Character arcs: mapping creative writers' trajectories into the composition classroom.

Jon Udelson
University of Louisville

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CHARACTER ARCS: MAPPING CREATIVE WRITERS' TRAJECTORIES INTO THE COMPOSITION CLASSROOM

By

Jon Udelson
B.A., New York University, 2004
M.F.A., The City College of New York, 2010

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

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Department of English
University of Louisville

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A Dissertation Approved on

May 9, 2019

by the following Dissertation Committee:

______________________________
Andrea Olinger
Dissertation Co-director

______________________________
Bronwyn Williams
Dissertation Co-director

______________________________
Paul Griner

______________________________
Timothy Mayers
DEDICATION

For

Hilary

Who taught me anything is possible—even putting a stargate on a ship.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wouldn’t be writing this acknowledgements section of my first and, heavens help me, only dissertation without the unending guidance and support of my co-director Andrea Olinger, who has been in my corner since the start of this grad school journey of mine. Her mentoring and belief in both me and my work has made all the difference. As well, I want to thank my co-director Bronwyn Williams for his keen insights into this dissertation, worldly and spot-on views about the job market, and his host of sayings, the best of which has no doubt been: “The best dissertation is a done dissertation.” I would also like to extend my thanks to my committee members Paul Griner and Tim Mayers, for their time, patience, acumen, and friendship.

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This dissertation develops a theoretical and empirical approach to the study of professional creative writers and teachers. Specifically, it examines how these writers developed their knowledge of creative writing and writing pedagogy and how that knowledge informs their work as instructors of composition. Despite the common practice across writing programs of hiring formally-trained creative writers (M.A., M.F.A, Ph.D.) to teach first-year composition and related courses, little scholarship in the field of rhetoric and composition or writing studies more broadly specifically focuses on the disciplinary and professional development of these writer-teachers. Through case studies of graduate students, contingent faculty, lecturers, and professors, this dissertation shows that these writers become professionals not only through acts of literate and disciplinary uptake primarily characterized by curricular-based advancement in a field, but also through complex negotiations with communities, institutions, values, and practices outside the domains of colleges and universities.

In writing studies and the field of creative writing, the act of writing creatively tends to be viewed, respectively, as either undertheorized or without need of scholarly theorizing. Attendant to this view is one that, by extension, holds that creative writers’ practices and habits of mind are likewise either undertheorized or without need of being theorized. In
contrast, sociocultural approaches to studying writing practices address the need for research into this demographic of instructor by identifying the complex relationships that exist across their writing practices, institutions of disciplinary sponsorship, and semiotic action. This dissertation argues that these relationships may account for, provide perspectives on, or offer insights into both these instructors’ practices in the composition classroom and their professional situatedness in the programs for which they work.
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CHAPTER 1:
CARTOGRAPHICAL CONCERNS – MAPPING LITERATE DEVELOPMENT ACROSS SOCIAL, DISCIPLINARY, AND TEACHERLY CONTEXTS

Scholarship in the discipline of rhetoric and composition has often concerned itself with understanding both the training of writing teachers and the effects—professional, social, emotional—of that training. A great deal of this work situates these writing teachers-in-training as those who: work through carefully designed and theorized training protocols and practicums, are inflected by their experiences in the classroom, and are the subject of inquiries into questions of professional identity, disciplinary identity, and intellectual and emotional experience (Pytlik & Ligget, 2002; Anderson & Romano, 2006; Dryer, 2012; Restaino, 2012). Other scholarship, however, points out that although much of this research has been devoted to understanding theories of teaching and the training of teachers, less has been devoted to studies on how instructors actually learn to teach (Estrem & Reid, 2012; Wardle, 2014).

