needs weren't met promptly, she would become cranky. The point of the matter is that I've managed to develop a somewhat of a special connection with the nurses of "_____", and in my successive field-working and note-taking, I hope to do closer observations and learn more about these individuals.

Dear Bertrand,

I've finally completed my first draft of my field-work at "_____", and while I found the experience quite enjoyable, I've had some trouble in organizing all my notes, thoughts, and observations into coherent paragraphs that wouldn't sound "choppy" when it was read. I've tried my best in order to make sure that I don't jump around from idea to idea, and I've also attempted to use better word choice/vocabulary while constructing my sentences, primarily so that the reader stays interested. However, doing all this has somewhat given me a brain drain, and I had to struggle to come up with other topics to talk about.

I hope that on the day of the conference, I can discuss all these issues with you, because from the syllabus, I see that the deadline for submission of paper 2 is not very far, and I don't want to be in the same situation. I would also like to get your feedback on how I can improve my essay, in terms of sentence structure, word choice, coherence, and proper grammar. I am confused about one thing, and I hope to clear that out on the day of the conference, but the papers that we are going to be writing throughout the semester, are we going to put them all together in a portfolio, or will we use all these papers to write a final paper? Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Megan "_____"

APPENDIX F.2

Megan's Second Paper With Bertrand's End Note Feedback

February 17, 2010

English 102-“ ”

The Boon and The Bane of Assisted Living Centers Continued...

On my previous paper, I mentioned how I wanted to learn more about the nurses that worked at “ ”, and how they were given the stigma of being mindless elderly abusers by the powerful media. Much to my dismay, I wasn't able to get as much information as I needed to satisfy my research, since the horrible weather conditions prevented me from going as often to my field-working site. However, I did manage to obtain a few substantial details that hopefully I can build off my limited research.

February “ ”, 2010 was the allotted day of my second phase of research and note taking. I had planned on interviewing a few nurses and learning about their stories as to what they had to say regarding their jobs, and in addition, I wanted to learn more about their lives. Since I still have not formally begun my interviewing process, I figured it may be a good idea to map out the objectives/goals that I wished to accomplish from this new task:

- Why these nurses work here?
- Why they chose “ ” for Employment?
- What they liked about their job?
- What they didn't like about their job?
- What they thought of the other staff and residents at “ ”.

The next day, I headed down to “ ” to interview my first nurse. The only thing that I was allowed to disclose of this person was the gender; this subject is male. Anyway, I asked him the questions that I listed above, and I was quite delighted to hear his responses. When asked about what he liked about his job, he said that it was very flexible, and that “it pays well; takes care of my bills and what not at least.” Later, I asked him about what he didn't like, or what he could change about his job, if there was anything that stuck out to him on that regard. He admitted that he found his job quite stressful, because “dealing with the elderly has to be done carefully or else you can get sued for abuse or neglect.”

Whenever I came to “ ” to volunteer, I'd see this particular nurse also take a number of breaks to go out for a quick smoke. This seemed like a good observation for creating a question related to job stress, so I asked him if his job has caused him to take up any behaviors that helped him de-stress. He was puzzled at my question initially, and since I couldn't find a better way to phrase it, I asked him point-blank whether his need for smoking had anything to do with his job stress. Luckily, he didn't seem to mind or be offended by that question, since he responded quite nicely. He told me that “I'm single and I have no family, so it gives me more

Comment [11]: Is this an effective introduction, or should I try and improve it?

I think writing is a strong point of yours. I think this is a very good background and start to your second piece. Remember that your second paper has to be from 1500 to 2000 words though. I don't know if you're finished with the piece though. If you are, you might want to consider adding in a stronger conclusion that ties everything together and sums things up.

-I think you could maybe put even more of your perspective into it or you could give more facts. SI

Comment [12]: Is it okay for me to list my interview questions, or should they be in paragraph form?

That's a good strategy. In my first paper, I listed the responsibilities of a teacher and student. Steve said that it's a good idea to include visuals. I guess he considers this a visual, but I'm sure it's actually encouraged to use other methods besides writing to get your point across.

-I get a much better perspective into what you are researching with the questions so I would keep them. SI

freedom to do what I want. But I see where you are coming from, and yes, I'll be honest, my job can be tedious, so a quick smoke helps me refocus."

Reflecting back on day one of this new task, I've been feeling very excited and eager to interviewing my subjects about their jobs and all. So far, this first day proved to be quite valuable and helpful in my research, and I have been looking forward to accruing more information about these nurses. It's almost like they have their own separate world, one of which the media tends to negatively portray. Anyway, I realized that some of my interview questions can be taken as somewhat controversial, since I ask my subjects in a direct way as to what they like/dislike about their jobs. Many people may not feel so comfortable in being asked questions like these, especially with the recent job-crises and the failing economy; no one would want to put their jobs at risk. So I've decided that I'll try and ameliorate my questions where it is more "politically correct."

On a personal note, I'd have a lot of respect also like to give kudos to anyone towards people who has have the capability of tolerating the elderly and their demands. As much as I love and respect the elderly, and feel that they deserve every right to be "spoiled," dealing with them on a daily basis can be quite a hassle.

February " ", 2010, I begin my second interview. This person didn't want their identity or gender to be revealed. Anyway, I asked the nurse the same questions, what they liked about their job, what they could change about their job if given the option, why they chose " " for employment, and what they thought about the residents and staff. This nurse was very honest with me; they didn't really enjoy their job, partly because the families of the residents would hound down on this particular employee for not wanting to communicate with the elderly as much as the other nurses. The reason behind this nurse's lack of interest in exceeding the time spent with the residents was primarily due to the fact that this employee was under a lot of stress with family issues, and didn't want to "vent" out that frustration on the innocent elderly.

I then progressed to asking what this nurse liked about their job. This person loved the flexibility and the pay from working at " ". This employee is a single parent of three, and they admitted that it could become "increasingly difficult to balance a job and extra-curricular activities for three kids." This nurse went on to tell me that where they were employed previously, they weren't given as much of a leeway for family emergencies, etc. However, coming to " " changed all that, and currently, this nurse's time is much more manageable, and they can effectively juggle a job and three kids.

Overall, this nurse had no complaints about the staff or residents, and liked their job for the most part. It only became "annoying" (so to speak) when the families of the residents would "butt in too often when their relatives were under my gentle care."

Comment [13]: From those two sentences, do you think that was an effective transition, or do you think it needs improvement?
-I like how you transitioned but it seems very personal and not needed. Maybe talk about a respect for the staff instead of kudos. Or you could elaborate again on what they have to go through. But I like this part because my grandfather is in a nursing home and I have seen similar behaviors. SI

Comment [14]: Is this a good topic sentence?

I like the straight-to-the-point approach. That's what I use most of the time.

Comment [15]: Since I wasn't allowed to disclose the name or gender of the nurse, I couldn't think of a good pronoun to use in order to refer to this nurse. Reading this paragraph, were my sentences and/or word choice somewhat confusing or misleading?

I was not confused at all when I read it. Using employee and nurse really made it clear. I think it is very concise and tells a good story. SI

Reflecting back on my second interview, I find it highly remarkable when I learn about individuals who manage a job and a family single-handedly. I have a lot of respect for these people and I truly sympathize with them. I know for a fact that I wouldn't be able to handle the stress associated with striking a fine balance between a job and housework. In all honesty, I really do wonder how people, such as this particular nurse that I just interviewed, manage to make ends meet with such struggles befalling them.

Coming back to my second interviewee, I was happy to know that this nurse was happy with their job, despite the fact that they were slightly unhappy with the residents' family members for being "bothersome." Throughout the entirety of my interview with this nurse, they seemed to have a very jovial demeanor.

February " ", 2010 was the day I interviewed my third nurse. This nurse didn't want to reveal her name. I followed through with the same routine that I had established with the other nurses, and while I received somewhat similar answers, this person's responses were quite interesting. From this point forward, I'll present the question and answers so that the conversations make more sense:

Q: What do you like about " " ?

A: "I love the staff and the residents a whole lot! Everyone is so nice and helpful, and the residents are a real pleasure!"

Q: That's great that you enjoy your job; however, is there anything you'd like to change about your job, if you had the opportunity to?

A: "Well, as much as I love my job, if I could change one aspect, I want it to be a little less stressful. I will admit this much that on certain days, if we are short on volunteers, the task given to us can become quite tedious. However, I probably shouldn't be complaining because every job has their stressors."

Q: You weren't complaining, so don't worry about that. Can you tell me some aspects of your job that make it somewhat stressful?

A: "All I'll say is that sometimes it becomes slightly difficult when you cannot meet or understand the demands of the elderly residents. Sometimes, these people get very homesick, and they long to be with their families. Those are the times when it becomes increasingly difficult for us nurses to pacify them."

When I went home later that afternoon, I did a lot of thinking and based on the responses that I've received from the nurses that I've interviewed, none of them seemed to be unhappy with their jobs, which is very pleasing. In fact, most of the nurses loved their occupation and normally have a fun time working with the residents. Of course, I've heard a few minor

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complaints from the interviewees here and there, but then again, everyone has something about his/her jobs that he/she may not be fond of.

Coming back to my interviewee, this nurse, in particular, really intrigued me, because whenever I used to volunteer at "_____", I'd notice how seemingly nervous and stressed she was. She was also a compulsive smoker, so it made me wonder whether she (and sometimes the other nurses at "____") really liked her job or not. Then again, I tend to over think a lot of what I observe, so she may enjoy her job but smoke to alleviate other stressors in her life. I'll never know.

February "____", 2010, I interviewed my fourth nurse, who is male. Here are the questions and answers to the interview:

Q: What do you like a lot about your job as a Nurse at "_____?"

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A: "I really love the flexibility that "_____" offers. Since we have such a large and generous staff, if one of us needs a day off due to family emergencies and/or other stressful situations, the managers are very empathetic and helpful. The added bonus is that "_____" pays pretty well, especially since I'm not married and don't have a lot of family commitment. At the same time, I guess my marital status can be seen as a downside since I end up covering a lot of shifts for other people."

Q: I can see how that can be a bit tedious for you. Building off from your response, what are some things that you would like to change about your job, if you could?

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A: "If there is one thing I could change about my job, I would love to reduce the stress intensity that is tied with this job. "_____" is a great place to work, but the one thing that kind of tugs at my heartstrings is dealing with the pressures of meeting the demands of the elderly, which can be a difficult process. When you can't understand what a resident wants or needs, and when he/she starts throwing a 'tantrum,' it becomes our responsibility to pacify them, and that can take a while (in some cases, a few light doses of tranquilizers). That's about the only thing I'd like to change about my job."

After the short interview, I went home and did my usual reflection on what I have learned from my field-working research for that day. I have learned several things about myself and about these individuals.