All of this is to say that we know much about what is said about teaching and about the experience of teaching, but not as much about both how instructors ultimately “take up” teaching and how often myriad literate practices developed across contexts, over time, and often unrelated to the modes of teaching and writing performed in the classes they teach, influence these instructors. As such, it is important that the field further probes how what is taught to writing instructors and what is learned outside the walls of the institution is interpreted, internalized, and made manifest in specific teacherly dispositions and practices. Additionally, the field must further work toward an understanding of the ways in which the
host of other literate practices undertaken by writing instructors may (or may not) affect both their teaching and the construction of various identities across time and space.

Certain scholars, it should be said, have begun this work toward both further articulations and understandings of these questions. Through the tracing of teachers’ practices—in and out of the classroom, within and beyond the boundaries of their professional institutions, as parts of and as parts separate from their social associations—researchers have suggested or implied the pedagogical importance of paying attention to the intricate networks and nexuses of teachers’ personal, professional, and literate experiences (Alsup, 2006; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Whitney, 2009; Roozen, Woodard, Kline, & Prior, 2015; Woodard, 2013, 2015). Much of this research has been made manifest, in part, by the various studies of teachers that have utilized sociocultural approaches emphasizing the “ways practices and identities develop by tying together seemingly unrelated activities over time” (Woodard, 2013, p. 2). Participants in these studies have included (but have not been limited to) instructors who have backgrounds in the sciences, who are creators of fanfiction and related materials, who undertake blogging as part of both their social action and pedagogical goals, who participate in multiple writing organizations, including those associated with their focal discipline and those seemingly outside that discipline, and so on.

Despite this scholarship, I would argue that much research has not explicitly focused on a particular key demographic of composition instructor (or the particular characteristics of that demographic): those who come from formal—i.e., institutionally sponsored—backgrounds in creative writing and who disciplinarily and professionally identify first and foremost as creative writers. In the examples above, many of the studied and surveyed teachers are situated firstly as educators, by both their own estimates of themselves as well as the researchers’. The non-educator identity is, in turn, often subsumed by their principal identity,
i.e. the identity most emphasized in the study. As an example, the three educators studied and discussed in Roozen et. al. (2015) are “Lisa: Who Also is Working Toward Becoming a Writer,” “Dave: The Accidental Blogger,” and “Kate: Showing the Students I'm a Fan” (pp. 207, 208, 210, emphases mine). Situating the educators in these ways suggests a framework for the studies that, while immensely valuable to our understanding of the lamination of activities bound by historical trajectories that assist in the construction of identity (Prior & Shipka, 2003), prioritizes one professional role (teaching) over another (writing, or creative writing). Still yet other research has situated its subjects as those who either come from a spectrum of English studies backgrounds or come from Writing Studies backgrounds more commonly associated with rhetoric and composition. Or, this research has situated its subjects more as universal instructors-to-be without great attention paid to their particular disciplinary and/or personal backgrounds.

In contrast to this research, for the purpose of study and inquiry, what would it mean to situate these teacher-writers’ professional roles not in a hierarchical organizational structure, but a lateral one? Particular to this dissertation, what might we learn from considering how each professional identity of the creative-writer-composition instructor is constructed and informs the other? Before continuing, it is worth noting that the meaning of the phrases “creative writer” and “creative writing” are subject to ongoing debate scheduled to end no time soon. Problems associated with the term “creative” in this context include oft lending itself to romantic conceptions of the artist-genius, intimating an elite form of writing, or even assuming universal notions of what creativity means (see Piller, 2017; Horner, 2018; Udelson, in press). For the purpose of expediency, I use the term “creative writer” to describe the person who writes in the genres typically produced toward the completion of degrees including, but not limited to, the B.F.A, M.A, M.F.A, and Ph.D. in Creative Writing
or similar fields. These genres include, but are not limited to, fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, drama, etc.

Given the professional and social ecologies in which this particular demographic of writing instructor participates, both presently and historically, as well as the practice of many institutions of post-secondary education selecting their writing instructors from this demographic, it seems pertinent that we attempt to make more visible the ways creative-writer composition-instructors construct their teacherly identities in ways informed by both in- and outside of school-related contexts. This project hinges on an investigation of these writers that takes as a given the importance of developing a set of methods informed by a sociocultural approach, one that emphasizes the need to understand how practices, identities, and communities that on the surface are seemingly disparate may, in reality, play an integral role in the creation, development, and preservation of matrices of participation and action that constitute the foundations of identity formation (see Bakhtin, 1981; Prior, 1998; Wenger, 1998; Scollon, 2001; Latour, 2005; Woodard, 2015). The major research questions of this study include the following:

1. What activities outside the curricular or disciplinary domains have contributed to formally-trained creative writers’ identities as such?

2. How do these identities bear upon the writerly values held by these individuals, and, in turn, how do these writerly values inform their pedagogical values and practices in the composition classroom?

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1 Such similar fields include those under the umbrella of degrees in English with special emphases in Creative Writing, or more specific degrees such as Creative Writing & Publishing Arts (at, e.g., University of Baltimore), Creative Writing & Translation (at, e.g., CUNY Queens College and University of Arkansas), Creative Writing & the Environment (at, e.g., Iowa State), etc.

2 This is, of course, not to imply that only writing produced in service of attaining one of these degrees “counts” as creative writing.
3. How do these individuals negotiate their professional identities as writers and teachers in the departments and programs for which they work?

Such a study would apprise the field of Rhetoric & Composition of its need to further incorporate elements and theories of Creative Writing and Creative Writing Studies into its already-historically interdisciplinary fold—a need, it should be added, that has been long resisted (see, e.g., Moxley, 1986; Bishop & Ostrom, 1994; Bishop, 1997; Mayers, 1999, 2005; Hesse, 2010; Sumpter, 2016). Acceptance of such disciplines into Rhetoric & Composition may help the discipline further its continuing goal of realizing the affordances of other forms of composing (similar to how it has realized those offered by digital multimodal/ media compositions, for example (see Yancy, 2004)) and how such affordances lead to the theorization and creation of new writing ecologies, cross-disciplinary and cross-curricular partnerships, and potentially transformative writing pedagogies. As audiences for writing continue to broaden, so too will our perspectives on what forms of composing will influence our field. Therefore, I contend that Composition ought to continue recognizing the place of creative writing in its discipline (see Hesse, 2010), as well as to consider how the affordances offered by practices in creative writing and orientations to writing influenced by Creative Writing may help achieve these goals. Such a continued theorization on the part of Rhetoric and Composition will also, I argue, help further thinking in the field of Creative Writing Studies by opening up multiple pathways toward shared histories, epistemological foundations, and potential methodological frameworks for conducting research.

In tracing the trajectories of CWCIs’ practices and literate developments, my study works toward an understanding of how these CWCIs might be located within “the laminated trajectories of their sociocultural lives” (Roozen et al., 2015, p. 206). Such a study, then, suggests that an examination of various, seemingly literate practices—even those seemingly
unrelated to writing and/or pedagogy— which can be studied heterochronically, multicontextually, and multispatially “can open up opportunities for transformation, as well as critique, of classroom practice, and for more fully recognizing, valuing, and promoting such linkages as a key element in the production of pedagogical practice” (p. 213). In effect I study this population of CWCIs to understand how these instructors believe they were taught to teach writing, how they believe they have learned to teach writing, and what literate practices related to creative writing (regardless of their direct bases in writing) or the formation of their identities as creative writers they believe have influenced their stance toward writing, the teaching of writing, and the construction of their teacherly ethos in the composition classroom. Such a goal entails an investigation into the histories of members of this population, the sites of their practices (both professional and non-), as well as the repurposing of literate activities and synthesis of these activities to form retexutured and reconextualized practices (Beach, 2003; Roozen, 2009; Dawson, 2011, 2016).