First, I don't think I can ever become a nurse at a nursing home, just because I don't have the calm demeanor that all these other nurses have in order to care for the elderly; hats off to these employees.

Second, the conclusions that I can draw from all these responses is that "_____" is not a bad place to work, which is something that I had initially assumed. This reason for this assumption was purely biased. From what I've seen in the media and from my personal

experience with the elderly, I came up with an ideal (a very wrong one, might I add) that the elderly only nag and complain, and their demands can never be met because they aren't happy with whatever they receive.

Third, I am picking up on a common theme among the nurses of "_____", and it all revolves around job stress and difficulty dealing with the elderly. How these individuals handle it is really up to their discretion, however, I know very well that these employees cannot vent out their frustration to the residents, for fear of being fired, sued, or even arrested.

Overall, I've learned quite a lot about these nurses, and I hope that I can help remove the common stigma that these employees (not necessarily those specifically at "_____", but nurses in general) are strapped with, due to a strong media influence/bias.

My next goals for my field-working research is to be able to reach out to more of the staff members at "_____", such as the volunteer coordinators, the custodial people, and the cooks; I want to learn about what they have to say about their jobs.

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Reflection:

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I had somewhat trouble writing this paper, mainly because I had a hard time obtaining enough notes (to my liking at least) to have a lot to discuss in my paper. Also, I realized that in this paper, my transitions were probably not as effective as they were in my first paper; I just wrote whatever was on my notes for paper 2. I was pleased however, that despite the shortened length of my field-notes, I was able to meet the word count requirements, which was between 1500 and 2000 words.

If there are a few things I can change about my paper, I'd like to double check and makes sure that my sentence structure and grammar are all in check with this paper (meaning that my sentences and thought-processes within these paragraphs make perfect sense to the reader without sound colloquial). Second, I'd like to improve my transitions (this is one of my major issues with writing papers – letting ideas flow properly). Third, I'd want to make my conclusion a lot stronger than what it probably is right now. Conclusions are another thing which is hard for me to write, since it requires you to wrap up the paper via reiterating the main points.

Overall however, I am quite pleased with the progress of my second paper, in spite of running into some issues.

Megan – Excellent field work. Excellent presentation of interviews. Excellent reflection about what it all means. As far as your concerns about sentence structure and language, I think the paper is very well-developed on both counts. If you think you have problems with transitions I would prefer to conference about that in class so you can point to specific places you considered troublesome.

The part of your paper that intrigues this reader the most is the when you write, "Third, I am picking up on a common theme among the nurses of "_____", and it all revolves around job stress and difficulty dealing with the elderly. How these individuals handle it is really up to their discretion, however, I know very well that these employees cannot vent out their frustration to the residents, for fear of being fired, sued, or even arrested." You have located a tension within the culture and it seems to surprise you and disturb you. I think your conclusion could "think " about this a lot more than presently. What questions can you raise about this tension? But that is your call to make. I also wonder about your lack of secondary sources. If you explained to me already, I apologize for not remembering. They are required for the paper, though. Excellent work in all other areas! Process: 100/100 Imaginary grade: B+ (if it presently had secondary sources) with potential for A+ . Let me know if you have any questions.

APPENDIX F.3

MEGAN'S THIRD PAPER

Megan “_____”

March 22, 2010

English 102-“_____”

The Boon and Bane of Nursing Homes: An Annotated Bibliography

Why are nurses and nursing homes, for that matter, stigmatized so harshly by the media? Why are nursing homes portrayed as potentially hazardous places for the elderly? Why do so many of our senior citizens feel reluctant in entrusting the remainder of their lives in the care of a complete stranger? These are questions which boggled my mind as I ventured out into the real world, trying to find an intriguing topic to research for my ethnographic fieldwork for my English 102 class.

As a youngster, I can recall how fascinated I was by the concept of nursing homes, partly because I've had experience with taking care of my grandmother in her fragile state (e.g. due to her osteoporosis, she couldn't do most things like she used to, such as bathing and clothing herself). I was too young at the time to actively help my grandmother, so my mother would help her with her daily needs. However, there came a point where my mother was having trouble keeping up with my grandmother's needs and demands, so my mother suggested we possibly consider either hiring a caretaker or place her in a nursing home, where my grandmother would be surrounded by trained staff who can attend to her every need. This eventually created some tension in our home, since my father was opposed to the idea of nursing homes. At the time, I could see where he was coming from; he was naturally concerned that his mother would be subject to abuse by impatient staff. It was from that point forward where I kept wondering why so many people are afraid to send their loved ones to nursing homes.

Much to my dismay, I neither had a lead, nor was I well-informed to where I could have started my field-working years ago, whereby I could have compiled a lot of information about nursing homes and nursing staff members. However, eight years later, the spark, which ignited my fascination with nursing homes, has returned, and now I will, all this will change as I actively explore the secret lives of nursing homes and nursing staff. The place that I have been visiting for my primary research (where I noted all my observations and later reflected on) was “_____” nursing home. This place was the perfect candidate for my field-working since it is close to where I live, and it is a place that I'm quite familiar with as I volunteer there on a regular basis. I spent most of my weekends at “_____”, standing by and observing the errands that the staff members had to fulfill.

The questions which helped me steer my research are those mentioned in the very beginning of this paper as well as:

- What kinds of background checks are employed when hiring a prospective nurse?

Comment [e1]: Is this an effective intro?

Yes ma'am it is, you state your research questions and give the reader insight into what you were thinking as the research process began.

Yes I really like this intro because you state your research questions right off the bat which as a result gets the reader thinking right away. --Student #1

Comment [e2]: Is the transition smooth, or is it a bit on the choppy side?

It is a bit choppy, I will say that, but for your purposes it works alright. It changes the direction of the paragraph to the present day without being super blatant about it.

I like the idea but it is a lot to follow because the sentence itself is a little choppy. The two ideas transition smoothly but maybe try and reword this sentence a little. --Student #1

- What are the specific protocols that nurses have to follow when dealing with a patient?
-
-
- There have been many reported cases of nurses abusing the elderly within the premises of nursing homes. What factors triggered or instigated the nurses to "give in" to such actions?
- Should we expect the elderly to be more empathetic and understanding of the issues that befall their caretakers? Or does the elderly have/deserve every right to be "spoiled" and "babied" like younger kids?

I later realized that my primary field-working research was not going to help me get the answers that I was looking for my questions. Hence, I decided to do a literature survey on my research by reaching out to the internet and compiling information from experts who dealt with such topics day in and day out. I found eight intriguing articles which have substantially helped me get a better understanding of my research topic:

- Chen, Chung-Kuang, Cecilia Lin, Shu-Hui Wang, and Tung-Hsu Hou. "A Study of Job Stress, Stress Coping Strategies, and Job Satisfaction for Nurses Working in Middle-level Hospital Operating Rooms." *A Study of Job Stress, Stress Coping Strategies, and Job Satisfaction for Nurses Working in Middle-level Hospital Operating Rooms* 17.3 (2009): 1-14. Ebsco Host. Web. 12 Mar. 2010.
<<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=aph&AN=48145520&site=ehost-live>>.

—This citation discusses the stressors that most nurses in hospital settings face, however, the research findings can be extrapolated to nursing homes and hospices. The authors of this journal article tell the audience that nurses are "the backbone of the medical system, and act as the first line of patient medical care." Nursing in general is a very stressful profession, due to the specializations required for properly handling emergency situations. Stress can mount on nurses due to large a work load, absence from coworkers, difficult family lives, demanding patients, and from acquired illnesses via sick patients.

- The authors of this article also explained the relationship between job satisfaction and stress with nurses, and found that the two categories are inversely correlated. Moreover, most of the nurses have adopted tactics which help them deal with such stressful situations constructively, rather than destructively. The example that was used to represent nurses at a very stressful level were the nurses who worked in the operating theatres, since these employees had to deal with circumstances where not only a person's life was on the line, but so was their job.

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Furthermore, the equipment that was used by such nurses called for accuracy and precision, hence the added tension of delivering correct results to the patient and his/her affiliates.

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- Jewkes R, Abrahams N, Mvo Z. "Why Do Nurses Abuse Patients? Reflections from South African Obstetric Services." National Institutes of Health. December 1998. 4 March 2010.

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This paper discussed how care for the elderly in nursing homes is often a neglected area for empirical research. It talks about how most employees tend to humiliate and abuse the elderly, instead of providing tender loving care. The authors did some research by doing a qualitative analysis on 103 "minimally structured in-depth individual interviews and four group discussions held with patients and staff in the services." Many of the elderly patients reported that they were abused almost on a daily basis. The study found that "the nurses were engaged in a continuous struggle to assert their professional and middle class identity and in the process deployed violence against patients as a means of creating social distance and maintaining fantasies of identity and power."

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- Foxall, Martha J., Lani Zimmerman, Roberta Standley, and Barbara B. Captain. "A Comparison of Frequency and Sources of Nursing Job Stress Perceived by Intensive Care, Hospice, and Medical-Surgical Nurses." *A Comparison of Frequency and Sources of Nursing Job Stress Perceived by Intensive Care, Hospice, and Medical-Surgical Nurses* 15 (1990): 577-84. Ebsco Host. Web. 12 Mar. 2010.
<<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=c8h&AN=1990114108&site=ehost-live>>.

In this journal article, the authors explored whether there were any similarities or differences between the stressors that came across ICU nurses, hospice nurses, and medical-surgical nurses. Furthermore, the researchers wanted to know whether there were any differences in the frequency of reported stress issues found in the aforementioned occupations. The resolution to this study was that if there were significant differences found with regards to stress and the different types of nursing employment, then nursing managers would be required to properly train nurses for the specific tasks handed to them, should such tumultuous situations arise while on the job.

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Upon detailed evaluation of this study, it was found that on the bare surface, most of the nurses in all three subfields reported stress dealing with issues such as patient care, doctor behavior towards nurses, patient and doctor demands, conflicts and unsettling situations among fellow

staff members, and overworking. However, literature survey by the authors suggested other cofactors. According to Anderson *et al* (1988), interpersonal relationships and communication were among the top-rated stressors that most ICU nurses faced, whereas Vincent and Coleman (1986) found that interpersonal conflicts were among the higher ranked stressors for medical-surgical nurses. Additional research found that environmental factors, such as noise level and available work space were another major stressor for medical-surgical nurses. Hospice nurses yet faced different stressors, theirs dealing with staff support and comforting the terminally ill during their last days on Earth. Although, further investigation revealed that most hospice nurses did not encounter as much stress compared to ICU nurses and medical-surgical nurses.

- Copp, Mary Ann B. "Drug Addiction Among Nurses: Confronting a Quiet Epidemic." *Modern Medicine*. 1 April 2009. 4 March 2010.

<<http://rn.modernmedicine.com/rnweb/article/articleDetail.jsp?id=592623&sk=&date=&pageID=4>>

This resource talks about the drug abuse that most nurses in hospital and nursing home settings face. It's a well organized article because it takes some interesting questions, such as "Have you ever worked with nurses you felt were addicted to drugs?" The article answers these questions very accurately, and provides lots of statistical information, which gives validity to the research/survey.

- Jennings, Bonnie M. "Chapter 26: Work Stress and Burnout Among Nurses: Role of the Work Environment and Working Conditions." *Chapter 26: Work Stress and Burnout Among Nurses: Role of the Work Environment and Working Conditions*. Web. 12 Mar. 2010. <http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/nursesdbk/docs/JenningsB_WECN.pdf>.

In this article, the author Bonnie Jennings discusses several factors that cause physicians to be stressed from their occupation (this research can be extended to nurses); however, what intrigued me the most was the evidence that supported the subheading "Gender and Family Obligations." A study was conducted between neonatal physicians (86 doctors) and pediatrician doctors (97 doctors) in order to find out the prevalence of burnout from work stress. The study found that while the overall burnout was similar between the two groups of doctors, there was a higher frequency of breaking under stress among the female doctors (79 percent) than the male doctors (62 percent).

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Comment [e3]: I'm not exactly sure of the format of the citations and the annotations. Do we put the full citation, and then annotate it, or do we just put the website, and talk about what helped us for our research?

The introduction to the annotations is not necessary. You simply cite the source and annotate it. The link provided by Bertrand was very helpful to me in annotating.

Look on Blackboard for the requirements for the introduction because you do need to include something about the sources you found. Also, the sample papers on Blackboard helped me get a better idea about how to write the annotations. But you need to put the full citation (include the website) and then annotate it. --Student #1

Formatted: English (U.S.)

Dear Bertrand,

Out of the papers that we have written in your class so far, this paper gave me the hardest time. I will have to really revise this paper well and resubmit it to you because what I've done is a very slipshod finish for this paper. Part of the reason I had difficulty with paper 3 was due to the extensive reading that had to be done, and I had trouble fitting in the appropriate timing for my literature survey while balancing out work load from other classes. In addition, there were a lot of family commitments that had to be made, and because of all these additional stressors, paper 3 went in the back burner, with much chagrin and dismay. I'm very disappointed with myself in terms of the progress of this particular paper, and I will jump on the opportunity to refine my research and hence my annotations. I don't think my current annotations are terrible, but there is some much needed improvement for all of them, and I will see to it that I am consistent with those corrections for this paper: my sincere apologies for the downhill progress of paper 3.

APPENDIX G.1

DEAN'S FIRST I-SEARCH PAPER WITH CONNIE'S COVER LETTER FEEDBACK

Eng 102

January 13, 2010

Part I

I have chosen to write about the different alternative sources of energy that we can use for our vehicles and for our energy needs in our homes. I chose this topic because I was used to be a mechanic and I have seen and come up with different sources of fuel other than gasoline and diesel fuel. For example, in theory, I have designed a low powered engine that can run off of nothing more than water and the Brazilians have been making ethanol from corn rather than oil for years now. I plan to go into detail on how Brazil does this as well as show you that there really are cars out there that run off of water instead of fuel and give reasons on why we do not have them in the market today. I also plan to show you alternate sources of energy that we use here in the United States.

I wanted to write about this topic because our oil and coal supply will run out at some point. On top of that nuclear power plants have a lot of waste that is highly dangerous and must be monitored at all times. If we as a civilization are to survive the long haul we must find new ways to sustain our lust for power and transportation.

Part II

The first source I found was a method on how to transform your ordinary gas engine car to run on nothing more than water. This source tells me that it is possible to move away from oil and stop relying on a non renewable resource that damages our planet and move to a source that will help save it. This web site gives detailed plans on how to accomplish this, from written instructions to actual blue prints that have been proven to work in a staged environment. This is done by breaking down water into hydrogen and oxygen. When this is done your vehicle can run off of hydrogen and the oxygen gets put back into the atmosphere helping replenish the oxygen content in the air. This would not only stop our need for fossil fuels but it would help reverse the effect we have had on the environment (www.spiritofmaat.com/archive/watercar/h20car2.htm).

This web site is useful because it tells us that there is a cheap and easy way to help the environment with the technology we already have.

Another source that I came upon is from a web site that I found through Google search. I typed in alternate energy sources and it gave a site that taught about five different types of alternative energy sources. This source is very relevant because it tells us all the reusable and safe ways of producing energy that is being used all across the world today. It provides us with details about how to take each one of these natural energy sources and use them in our advantage. It is extremely useful because it shows how easy it is to harness natural energy from the planet. This source also provides information on other natural resources right under our feet about three miles down. It explains how we can use geothermal energy and how though it would not replace all of our energy needs it could very well help us start replacing. This source also explains how you use the tide from the ocean, solar energy, and hydroelectric energy to replace coal and oil (<http://home.utah.edu/~ptt25660/tran.html>).

The final source that I have is a web site called Ezinearticles.com (Kevin Rockwell). This site is very useful because it gives you the reason why we should use alternative sources of energy as well as why we are using our current forms now. It explains the good and bad of oil and explains to us what needs to change to seclude a safe future. The article is designed to educate the uneducated about alternative energy sources and that is why I felt that this article would be extremely useful to this particle paper (<http://ezinearticles.com/?Alternative-Energy---Why-do-we-Need-it?&id=801280>).

Part III

Through this research I have found out several different facts that are quite interesting. One fact is the way to build the systems for alternative energy. With that I have also found why we need these alternative sources and what we need to do to fix our planet. I will also be able to argue the good and bad side to natural resources and oil and coal.

The technology to build the systems to harness the planets natural resources is not something that is new to mankind. We have known of this technology for some time now. One known system is wind power. This is probably one of the easier ways to collect energy from the planet. All you have to do is build a wind mill which is a tall tower with fan blades facing the

wind. The natural wind will rotate the blades which will then rotate a generator producing usable energy.

Another form of energy is called hydroelectric energy. This is something that has been put in place and used for many years. This is the method of dams. You store water behind a huge dam and then allow the pressurized water to run over the fans of the generator and this will produce energy. It is a reusable resource as well as a cheap and easy system to maintain. That is why it is use today. Unfortunately it is very expensive to build.

One last type of natural energy source is called geothermal energy. This is the idea of harvesting the earth's natural internal heat that is forty five miles below the surface. That far down is three hundred and seventy five degrees Celsius which is more than enough heat to run a steam powered electric power plant. Mankind does not have the technology to drill that deep but we do not have to, all we have to do is drill three miles down where it one hundred degrees Celsius. This temperature is the boiling point of water so what you do is boiling water to operate a steam powered electric power plant. Unfortunately this system does not produce enough power to support our need for energy but it does produce some energy.

There disadvantages and advantages to all sources of energy. The advantage to oil and coal is that it was a cheap and quick source of energy. Today we still use it because it is hard for society and the economy to want to change. The disadvantages are very well known, they are bad for the environment and we will run out at some time in the future of mankind. The advantage to windmills and hydroelectric and geothermal energy is very simple, they are recurring resources and safe for the environment. The down side is that it is extremely expensive to set these systems up because of how many you would have to build to support our wants for energy.

Part IV

Over all the entire project was not that hard. The most difficult part for me was part II when I had to write about the research I did. I was not sure how to go about that at first but in the end it did help for me to write that section because it forced me to read the articles in its entirety. Over all the research went in the direction that I thought it would go. It reinforced the idea that mankind needs to change the way we get our energy to feed our own desires.

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If this was a full length research paper I would have researched the damage that fossil fuels have done to the earth over the course of the last ninety years. I would have also looked at what would happen if we did not change our ways and the impact that would have had on our children. A full length research paper would have mentioned the time frames it would have taken to repair our Earth and whether or not we have the ability to repair the Earth or are we too late. Our planet is the only one we have so we better take care of it.

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APPENDIX G.2

DEAN'S SECOND I-SEARCH PAPER

Eng 102

March 8, 2010

Part I

The original paper I was going to write about was going to be about nursing. I did some research on the topic and as I was doing this I started to notice that I was making mistakes at work because I was devoting my time to learning about nursing. Due to this I decided to switch my research topic to brewing beer so I could learn more about what I was doing at work instead of just going through the steps. Once I started doing the research I started to understand more about what I was doing at work. I also decided to switch because I really do enjoy what I do at work and I wanted to learn more.

This paper I am going to be writing about brewing beer. I chose this because I this is the job I have now and it is a hobby of mine that I would like to learn more about. I like brewing beer because it is a job that everyone wants to know about and wants to learn how to do it. Through this paper I will be covering the history of brewing in the United States, from the beginning when it first started in the late 1500s to the present day. I will also cover the how the brewing process is done. This section will cover everything from putting the grain into water to serving it to your friends that have come over to visit. Finally I will also cover how much it will cost for your average person to brew a batch of beer out of their own home. I know what your next thought is, "It is illegal to brew beer at home." I am here to tell you that it is not illegal, you

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do not need a liscence to brew beer, you need a liscence to sell it at an establishment or if you brew it on a massive scale.

I chose this topic because it is what I know and what I enjoy. If I did not live in an apartment I would be brewing on my own but since I do I can only do it at work for now. You never know maybe I can convince my father to let me brew out at his house if I give him some of the beer that I make. Either way brewing is a passion of mine, a passion that does not make a whole lot of money so I will have to give it up and move on but at least I can keep it as a hobby and still enjoy what is call a micro brewed beer. I enjoy it so much that in time I would like to open my own brewery pub. This is much like where I work now the only difference is that I would own it and that means that I can drink for free.

Part II

Researching this topic was very easy. There are magazines all over the place that are dedicated to small breweries and home brewers. There are web sites all over the web that will teach you and sell you the equipment you need to brew beer. Unfortunatly they all say the same thing. The history of beer was not a big secret and brewing is not hard so there are a lot of sites that give you the same information.

What I did was I went onto the University ; library web site and and typed in brewery under minerva. I kept it under key terms because I was not looking for anything specific. What I found was a title called Beer School: bottling success at the Broklyn Brewery by Steve Henry and Tom Potter. Unfortunantly this was not a good site for me because I am not writing about bottling beer but instead brewing. One thing I did find was an article called

Brewed in America; a history of beer and ale in the United States (Baron). I found this when I found the previous article but I cannot remember how I did it. From there I searched for brewing history and could not find anything. I tried beer history, brewery history, and brewing industry history and could not find a thing on the subject. I found this when I found the previous article but I cannot remember how I did it. I finally got fed up with it and went to google.com to search through that media.