By considering the on-the-ground practices of those composition instructors with backgrounds in Creative Writing alongside the histories of activity that have given rise to their professional identities as “creative writers,” my hope is to grasp how these writer-teachers and teacher-writers have conceived of and developed their writing styles and teacherly ethos, as well as how these style and ethos are manifest in their pedagogical positionalities and practices. As we move forward with such investigations, we must be aware of not only the implications of the sheer number of composition instructors with backgrounds in creative writing, but also of what creative writing practices and affordances can bring to Composition’s table. This dissertation, then, also seeks to further understand Creative Writing’s (potential) influence and further potential use to Composition and identify points of intersection, points of departure, and points of conflict between the fields.
AN ARC THROUGH THE LITERATURE

In order to understand not just the place of creative writing in Composition Studies (Hesse, 2010) but the place of creative writers, I believe it necessary to briefly elucidate on some ways that creative writing is and has always been a part of Composition’s mission, since the conception of a mandatory composition course in Harvard in the late 19th century. To wit: the study I undertake seeks not to suggest a new area of concern for Composition, but rather, in part, attempts to highlight an area that has always been present, though at times partially obscured.

In the remainder of the chapter, I first explore how the literature on creative writing and its affordances helps to further an understanding of CWCIs’ relationships with writing and teaching. By creative writing and its affordances, I mean both material affordances in the form of a large labor pool of composition instructors, as well scholarly affordances that offer Composition as areas of further intellectual investigation. Part of this exploration entails, I believe, a review of literature on the terms “craft” and “style”—two terms highly operationalized and abundantly used in literature on creative writing, as well the rhetorical ecologies within which creative writers live and work—in order to construct an interpretative framework for interpreting and analyzing these terms’ uses.

Next, I review literature orienting literacy around social practices, community affiliations, and environments in order identify how literacy in this context provides a framework for discussing the shaping and influencing of identity.

And finally, I present the theoretical framework of my case study that argues for the value of studying the trajectories of CWCIs lives, as they can be investigated through their writing and non-writing practices, professional developments, and various associations.
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

Arguably, creative writers or else those who were proponents of a constructivist view of literary study, which brought together the ideas of both creating literature and literature’s theoretical foundations, have been influencing and shaping the “field” of composition since shortly after the inception of the Freshman English course at Harvard. D.G. Myers (1996) identifies creative writers’ and literary constructivists’ participations in and influences on the composition program at late-19th and early-20th century Harvard, as well as considers the origins of the two in relation to each other. Myers, in attempting to trace the origins and development of Creative Writing as a field in the U.S., notes how literary constructivism was nowhere

…studied as a discipline in itself that could do something in literature. Even where it assumed a place in the curriculum, the higher study of literature did not include writing for its own sake or any account of the processes of mind by which literature is constructed. The constructive aspect of literature was the province of rhetoric. (p. 36)

Myers goes on to discuss that while “creative writing began with the opposition to philology,” which is to say a near-scientistic approach toward the study of literature that emphasized identifying and categorizing linguistic units of a work, it eventually “resume[d] with the effort in the 1880s and 1890s to restore literary and educational value to the teaching of rhetoric” (p. 36). Those such as Barret Wendell—an early organizer of “English composition” at Harvard around this time—who challenged the preeminence of

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3 Two important characteristics of “English composition” to note here. First, the phrase referred not to the field of Composition or a discipline built around it, emerging or otherwise, but rather to a type of course taught at Harvard. Second, what was called “English composition” at the time bears striking resembles to what we would today call “creative writing” (see Mayers, 2005, p. 98). The emphasis here is less on the specifics of the course or the differences among creative writing and composition courses as they are commonly thought in today, but rather that “creative writing and composition…have from time to time been in close proximity, occasionally to the point of being almost indistinguishable from each other” (ibid).
philological study, which often treated literature “merely as a linguistic phenomenon, open to scientific explanation, rather than as a human utterance requiring interpretation” (p. 23), often did so on the grounds that literature, as cultural study, possessed a potential cache of its own explanatory power. The project of studying literature with the goal in mind of producing more would further increase the size and scope of this cache.