When I got to google the first thing I typed in was how to brew beer. From that came a huge list of sites that were extremely useful but all said the same thing so I went with a site that said how to brew beer in seven simple steps (Mahalo). This site was mahalo.com and it gave me these very simple very useful steps that made it so easy anyone out there could brew beer. The seven steps show very detailed information on how to brew, I myself will use these steps to brew when I finally do get my own home brewers kit and make it at home.

The next thing I looked for was brewing kits. These kits are all the supplies you need to brew beer and bottle it so you can enjoy it at home with you friends and family. I went to google.com and typed in brewing kits and found several two web sites that you can go to and buy all the supplies you need to brew and order them online and have them shipped straight to your place of residence. The first site I found was a site called perfect brewing supply (perfectbrewingsupply.com). This site was perfect because it sold everything you needed from the kits to the grain to the hops you would need to brew beer. The other site I found for this subject was a site called more beer (morebeer.com). This site gave you the same thing, it was just a competitor of perfect brewing supply.

The last thing I typed into google was history of brewing in America and once again it gave me a huge list of sites that were all useful. The three sites I decided to use were each useful

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in their own way. The first site I came to was beer history which gave me a chronological history of brewing beer that came out of a book called "American Breweries II" by Dale P. Van Wieren (Wieren). The next site I found was alabev.com which only gave me a short history of brewing in America (A Short History of Brewing in America). The final site I found for this subject was a site called beer info (beerinfo.com). This site gave me plenty of information including a video library.

It was extremely easy to find information on this subject. The only problem I had was I kept finding sites that gave me the same information over and over again. One issue I had with finding the resources for this paper was that as I was reading the information it would give clips of information. I would have to go and do more research to figure out what the original site was trying to tell me or I would just look up what it was talking about so I could enter it into the paper.

As I started writing the paper I noticed that I did not have all the information that I needed to fully write a paper on this subject. I had to go back and do more research on the subject so I could fully understand the topic as well so the reader could get the information that was pertinent to the topic.

Part III

Brewing beer on a massive scale is a lot easier than brewing beer out of one's own kitchen. Inside of a micro brewery you have larger tanks and you have specialized equipment that help you brew the beer. One thing you have access to is carbon dioxide, CO₂, tanks that carbonate the beer for you instead of using specialized sugars. This means that when you bottle

the beer it is already carbonated for you and you can drink it right away whereas in home brewing you can not unless you have the ability to carbonate it with a CO2 tank. Most people do not use these tanks even though they are extremely easy to get ahold of.

Brewing beer is quite simple, but first you need certain ingredients. These ingredients would be malt extract, hops, yeast, water and sugar. Each has its own job in the processes of brewing. Malt extract is the forced germination of barley grain. It comes in different styles and flavors and you can pick it up at any brew supply store. Hops gives the beer additional flavors as well as aroma and bitterness. Yeast is a form of fungi that eat the sugar and malt extract and turn it into ethyl alcohol and carbon dioxide. The best water to use is filtered because tap water has chemicals in it that can give the beer a nasty taste. The sugar is used during bottling to help carbonate the beer.

Now that you know the ingredients let's get to brewing the beer. The first step you need to do is choose which kind of beer you want to make. There are many different styles ranging from a lager beer like a bud light to dark beer like a porter. You must decide this because you hops and malt extract will depend on what kind of beer you are producing. Once you have decided this your next step is to buy the ingredients you need to make that particular style of beer. For now we will brew what is called Big Bang Pilsner Ale. The ingredients for this are two pounds of liquid extract, 3 pounds of DME, one pound of rice extract, one and a half ounces of willamette for bittering, a half ounce willamette for dry hopping aroma and American liquid Wyeast yeast (<http://beerrecipes.org/showrecipe.php?recipeid=63>). Now that we have our ingredients we can set up our equipment.

As for the equipment the first thing you need to do is buy it. A home brewing kit will cost about one hundred dollars and will come with several items. It will come with a six and a half primary fermenting bucket with a lid, a six and a half bottling bucket with bottling spigot, a five Better Bottle PET Secondary Fermenter, an instruction manual, C-Brite sanitizer, twin lever capper, triple scale hydrometer, an airlock, drilled carboy bung, adhesive thermometer, fermtech auto-siphon, siphon tubing, spring loaded bottle filler and a bottle brush (perfectbrewingsupply.com). Once you have your equipment the next step is to sanitize all of it.

It is extremely important that you sanitize all of your brewing equipment because if you do not do this then bacteria can grow and ruin the flavor of your beer. Some of the chemicals you can use are bleach, chlorine, or iodine. Iodine is the chemical that is used in microbreweries like the one at Browning's restaurant. One thing you do not want to do is use an abrasive chemical on plastic parts because that can create tiny little pockets in the plastic and microorganisms thrive in those places. Once you have your chemical you want to make a batch of it by mixing it with cold water in a tub big enough to soak all of your parts. If you use bleach you want to soak your parts for thirty minutes and if you use chlorine or iodine it only takes five minutes. When you finish rinse the parts thoroughly and them in an area where they will not get dirty until you are ready to use them. As for your bottles just put them in the dish washer. You have your ingredients and your equipment is sanitized now it is time to make your wort.

Wort is the liquid that you have before you start fermenting. To make the wort you start by boiling three gallons of water in your brew pot on your stove and putting two gallons of cold water in your fermentation vessel so it can be used for later. Now that your water is boiling take it off the stove and put the contents of your malt extract canister in the water and make sure that everything dissolves completely and that no large clumps are floating around. After this put the

brew pot back on the stove and bring it to a rolling boil. The temperature should be right around two hundred and eleven degrees Fahrenheit. Keep the wort at a constant rolling boil for about ten to twenty minutes stirring as needed and keeping an eye on the temperature, because if it boils over you need to reduce the temperature of the boil. Once the protein clumps sink back into the pot and the foam subsides stir in the hops and be careful of a boil over. Now all you have to do is watch it and stir it occasionally for one whole hour. Now comes the tricky part. You have to cool down the wort to below eighty degrees quickly so you do not contaminate or oxidize your wort. All you have to do is get a container that is much bigger than your brew pot and fill it with ice water. After this is done pick up your brew pot and sit it in the container until you touch the pot without burning yourself. Finally your wort is done and you get to ferment it now.

Fermenting is simpler than brewing the wort but just like the wort you can not make a single mistake because you will screw up your beer. Start off by putting the strainer and funnel on top of your fermentation container and then you want to very carefully pour your wort into your container through the strainer. Now that your wort is in the container take your thermometer and make sure that the wort is at room temperature, if not then let it sit until it is because if you do not and you put the yeast in the wort then you will kill the yeast. Pour the yeast into the container and stir it all together gently to give a little bit of oxygen to the yeast. After that put the airlock and stopper on the top and make sure that they are sealed firmly then put them in a dark and cool room. Every couple of days check on it to make sure that the temperature does not go too high and that the fermentation process is still going at it. You will want to leave it there for about a week to ten days. There are two ways to check and make sure that the beer is done and ready for the next step; one way is if there is fewer than one bubble coming out of the airlock per

minute; the second way is if the yeast has settled to the bottom and the beer has become clear and not that hazy liquid that you saw earlier. Well done now you have made your very first batch of beer and now you are ready to bottle that beer to enjoy it.

Your beer is done but you have to prime and the bottle the beer first. Priming is where you add sugar to the beer so the yeast will eat the sugar and create carbonation. You do this by adding three quarters cup of corn sugar and two cups of water to each other and put it into a small sauce pan. You want to boil this for about fifteen minutes or until the sugar completely dissolves and then put it into the bottling bucket. Once this is done use the siphon to transfer the beer into the bottling bucket but be careful not to disturb the contents at the bottom of the fermenter. Once done stir the sugar and beer together and now you are ready to bottle. Fill your bottle till it is about one inch below the top with either the siphon or spigot. Afterwards use the capper and cap the top of the bottle. You are still not ready to drink the beer yet so do not open a beer and drink it.

The first thing you have to do is condition the beer inside the bottle. To do this all you have to do is store the beer somewhere warm, about seventy to eighty degrees. This should take about a week, after that time frame open up one of your beers and test the carbonation of the beer. Once you are satisfied with the carbonation of the beer you chill it or age it. If the beer does not turn out the way you want it to be do not worry most people do not get it right on the first time. It usually takes a few times to get it right before you get the taste you are looking for. Keeping working at it you will get it.

There are few things that might have gone wrong with brewing your beer if you do not get what you were looking for. One thing is the beer might be flat and this is caused when you

do not put enough carbonation sugar into the bottle with your beer. On the other hand, your beer might be over carbonated which you means you put to much sugar in the bottle. If your beer as a sour, tart or vinegar taste or aroma then most likely something got contaminated while your were brewing or you just did not clean your equipment well enough. Another issue is that the beer might be cloudy or has yeast in the bottle. All this means is that you had an incomplete yeast conversion. If these are not one of your problems then all you have to do is go online and look your problem. There are a lot of web sites that help you trouble shoot the problem with your beer.

Before settlers ever showed up to the North America the natives were making a fermented drink out of persimmon. When the settlers arrived on the Mayflower they were actually forced off the ship because of he the fact that they were running out of beer aboard ship and did not have enough for everyone to make it back to their home land. As the settlers were settling down they were mandated by law to only have two quarts to consume at breakfast. The problem they ran into was that they did not take very good care of there waste product and it was contaminating their drinking water; because of this they consumed more beer and drank it like we would drink water in todays world.

The early English settlers relied on the improtation of beer from their homeland. In 1612 the first brewing company was established by Adrian Block and Hans Christiansen on the southern tip of New Amsterdam now known as Manhatten. In 1629 two breweries were established in the new world using maize and had no hops in the beer. A Dutch colony called New Amsterdam relied on local breweries instead of imports and this area stayed the brewing central of America even after the colony was sold to the British and renamed New York. Philadelphia closely followed New York in the amount of beer it produced until the 17th century

when it finally started to pass New York. Actually, many of our founding fathers were home brewers.

Some of our founding fathers encouraged the legislation to promote the American brewing industry like Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, James Madison and Samuel Adams. William Penn had a brewery on his estate. If you did not know William Penn is the man who founded Quaker of the Pennsylvania colony. One man that you might not think who owned his own home brewery was George Washington (A Short History of Brewing in America). Washington preferred porter over any other beer but he had his own recipes. One recipe was written down in a journal of his and is now kept on record in the New York Public Library. That journal article went at such, ""To Make Small Beer, Take a large Siffer [Sifter] full of Bran Hops to your Taste. -- Boil these 3 hours then strain out 30 Gall[ons] into a cooler put in 3 Gall[ons] Molasses while the Beer is Scalding hot or rather draw the Melasses into the cooler & St[r]ain the Beer on it while boiling Hot. let this stand till it is little more than Blood warm then put in a quart of Yea[s]t if the Weather is very Cold cover it over with a Blank[et] & let it Work in the Cooler 24 hours then put it into the Cask -- leave the bung open till it is almost don[e] Working - - Bottle it that day Week it was Brewed." (http://www.beerhistory.com/library/holdings/washingtonrecipe.shtml).