These “opponents of philology,” Myers argues, in searching for “an alternative to scholarly unconcern with literature as a creative act” (p. 36) investigated the greater affordances of rhetoric, which would become the basis of English composition. Myers continues his argument by noting how at this time at Harvard, however, the branch of rhetoric was thought to be an all-together separate one from the study of literature and primarily concerned itself with surface-level stylistic matters of speech and writing as practiced by those who had written literature; thus the field would have to be rescued and rebuilt. And while much can be seen to be lacking in the approaches taken by some of the original compositionists teaching at Harvard—most notable what we might term today as “current-traditional” approaches, which emphasized form and “force[d] students to repeatedly display their use of institutionally sanctioned forms” (Crowley, 1998, p. 95)—their success lies in being able to treat composition as, in the words of Wendell, “a thing apart” from other subjects that were usually understood as being more important components of the college curriculum.

While my purpose here is not to track in full a juxtaposed history of creative writing and composition, I also cannot overlook the importance of Myers’ discussion of English composition’s advent through, in part, literary constructivists taking up the subject of rhetoric—“the old subject” they found “disrepair” and “rebuilt…from the ground up” (Myers, p. 36). English composition finds its roots, via literary constructivism, in the notion
that there is more to say about literature than the (philological) study of it; in other words, a focus on literary constructivism *assisted* in the disciplinary outbreak of composition. In *History, Reflection and Narrative*, James Zebroski notes how forays into new disciplines are fomented when a “proto-community” representative of the nascent or inchoate discipline are dissatisfied with the “existing social formations and identities” of the parent discipline and so begin to identify their intellectual distinctions (pp. 109-110). It follows, then, that any new discipline born out of a parent discipline in the way Zebroski describes harbors with it these seeds of discontent and rebellion and, with them, a dream of new methodological foundations and practices that allow the new discipline to further grow apart from its parent discipline in order to stake its own disciplinary claims. My own claim here is simple enough: compositionists should forget neither Composition’s roots insofar as they relate to creative writing, nor creative writers who even today might still harbor similar concerns as those literary constructivists held over a century ago and helped to shape English composition at its institutional inception. In other words, we should be aware of how that seed has grown and into what.

In addition to offering a reading of D.G. Myers’ history of the subject, Tim Mayers (2005) points out that other major histories written by scholars across the fields of literature and composition, including those by Gerald Graff (1987) and Sharon Crowley (1998), have also found significant connections—conceptually, spatially, and temporally—with one another. All three scholars, for instance, cite and discuss at length the contributions Norman Foerster, director of the University of Iowa’s School of Letters in the 1930s, made

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*See also Maureen Goggins’s “Tangled Roots” (1999) for a short discussion of and bibliographies on the ways various fields in English studies have been historically entangled and, in cases, disentangled through the formations of disciplines, which are regarded as sites of power, influence, and disciplinary agency.*
to the fields. Mayers notes that it was Foerster, who, “disdaining the practice of philology,”
sought to “train aspiring English professors to be practicing creative writers, critics, and
public intellectuals…” (p. 99). Since the University of Iowa’s School of Letters is commonly
cited in histories as something of a hub for writerly activities and development at the post-
secondary level for a variety of reasons, not all of which, however, are related to paragon
writing and teaching activities (see Bennett, 2015), this emphasis on Foerster arguably
indicates the degree of influence he had not only the UISL but on how writing—as a
practice, commodity, and teaching subject—was understood in and for post-secondary
institutions. The point here being that quite visibly through the 1930s, overt connections
between all three fields—composition, creative writing, and literature—certainly existed.
And even once the disciplines of Composition and Creative Writing split apart, having, along
with Literature, never quite synthesized into the ideal form Foerster originally intended them
to be—followed quite different trajectories into the decades following the 1930s (see
Wilbers, 1980; Myers, 1996; McGurl, 2009), more covert but still undeniable connections
could be found between the cousin fields.