The early beers in America were what are known as ales which were made with high end yeast like what is made in England. As time went on and Germany started sending emigrants to the new land and with them came low end yeast products. This yeast produced what is called lager beer. This is a beer that many of you are familiar with because beers like Bud Light, Coors Light and Pabst Blue Ribbon are all lager beers. Actually, this immigration brought men like Frederick Pabst, Bernard Stroh, Joseph Schlitz, Adolph Coors, Henry Weinhard, Theodore

Hamm and Eberhard Anheuser to the new land. As you can already tell some of the breweries that these men established are still around today.

The peak of American breweries was in the 1870s with 4,131 breweries around the country. From this point till the beginning of prohibition in the 1920s the amount of breweries declined due to companies combining together to make beer that is easier to sell to the locals and to nations around the world. In January of 1920 one thousand five hundred and sixty eight breweries closed due to prohibition. The rest remained open because they made candy or malted milk or even soda water. There were a few though that survived by making illegal alcohol. In 1933 president Roosevelt revoked the prohibition law and within a year seven hundred and fifty six breweries had reopened for business. Over time the number of breweries started to decline again because the larger breweries were buying the smaller ones out. There were a few that survived by catering to the local taste buds of the people where they were located at. One brewery that did this is still in operation and is the oldest brewery in America; the name of this establishment is Yuengling which located in Pottsville, NY and was established in 1829. At one point there was less than ninety breweries left in America and it was only getting worse so different states began allowing micro breweries to open up shop.

In the past twenty years more than two thousand breweries have been established. American is now the leading nation in the different types of beer produced. This is a vast improvement from 1978 when eighty nine breweries existed and only twenty five brands were nationally distributed across America.

One of the brewing companies that are around today is called Anheuser Busch. Anheuser Busch was created Eberhard Anheuser when he bought Bavarian Brewery. When he bought it he

renamed it E. Anheuser & Co. Later on a man named Adolphus Busch moved to America from Germany and married Ederhard's daughter. He soon starts working for his father-in-law and fifteen years later Ederhard changes the name of his brewery to Anheuser and Busch Brewing Association. A year later Ederhard dies and his son-in-law takes over the company. Four years before that though they did come out with Budweiser and then in 1896 they came out with Michelob. At the turn of the twentieth century Anheuser Busch was producing one million barrels a year. Just for your knowledge a barrel is thirty one gallons. In 1913 Adolphus dies and his son August takes over. This is a good thing because in 1920 the prohibition starts and I do not think that Adolphus would like this very much. The company survived by creating products like ice cream, barley malt syrup, ginger ale, root beer, chocolate- and grape-flavored beverages, corn syrup, truck and bus bodies, refrigerated cabinets, baker's yeast and dealcoholized Budweiser. Now all they have to do is ride out the prohibition.

When prohibition finally was over turned Anheuser Busch came out with the marketing tool of the Clydesdales. The Clydesdales are a chain of horses that are pulling a wagon that has Anheuser Busch on the side of it. They have shown up on multiple commercials as well as become an icon in the American public for beer. Shortly afterwards August dies and his son, notice a trend here, takes over and his name was Adolphus Busch III. He dies in 1936 and August Jr takes over the company. 1952 rolls around and it signifies the hundredth anniversary of the founding of the company. This is a historical mark in the history of beer in America.

From this point on in the Anheuser Busch Company they just become a corporation that is set on making money and not on making beer. In the past ten years or so it seems that the company has started to realize that there is losing business to the smaller micro breweries and have started making different types of beer. There most recent one is a wheat beer which is not a

new concept in the beer industry but it is new concept to Anheuser Busch. From this point on it seems that the micro breweries are now the place to get actually good beer instead of mass produced beer that is made only for profit. “_____”, “_____”, “_____” and “_____” are just a few micro breweries that are located in “_____”. If you ask around you will find that many people prefer their beer to any big corporation and if they do not then they have at least heard of one of them and eaten at their restaurant. Over time one thing has not changed and that is the importance that beer has on our culture. The reason for why we drink has defiantly changed over time but the fact that we drink has not and never will. On top of that breweries hold an economic role in our lives. It gives thousands of people jobs throughout America and the taxes that they have to pay helps pay for road repair and many other things that help better our lives.

Part IV

As a whole I think that the hardest part of this paper was deciding on what I should write about. Once I finally decided what to write about the rest of the paper was fairly simple. Finding information on the topic was very easy. As the paper comes to a conclusion I have found that I do much better at work now that I understand how and why we do certain things at work. If I was to use this topic to write a more traditional paper there are many more things that I would introduce into the paper. For one I would have talked a little bit about some of the major brewing companies that are out there now. I would have given back ground information like when and where they were established and put in things like how big they were then compared to how big they are now. I would have also loved to have found different recipes that some of our founding fathers used when they were brewing beer in their own kitchens.

I enjoyed this paper and all the research that came with it. I found out all kinds of things like how our founding fathers had home breweries on their plantations. I also did not know that beer was such a big part of colonists' lives but in a much different way than how it is for us today. I enjoy beer and I enjoy brewing beer and now I have enjoyed learning the history of beer and the process that someone like you and me would have to go through to make their own beer at home. I have every intention of making my own beer at home as soon as I have the money and location to brew it. Without this paper I probably would never have figured out how to brew my own beer and never tried to do it at home but now I can whenever I want and so can you. Enjoy what you have learned here today and try to make some for yourself.

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APPENDIX H.1

ASHLEY'S WRITING PROJECT 1 WITH JANE'S COVER LETTER FEEDBACK

Hi

It's clear from this essay that you've done a good amount of research that has enabled you to discuss the effects of PTSD on women in a meaningful and thorough way. Although you have some citation problems (see my in-text comments), your use of sources, especially the book sources, demonstrates a clear and balanced application of the source-integration skills that we discussed in class. Additionally, the overall structure of your essay presented your ideas in a thoughtful and logical manner.

The primary revision suggestion I have, besides revision of your citations, has to do with what you commented on at the end of your essay yourself – specifically, I think you could do a good deal more in terms of explicitly connecting your argument statement to the body of the essay. That is, because the body of the essay tends to explain the problem but not argue why it matters, I'm not entirely clear how or why the problem is important. However, you've indicated in the first paragraph of the essay that this problem is a problem because it is commonly "misunderstood by the public." I think you could go much further reminding your reader(s) about this in each paragraph of the body of the essay.

Because of the citation problems listed above, I have recorded a "NG" (no grade) in my grade book. Once you've fixed the citations, I will give you a grade with no penalty, but if the citations aren't fixed before the end of the semester, then the NG will become a 0. I'd recommend revising according to my suggestions above in the next week or two, so that I can give you a grade and you can decide if you'd like to revise again before the end of the semester.

As you start thinking about WP2, I'd keep your eye out especially for articles that discuss the effects or consequences of the way the medical community and/or public (mis)understands PTSD as a "man's" or "war" problem. Or, you could take a step back from that and look for debates surrounding whether or not the medical community and/or public actually misunderstands PTSD. Or, alternatively, you might find disagreements surrounding who is affected most by the problem – is it the women themselves? Their families or partners? Or, you might find disagreements about the definition of PTSD – that is, there may be some parties who would argue that PTSD should not be called that when it comes to war, or that there should be a new name for the disorder when it affects women. These are all just guesses about what you might find – you should, of course, keep your mind open as you explore the possibilities.

	Credit?	Notes/Recommendations
RE1	Y	
RE2	Y	I'm sorry you didn't receive comments on your work this week.
RE3	Y	Worth revising further.
	Overall:	Very good overall.
Peer Group Response	Y	
	Overall:	You provided a good response to Rashad's work, and I appreciate the fact that you conducted a quick search on his behalf to help him with his research.
# Absences	1	1/14

NG

next time
please
double-space

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cited
page

The Effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder on Women

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, also abbreviated PTSD, has affected many people and has been a long, difficult process to uncover this disorder because it was never discovered until after the war of Vietnam. When we usually hear of PTSD it is associated with devastating after war effects but that is not always the case. Statistically, 60% of men and 50% of women experience a traumatic event in their life and of those people, 8% of men develop PTSD and 20% of women develop PTSD (WebMD PTSD 1). Since this illness is normally thought of as a disorder that affects men in war more; women, who suffer in greater numbers, are sometimes misunderstood by the public and men are generally the cause of a women's development of this psychological illness.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is a mental disorder that is generated by a distressing outside event. Webster's Dictionary defines it as, "a psychological reaction occurring after experiencing a highly stressing event (as wartime combat, physical violence, or a natural disaster) that is usually characterized by depression, anxiety, flashbacks, recurrent nightmares, and avoidance of reminders of the event." There is much publicity about the horrible side-effects that soldiers experience after surviving a traumatic event during war but women suffer more frequently from PTSD caused by all different forms of abuse than from war.

1 major source
11/11/10
the author
yes

People who suffer from sexual, physical, and sometimes verbal abuse are more likely to develop PTSD. The more traumatic an event may be, the more serious the symptoms of this disorder may occur. Since women are victims of abuse, such as rape, more so than men, women have a higher percentage of developing PTSD. Normally, men and women are subject to stress in a variety of different ways. More specifically, when a women experiences abuse from a male figure, they usually are overpowered and do not have control of the situation. According to Trauma and Survival written by Elizabeth Waites, "The assaulted female is likely to respond with submissiveness, complicated by the effects of shock, and frequently, physical injury" (Waites 86). When a woman experiences abuse, she feels like there is no way of escaping it, therefore, she does not fight back usually out of fear that something worse could happen like physical injury where she is not able to defend herself.

After a traumatic event occurs in a woman's life, she may feel demoralized, helpless, and her self-esteem that she once had quickly diminishes and feels physically and emotionally overwhelmed. Usually, women tend to place great importance on their reputation as a person, "Reputation-that valuable female asset- is contingent on the opinion of others" (105). Women often operate out of social expectations. Women try to live up to their social role and the way she

author?

is viewed is an important part of who she is. After becoming a victim, the world around them is now completely different and the pride that they once had is stripped away from them. If a woman is placed in a type of traumatic situation like rape where she has no power over the outcome or anyway to stop it, her identity as a woman is destroyed because it has become a part of her life. Following that abuse, she may experience a situation where the abuser is repetitively speaking demoralizing words to her, "One of the most pervasive experiences of many abused females involves responses to being treated like a nonhuman object rather than a human being" (106). Even if the words that are being spoken into her life are not true, the woman is still affected by those words and they start to become truth to her because she no longer knows or remembers who she really is.

The symptoms that follow Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder cannot simply disappear or be ignored. PTSD victims experience frequent flashbacks of their traumatic event that seem so real that they are controlled by them. Victims can also experience horrible nightmares in their sleep, "Sleep problems have such extensive implications for daily coping..." (103). When the victim lacks sleep or is traumatized by sleep, she has difficulty performing simple tasks during the day and is in almost a trans-like state which in return affects other parts of her life. Sleeping problems can affect many aspects of life such as interacting with people or studying in school. The victim can also experience jumpiness and a high state of arousal. A loud noise may trigger a victim to cause a scene and constantly be on the lookout for trouble which may interfere with maintaining a job (WebMD PTSD 3). *not on Works Cited page*

After a loved one has been subject to some sort of abuse, people that are in their lives for support sometimes do not help the victim at all. Following abuse, the victim is so consumed by what has happened to them, "Tendencies to blame the victim make some people who are needed for support part of the problem rather than part of the solution. Tendencies to withdraw or dissociate in the aftermath of shock isolate victims from supportive relationships that might be otherwise available" (109). Because the victim is so traumatized by the stressful event they experienced, they will usually extract themselves from everything in their lives and feel like there is no one that could help them. The supporting group then begins to feel confused and do not understand the victim. They try to offer all the help they can give but they do not understand the victim or why they think the way they do. The abused usually begins to feel very alone and hopeless and every aspect of their life begins to be controlled by this one event. This is when treatment for the victim is very helpful because they explain what she is experiencing as a syndrome so that she does not feel like she is going crazy (87). If the woman is a mother, she can find it very difficult to show affection or express herself to her child which results in difficulties with the child as it becomes older. The child can experience social problems and not be able to express itself just like its mother. If the woman is married, the abuse she experienced will often affect her marriage because she is no longer the same woman she once was and the husband may have a hard time having the patience to try to understand her.

Often times, women are known to internalize things that go on inside their thinking process. Women are also known as the more dependent type as males are known as the more independent type. When a woman feels alone and has no one to depend on and begins to internalize the abuse that she has experienced, she becomes even more liable to other illnesses such as depression on top of anxiety and phobic disorders, therefore, a woman's likelihood to develop PTSD is quite higher than a man's probability. Because a woman is so dependent on other people for support, if that support is gone and no one is there to help her become the person she once was prior abuse, the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder are more severe and a woman will suffer extensively.

*I wanted to write you that the body of my parent
really supported my argument.*

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WebMD source?

how
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this?

Don't
show
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APPENDIX H.2

ASHLEY'S RESUBMITTED WRITING PROJECT 1 WITH JANE'S COVER LETTER FEEDBACK

Hi _____,

You've made some good adjustments to your primary thesis statement, as well as transition sentences within paragraphs, to emphasize more clearly exactly how the body paragraphs of your essay "make sense" in the context of your larger arguments. Although some of the revisions to individual sentences could be revised even more so that they run more smoothly (see the 1st sentence of the 2nd paragraph on page 1, and the last sentence of the 1st paragraph on page 3), and although I think you could have gone even further in terms of making the connections explicit (and possibly even in the final paragraph), I think that generally, the changes you made to this already-strong paper are rhetorically effective.

I have some minor comments on pages 1 and 3 about your citations, which are still a little off – but the difference between this draft and the previous one is that I can at least follow your citations from the body of the essay to the Works Cited page, and there aren't any missing from the list. See me if you have questions about my new comments – I know it can be confusing!

A

The Effects of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder on Women

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, also abbreviated PTSD, has affected many people and has been a long, difficult process to uncover this disorder because it was never discovered until after the war of Vietnam. When we usually hear of PTSD it is associated with devastating after war effects but that is not always the case. Statistically, 60% of men and 50% of women experience a traumatic event in their life and of those people, 8% of men develop PTSD and 20% of women develop PTSD (emedicinehealth 1). Since this illness is normally thought of as a disorder that affects men in war more; women, who suffer in greater numbers, are sometimes misunderstood by the public because of the difficulty with interacting with people. ✓

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is a mental disorder that is generated by a distressing outside event and for women; men are generally the cause of the development of this psychological illness. Webster's Dictionary defines it as, "a psychological reaction occurring after experiencing a highly stressing event (as wartime combat, physical violence, or a natural disaster) that is usually characterized by depression, anxiety, flashbacks, recurrent nightmares, and avoidance of reminders of the event" (Merriam-Webster). There is much publicity about the horrible side-effects that soldiers experience after surviving a traumatic event during war and the difficulties with functioning normally in society but women suffer more frequently from PTSD caused by all different forms of abuse than from war. ✓

like: ("Post-Traumatic", emedicine 1) ^{keep since 2 since same}

like: ("Post-traumatic", merriam-webster) ^{nth}

should be of what first on works cited

People who suffer from sexual, physical, and sometimes verbal abuse are more likely to develop PTSD. The more traumatic an event may be, the more serious the symptoms of this disorder may occur. Since women are victims of abuse, such as rape, more so than men, women have a higher percentage of developing PTSD. Normally, men and women are subject to stress in a variety of different ways. More specifically, when a woman experiences abuse from a male figure, they usually are overpowered and do not have control of the situation. According to Trauma and Survival written by Elizabeth Waite, "The assaulted female is likely to respond with submissiveness, complicated by the effects of shock, and frequently, physical injury" (Waite 86). When a woman experiences abuse, she feels like there is no way of escaping it, therefore, she does not fight back usually out of fear that something worse could happen like physical injury where she is not able to defend herself.

After a traumatic event occurs in a woman's life, she may feel demoralized, helpless, and her self-esteem that she once had quickly diminishes and feels physically and emotionally overwhelmed. Usually, women tend to place great importance on their reputation as a person, "Reputation-that valuable female asset- is contingent on the opinion of others" (Waite 105). ✓
 Women often operate out of social expectations. Women try to live up to their social role and the way she is viewed is an important part of who she is. After becoming a victim, the world around them is now completely different and the pride that they once had is stripped away from them. If a woman is placed in a type of traumatic situation like rape where she has no power over the outcome or anyway to stop it, her identity as a woman is destroyed because it has become a part of her life. Following that abuse, she may experience a situation where the abuser is repetitively speaking demoralizing words to her, "One of the most pervasive experiences of many abused females involves responses to being treated like a nonhuman object rather than a human being"

(Waites 106). Even if the words that are being spoken into her life are not true, the woman is still affected by those words and they start to become truth to her because she no longer knows or remembers who she really is and therefore it causes people to have difficulty with relating to her needs. ✓

The symptoms that follow Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder cannot simply disappear or be ignored. PTSD victims experience frequent flashbacks of their traumatic event that seem so real that they are controlled by them. Victims can also experience horrible nightmares in their sleep, "Sleep problems have such extensive implications for daily coping..." (Waites 103). When the victim lacks sleep or is traumatized by sleep, she has difficulty performing simple tasks during the day and is in almost a trans-like state which in return affects other parts of her life. Sleeping problems can affect many aspects of life such as interacting with people or studying in school. The victim can also experience jumpiness and a high state of arousal. A loud noise may trigger a victim to cause a scene and constantly be on the lookout for trouble which may interfere with maintaining a job (emedicinehealth 3) *
see p. 1

After a loved one has been subject to some sort of abuse, people that are in their lives for support sometimes do not help the victim at all. Following abuse, the victim is so consumed by what has happened to them, "Tendencies to blame the victim make some people who are needed for support part of the problem rather than part of the solution. Tendencies to withdraw or dissociate in the aftermath of shock isolate victims from supportive relationships that might be otherwise available" (Waites 109). ✓ Because the victim is so traumatized by the stressful event they experienced, they will usually extract themselves from everything in their lives and feel like there is no one that could help them. The supporting group then begins to feel confused and do not understand the victim. They try to offer all the help they can give but they do not understand

the victim or why they think the way they do. The abused usually begins to feel very alone and hopeless and every aspect of their life begins to be controlled by this one event. This is when treatment for the victim is very helpful because they explain what she is experiencing as a syndrome so that she does not feel like she is going crazy (Waites 87). If the woman is a mother, she can find it very difficult to show affection or express herself to her child which results in difficulties with the child as it becomes older. The child can experience social problems and not be able to express itself just like its mother. If the woman is married, the abuse she experienced will often affect her marriage because she is no longer the same woman she once was and the husband may have a hard time having the patience to try to understand her.

Often times, women are known to internalize things that go on inside their thinking process. Women are also known as the more dependent type as males are known as the more independent type. When a woman feels alone and has no one to depend on and begins to internalize the abuse that she has experienced, she becomes even more liable to other illnesses such as depression on top of anxiety and phobic disorders, therefore, a woman's likelihood to develop PTSD is quite higher than a man's probability. Because a woman is so dependent on other people for support, if that support is gone and no one is there to help her become the person she once was prior abuse, the symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder are more severe and a woman will suffer extensively.

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APPENDIX H.3

MEGAN'S WRITING PROJECT 2 WITH JANE'S COVER LETTER FEEDBACK

Hi

In this essay, you've done a lot of work to explain why a focus on the effect of PTSD on children is more problematic than PTSD's effects on adults. This implicit argument is an important one in relation to your previous writing project, in which your focus was primarily the effects of PTSD on women. I think that overall, you've done a nice job supporting this argument with sources that each explain, using different kinds of evidence, how children suffer the consequences of PTSD more strongly than women or adults. Also, although some of your source material is quite dense, I think you've made a solid effort to explain and support your understanding of these sources in a way that is useful for your purposes. I have two primary suggestions for revision, which you might keep in mind as you continue writing, and/or if you choose to revise this essay.

First, although I think you are making an argument in this essay, at this point, your own perspective is never explicitly stated, and so I had to work more than I should have, as a reader, to make the connections between each source and your larger point that I think you wanted me to make. Specifically, although you have written a convincing introduction to the essay, I think the essay as a whole would be clearer if you stated explicitly in the first paragraph that you intend to use these different sources to demonstrate, ultimately, that our focus should be on children, rather than adults, when it comes to the issue of PTSD. Although this argument is implicit throughout, you haven't yet done enough to make these connections explicit in a rhetorically effective way. Related to this, I was surprised, when I came to the end of the essay, that you didn't synthesize your sources in a separate paragraph (before the conclusion) so that I understood how, exactly, you saw them relating to your larger argument. If you were to revise, I would encourage you to compose an explicit argument statement in the first paragraph, and develop/synthesize your ideas about the sources (talk about them together) in at least one paragraph toward the end of the essay.

Secondly, as you write about each source, although you've generally done a good job explaining each one, I had a hard time remembering how the individual sources related to one another, as I got caught up in each paragraph. It would be interesting, and more effective, to read your explanation of each source while also understanding how you see the source relating to (being similar or different) the other sources you're describing. In other words, why is it important that Armsworth and Holaday take a more general approach (toward explaining the different effects of PTSD on children versus adults), while Rowe and Jackowski are more specific in their approaches toward explaining the effects of PTSD on children? Do you see Rowe adding to, or justifying, or simply confirming, Armsworth and Holaday's claim that the effects of PTSD on children are more consequential than on adults? Or do you see Rowe in a different light? Mainly, I just want you to remind me in each paragraph how you see each source building upon the previous sources, which will ultimately contribute to your larger argument.

B+

Writing Project 2

English 102

March 23, 2010

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a serious mental condition that people obtain after experiencing a traumatic event. Webster's Dictionary defines it as, "a psychological reaction occurring after experiencing a highly stressing event (as wartime combat, physical violence, or a natural disaster) that is usually characterized by depression, anxiety, flashbacks, recurrent nightmares, and avoidance of reminders of the event" (Merriam-Webster). PTSD not only has a dramatic influence on their mental state but it drastically affects their social life as well by not allowing them to partake in normal lifestyles such as holding a job or going to school. There have been many instances when researches have done studies on the effects of PTSD and they have left out the importance and the impact that it has on children. Many times the effects that this mental illness has on children are more life impacting than the effects it has on an adult because PTSD can have permanent brain damage to a child and by the time the child becomes an adult they cannot function as a normal adult, it causes complications in children while attending school because it hinders children from getting the full experience of education which is one of the most important things to have in this generation, and it also has immediate side-effects that come with the mental illness.

good use
of
definition!

complex
sentences!

In the article, "The Effects of Psychological Trauma on Children and Adolescents," written by Mary Armsworth and Margot Holaday, they argue that, "several researches have cautioned that PTSD as it applies to adults may not be applicable to children, or that PTSD is

being over applied to all survivors of all stressful events" (Armstrong, Holaday 49). It is observed that children and adults have different emotional reactions to different traumatic events that occur. As a result of this, "Memory impairment may occur, which in turn may affect intellectual functioning or the ability to perform in the present or think of the future" (Armstrong, Holaday 50). It is also noted that children who suffer from a traumatic event and suffer from PTSD are more likely to suffer from mental retardation. PTSD has a very dramatic affect on adults and there are many studies done to prove this, but children also suffer from the same side-effects if not more. "Traumatized children have been found to be more likely to exhibit aggression toward peers parents, teachers, and authority figures to show cruelty toward animals and to be more belligerent and demanding of attention. They also may be more self-abusive and self-destructive than are their peers and show extreme adjustment difficulties. They are more likely to become chemically dependent to be involved in delinquent, antisocial, or criminal activities to exhibit intergenerational abuse and to engage in prostitution and runaway behaviors (Armstrong, Holaday 52)." In this article, Armstrong and Holaday present that a child's reaction to a traumatic event is just as significant as an adult's reaction. In order to decipher whether or not a child was able to experience the results of PTSD, "Mowbray (1988) considered an awareness of the child's stage of cognitive development as the core feature in understanding how the child has made sense of traumatic experiences. She believed that Piaget's conception of egocentrism, in which the child views the world from his or her own perspective, is the major influence in the child's translation of causation of events" (Armstrong, Holaday 50). A child's experience of a traumatic event is extremely significant and furthermore, a child's experience of PTSD has more impact on a child's life than an adult's life. Many of the side-effects of PTSD on children have to do with their mental stability in the future and their ability to

How
+ 2

← Should I have parents
Some of the differences
between child & adult
difficulties are?

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know
so, since
your focus
is on
children

even function as a normal adult is slimmer than the impact it has on people who suffer from PTSD after puberty.

not full title - see Works Cited

In the article, "Dealing with Psychiatric in Schools," written by John Rowe he discusses the influence that PTSD has on children in the school place. "Children's reactions to traumatic events tend to have three core manifestations: signs of re-experiencing the event, attempts to avoid dealing with the resulting emotions, and increased physiologic arousal" (Rowe 195). Rowe also points out that symptoms of PTSD can be disguised as other disabilities also, such as ADHD. This symptom is more so expressed as being extremely sensitive to their surroundings to look out for any possible danger. With this common problem of children who suffer from PTSD Rowe points out, "They may need to modify the classroom expectations. In particular, teachers should set priorities so that they demand less from the children while still preventing them from falling too far behind in work" (Rowe 195). While the teacher is demanding less of the child, the child is therefore not getting the same type of education that every other student may be getting. This in return may affect the child's development after they get out of school and alter with the reality that that child will not be demanded less of in the work place. In this current day and age, education is an absolute must. People are usually not able to obtain a successful job without a college education. When a child experiences a traumatic event and it causes them to receive less of an education then they need, most importantly it may cause them to not have much success outside of school.

use 1st Name's on 1st reference

The most life-altering effect that PTSD can have on children is researched by Jackowski and Parolin et al titled, "Neurostructural imaging findings in children with post-traumatic stress disorder: Brief review." Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder can have a serious impact on the structure and functioning of the brain. "PTSD may be accompanied by other types of mild

cognitive impairment, such as relatively impoverished autobiographic memory for positive events, as well as problems with attention, working memory, and the learning of novel word associations, suggesting the disruption of neural mechanisms affecting specific brain circuits" (Jackowski, Parolin et al 3). Jackowski^{et al.} states that there can also be alteration to your brain structure when exposed to early trauma, "Preclinical studies have shown that early life stress promotes long-term changes in stress reactivity and brain development" (Jackowski, Parolin et al 3). The earlier someone suffers from a traumatic event, the more likely they are to experience alterations in brain development. In the Hippocampus, which is the part of the brain that deals with explicit memory, episodic events, and working memory, researchers have noticed that there is a decrease in size in the Hippocampus in adults who experiences a traumatic event at a young age (Jackowski, Parolin et al 3). Another part of the brain that trauma at a young age causes damage to is the Corpus Callosum. The Corpus Callosum is the main communicator in the interhemispheric area, "Decreased midbody and posterior portions of the CC are the most significant structural MRI findings in children with PTSD compared to controls with or CC myelinates between the ages of 6 months and 3 years and continues into the third decade of life" (Jackowski, Parolin et al 4). There are also damages that occur in the brain of children who suffer from PTSD that are not found in an adult who suffers from PTSD. "Children and adolescents with PTSD were found to have significantly reduced intracranial and cerebral volumes (approx. 6% smaller in maltreated children with PTSD)... Neither intracranial nor total brain volume reductions have been reported in adults with PTSD..." (Jackowski, Parolin et al 4). This type of side-effect is a permanent development that cannot be fixed or altered and most certainly affects the functioning of a trauma victim in every aspect of life.

in each article, the authors present very solid facts about the impact that trauma can have on a child and provides foresight into what kind of effect it will have on the child in adulthood. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder not only causes immediate side-effects in children but it also causes life-long symptoms that can alter their futures in education, the workplace, and at home. Although PTSD is extremely serious in adults as well, children who are affected by this mental illness are possibly not even given a chance at life. A child's life is so drastically impacted at such a young age that a child may not ever know any other part of life than suffering from a mental illness and some of the side-effects can never be erased.

I feel like my strongest part in this paper is the discussion of the changes that PTSD causes to the brain. I feel like that really creates an impact to proving my point.

One thing I want you to focus on in my paper is whether or not I provided & supported my argument to the reader clearly.

Sorry, I still don't have black ink! :"

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Rowe, John. "Dealing with Psychiatric Disabilities in Schools: A Description of Symptoms and Coping Strategies for Dealing with Them." *Preventing School Failure* 54.3 (2010): 190-198. *Academic Search Premier*. EBSCO. Web. 8 Mar. 2010.

APPENDIX H.4

ASHLEY'S WRITING PROJECT 3

1

Writing Project 3

4/22/10

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is a mental illness that a person can obtain after suffering from a traumatic event. The symptoms vary from disturbing flashbacks to brain damage. There is not one specific form of therapy that can help victims of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder; rather, there are multiple different types of therapy that are beneficial for different people. Therefore, the question is: what are the most beneficial types of therapy that facilitate PTSD victims? My concentration throughout the Writing Projects has been focusing on women and children with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. The reasons for my concentration on women and children are because I have come to find that they undergo more greatly when suffering from PTSD; they both have a lot to lose. Women who suffer from PTSD risk losing their jobs, education, and families. Children who experience PTSD risk losing their future, the full potential of education, and possibly brain damage. The most effective solution for women and children with PTSD is a yoga breath program and then followed by a trauma reduction exposure method to reduce the side-effects of PTSD. For children, a successful solution is play therapy where they simply just play with the children and as each session passes, the aggression of the child disappears. The results of yoga and play therapy have been researched and studied and results show that these two methods have a high success rate and they should be implemented in PTSD rehabilitation.

Descilo et al. evaluated the effect of yoga therapy on 183 tsunami victims that were living in refugee camps who had been diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. They were assigned to different camps which consisted of yoga breath interventions followed by 3 to 8 hours of trauma exposure reduction techniques. "Clinical studies of yoga suggest that yoga breath interventions could target the symptoms of PTSD, depression and anxiety. Multi-component mind-body programs, including breath practices, postures and movements, may alleviate symptoms of anxiety, depression, PTSD...(Descilo et al. 290)." The subject would, in return, report a feeling of peace and calm and the results of effectiveness were present after 6 weeks. A significant result that the researchers found were that eight months after the 2004 tsunami, survivors living in refugee camps, who were given a yoga breath program followed by an exposure therapy, had significantly reduced scores on a PTSD test (Descilo et al. 289). This would be beneficial if implemented on women because it would give women the opportunity to relax and it would be a unique way of therapy besides the typical office room and therapist. The method has positive results and would be very beneficial to be put into practice.

Play therapy is a valuable form of therapy that is most effective for children. Dugan et al. used play therapy on two children who had suffered Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder from Hurricane Katrina. "Because young children have limited coping skills, they are particularly at risk for negative outcomes associated with traumatic events (Dugan et al. 52)." In the study done, the child who had side-effects of PTSD was taken into a play room with a play therapist and the session would go from 40 to 50 minutes. During the beginning of the weekly therapy sessions, the theme of the child's play was safety and control and then it developed into a theme of breaking things and fixing them. Eventually the child's play consisted of things crashing and being destroyed and then to aggressive play followed by the feeling of anxiety. After the child's

fourth session his play turned into nurturing and after the child's eighth session, his mother reported that the side-effects he possessed had decreased and the child showed less signs of anxiety. Each session the child showed less and less anxiety and aggression in his play and eventually the mother reported that he no longer showed any signs of anxiety and showed more signs of independence. Shortly after that they stopped the sessions based of the mother's reports of his significant progress. The same study was done with another child whose play therapy went very similar and had the same significant results. This method of therapy is wonderful for children because it is taking what children are supposed to do (play) and it remarkably helps to remove anxiety and symptoms of PTSD in children. With this specific group of people, it is hard to keep their attention, such as in therapy, and the child's progress would probably take twice as long to begin having results. Play therapy is fun for the child and is also a successful solution to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Another solution to these problems that has been suggested is medication. Although this may help the problem, the risks are far greater with this solution. Unlike yoga and play therapy, medication is not a process of recovery; it is only a temporary band-aid. In the book called, "Trauma and Survival" written by Elizabeth Waite, she talks about women and the different aspects of PTSD. One of her possible methods to treat the symptoms of PTSD but is not normally recommended is medication. "In some instances, medication is helpful as a temporary support (Waite 90)." Medication can be useful when it is used to moderate small symptoms of PTSD but the key word is that it is only temporary. There are definite negative side effects to medication like addiction to the medicine. Some victims can feel like they cannot function normally or get through a day without medicine so it never really helps them conquer the disorder. In the long run, if a victim is depending solely on medication, it will end up costing

more for the continuous medication supply than it would to attend therapy and remove the symptoms of PTSD "Many therapists, too, prefer to treat victims with methods that deemphasize medication in favor of such mind-body intervention... (Waites 91)." This method of ridding the symptoms of PTSD would not be beneficial for women but especially for children. For a child, if you were to put them on medication for a long period of time, they would grow up only knowing life with medication. For both groups of victims, it is only a short time before they realize that medication does not permanently take away their pain.

One of the best ways to solve the problem of PTSD in women and children is through therapy, and in the city of "_____" there is a center for women and children who do just that. "_____" is a safe place for those that have experienced a traumatic event such as rape or domestic violence and who suffer from it. They provide immediate care and therapy along with a place to stay for woman and their children and it is all free of cost. I propose that the center for women and children should begin to implement yoga breath therapy for women and play therapy for children in the organization. The people who really need it would not have to worry about the cost of the therapy and it would be an addition to the great things that the center is already doing for these people. Since the University of "_____" has their own Psychology research center, the students at the university could replicate the study done by Dugan et al. and Descilo et al. for a year and test to see if the outcome is as successful as theirs. If the results turn out as expected, the two therapies could be proposed to "_____" and it could begin to be used in the organization. The University of "_____" students would benefit from this study by proving the success of these therapies can be successfully replicated and the center for women and children would benefit from the study because of the great potential effectiveness it will have on the women and children.

Although yoga and play therapy are great ways to help solve the problem of PTSD, there are also limitations to the solution. One of the biggest tasks of helping victims is to get them to go to therapy. Many people may feel intimidated of the stereotypical atmosphere of therapy and refuse to get help. These two unique forms of therapy are good ways to eliminate the stereotypes of therapy and to provide people with help. Another possible limitation is the task of finding women and children that would be willing to participate in the research for a year. After the research is finished, “ _____ ” would also have to agree to use the two methods, but the results will hopefully speak for themselves.

These unique solutions of therapy will provide victims of PTSD with the help that they have never received before. What Dugan et al, Descilo et al. and other researchers have done is take an ordinary, simple activity and turn into something that can help take away the pain, anxiety, and the future problems that victims may experience. With these two promising methods, “ _____ ”, and hopefully many more, can treat numerous amounts of women, children, and families so that the possibility of losing so much of their lives diminishes.

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APPENDIX I.1

AVA'S WRITING PROJECT 1 WITH JANE'S COVER LETTER FEEDBACK

Hi

In general, you've provided a logical overview of the problem of child soldiers; not only have you provided a sense of the extensiveness of the problem, but you've also considered whether or not the children can be blamed for their actions, and you've also discussed the psychological implications of the childrens' involvement in these inhumane and troubling activities. You've also given a sense for the complexity of the problem, and I am looking forward to reading about your continued research on this issue.

I have two suggestions for revisions: First, although you've used your sources to support some of your points, I was surprised to find that some of your body paragraphs did not include any support from your sources, and you only used each source once or twice. Part of the challenge of this writing assignment is figuring out how best to use your sources to support each of your points, and how to distribute this support evenly throughout the essay (instead of relying too much or too little on your sources). I think that a revision along these lines would improve your credibility as a researcher, and make your argument more convincing.

Secondly, although this is a more minor point, your argument statement, which I found at the end of the first paragraph of the essay, presents your perspective on the issue instead of making an argument that, quite simply, the problem exists. I was pleased to find that the body of the essay didn't continue with the argument at the beginning of the essay, as this would have inappropriate for the writing assignment – but your introductory paragraph was misleading as a result. I would revise this paragraph so that your argument statement accurately reflects the purpose of the essay, and also so that it forecasts the overall structure of your essay, so I will know what to expect as I read.

As you move toward WP2, I'm sure you'll be looking for debates surrounding whether or not children can be blamed for their activities as child soldiers. However, I think that, beyond these debates, you might also look for disagreements about why the problem exists in the first place, what the effects are on the children themselves and/or the community they terrorize, and/or even how rescued or recovered child soldiers can best be supported. Keep your mind (and eyes) open for the different kinds of debates that might exist along these lines, as well as the debate you seem to be most aware of at this point.

B

	Credit?	Notes/Recommendations
RE1	Y	
RE2	N	
RE3	Y	Worth revising, especially in response to 's quite thorough comments to your work.
	Overall:	Quite brief and oftentimes vague. In the future, see what you can do to develop your ideas more in these REs.
Peer Group Response	LATE	
	Overall:	Although late, this response to 's work was respectful and thorough. Good work.
# Absences	2	1/7, 2/4 (1/7 won't hurt your grade, but still counts as an unexcused absence)

I am not alone in the belief in the concept that everyone should be held accountable for his or her actions, especially when those actions cause harm or bring loss upon another human being. But what happens when an innocent child is forced to commit these crimes against humanity? Is it just to prosecute and punish those who have no control over their lives or actions? Shouldn't the guilty party be those ~~who~~ ^{whose} forced the innocent to carry out these actions in order to further their own cause? While the ~~child soldiers~~ ^{children} involved in armed conflicts can be dangerous soldiers, they are victims and should be treated as such.

The general belief ^{OR fact?} is that at any given time there are approximately three hundred thousand children participating in armed conflicts all around the world (Briggs vii). These children have been abducted and forced into this horrific form of slavery. From Uganda to Afghanistan to Sri Lanka and Colombia children as young as eight years old are being used as soldier, scouts, cooks, and sexual servants in armed conflicts (Briggs xii). The fact that these young soldiers are children doesn't mean that they are any less capable than their captors of committing these grave acts of violence. It is actually quite on the contrary, because of the impressionableness of these scared and traumatized children, their recruiters can break them down and with the help of mind-numbing drugs shape them into killing machines. But how accountable can these young soldiers really be for their actions?

One could argue the fact that not all children are forced into fighting but those that do have a "choice" have no family left alive, no way of providing food and

shelter for themselves and they just want somewhere to belong. To this particular group of children the recruiters present the armed group as a place for this lost child to belong. A "family" where they will be provided for both physically and also an emotional support system of brotherhood and camaraderie. But this is not a child choosing to be molded into a ruthless soldier but a child lost and looking for anywhere they can belong who falls for the manipulation and promise of security. So when placed in a situation where one must essentially join or die is there really a choice present? When an individual's life is at risk the whole idea of free will is diminished and replaced with only one choice and that is the choice of preserving their life at any cost.

It is however understood that the crimes these children commit are real and real victims accompany the violent acts. Those affected by armed conflict and those who ~~lose~~^{ed} family and friends to these conflicts deserve justice and should not be overlooked, the problem is finding who is truly responsible for the loss and trauma. There are a lot of grey areas once culpability and responsibility come into question. For instance if all the people who have recruited children into armed forces should be put on trial for violating human rights then what happens to the children who were recruited then turned around and recruited others as part of their orders? When placing responsibility on someone's shoulders the key component of reasoning should be if the individual was fully aware and in a correct state of mind when they carried out the act. If they were high off drugs being pumped into their system by an authority figure that is supposed to be protecting them then I would say the individual in question cannot be held fully accountable for their actions. The

real criminals are the adults who traumatize and manipulate these children by using a number of indoctrination tactics to emotionally tie the children to their armed group turning them into soldiers who are capable of monstrous acts.

This amount of extensive traumatic experiences and manipulation these children are put through at such a young age leave them with emotional wounds that can take a life time to heal. In the document "Child Soldiers: Criminals or Victims?" it is stated: "It is particularly important that children receive this type of help [assistance to aid physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration] even before trial, and while any criminal trial is continuing. If the provision of such help is withheld until a determination of guilt or innocence is arrived at, then serious psychological damage may be done. Continuing psychological assistance may be vital in helping the child to realise his responsibility for his acts and come to terms with them." ^{long quote} (Child Soldiers). After reading this it is safe to assume that these children are so far detached from reality that they do not even realize the fact that the violent atrocities they have been committing are in fact crimes and cannot continue to happen. It is hard to imagine a child, whose mind has been so warped and twisted to the point where they cannot see that killing, raping, and stealing is wrong. And then once the former soldier has come back to reality and realized the severity and ruthlessness of their past experiences in the armed conflict they need extensive psychological treatment in order to live with the sickening reality of what they have done to not only complete strangers but their neighbors and family members.

This is an ongoing issue in the world that still is still a long way from being

solved and does not receive as much press attention as it should. Which is another aspect of this problem that deserves some thought. Why doesn't the use of child soldiers get the attention from the media? Why aren't there countries sending aid to help liberate these children and stop the numerous induction statistics. This is not an issue that will go away any time soon. While the use of child soldiers is extremely detrimental to the country as a group of individuals, the people in charge of raising these armies of children have found great success in using children so the problem will only continue to grow until something is done to stop it. Maybe the problem is that awareness needs to be raised to get the word out and that will start activism. A slightly more alarming theory is that other countries just do not really care. If the problem is not affecting them personally and if they cannot benefit directly by stepping into help not many will bother providing any aid or solution to the problem at hand. Why can't the opportunity to save someone's life and end this atrocity be enough of a reward to help these children?

I have only scratched the surface of research on this issue and there is much more out there to be read and considered when thinking of the reasons why instead of treating child soldiers as criminals, they should be taken care of like the victims they are. None of these children asked for the brutality they have been shown or the manipulation they have undergone for the sake of being turned into soldiers to be used at their commander's disposal with complete disregard for their individual rights they are entitled to as human beings. They are not the ones to blame, they are suffering just as their victims suffer. Yes, someone should pay for the brutal acts of violence committed, but these children are not the ones to blame.

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I would like your comments to help me focus the direction of my paper and organization as a whole. Also what could be cut out and what you would like to see added. Thanks.

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