A look at literature from such journals as *English Journal*, *College English* and *College
Composition and Communication*, for instances, would reveal the fields of English writ large and
Composition’s continued connection to creative writing—as grounds for theorizing,
establishing practices, and considering certain pedagogical affordances. Granted that *English
Journal* is not a publication solely on matters of composition, since its inception in 1912 it has
published hundreds of articles with “Creative Writing” or its equivalent in the title. *College
English* and *College Composition and Communication*—the former geared toward scholar-teachers
and dedicating a large portion of its publication space to matters of composition, the latter
fully geared toward these matters, and both publishing inaugural issues in the mid-20th
century—combine on having published close to 100 articles with the phrase “creative writing,” and equivalent (such as “poetry”) or near-equivalent (such as “imaginative writing”) in their titles. These numbers of course include both CCC’s and College English’s publications of special issues focused on creative writing in 1999, and 2003 and 2009, respectively.

Further, investigating the role that creative writing might play in the composition classroom, Doug Hesse (2010) identifies that within 60+ year history (at the time of Hesse’s article) of CCC alone, the phrase “creative writing” or “imaginative writing” crop up in over 300 articles. Hesse, it must be noted, characterizes these references as often “passing” and usually “in conjunction with the ever-venerable debate about literature’s place in the composition course or broader considerations of the nature of the English major or department” (p. 35) all in an effort to highlight the degree to which composition has ignored the affordances of creative writing. However, the point that I am arguing here is not that Composition, as a discipline, hasn’t conducted a steady, overt, and focused investigation into creative writing—on this point I concur with Hesse—but rather that the affordances of creative writing have always made up a visible, albeit perhaps small, part of Composition’s discourse.

If we are to understand journals to be, in part, barometers of disciplinary importance or what is worthy of attention within a particular field, then we must consider what the measurements on the instruments indicate about creative writing. Mary Hedengren (2015), in her work on disciplinarity and the field of Creative Writing Studies, observes that “many disciplinary and writing-in-the-disciplines specialists (among others, Goggin, Hyland, and Becher) have turned their attention to journals, especially the early years of journals, as evidence of the formative power of disciplinary knowledge-making” (p. 98). Discussions of creative writing’s affordances to the field of English and, more specifically, that of
Composition would indicate that such ventures are part of this knowledge-making process. Hedengren goes on to argue that the way such processes of knowledge-making within a discipline are enacted are through the ways that “academic journals develop a consensus of knowledge-building practices as potential authors ‘negotiate’ with editorial staff and the journal’s imagined audience (MacDonald [1994], p. 9; Hyland [2004], p. 1)” (p. 98). As far as goes creative writing’s history vis-à-vis that of Composition, if the end of such negotiations include hundreds of articles, multiple special issues, and a countless number of references, then the editors (as gatekeepers), authors (as primary producers of knowledge in these negotiations) and imagined audiences (as rhetorical constructions of these gatekeepers and producers) all have already carved out a space for the continued investigation of creative writing: its history, theories, methodological and epistemological conceits, and practices, as well as concomitant social practices and community affiliations of its practitioners, which in themselves are better understood fluidly—that is, existing in states of constant evolution and flux via the members’ participatory actions.

It seems impossible that any single CWCI—or any single individual for that matter regardless of professional and/or intellectual status—would possess the knowledge in full of the various complexities of the sites of these above-mentioned investigations. However, it is doubtful that these influences have not played a part in CWCI’s identity formations—both personally and professionally—much in the same way that it is near-impossible that ongoing participation within any literate ecology would not influence one’s literate actions and rhetorical or discoursal sensibilities (see, e.g., Cooper, 1986; Edbauer, 2005). Hence it also seems impossible that such influences—and sensibilities and dispositions affected thereof—and such characteristics of identity do not inform, or are not performed in, CWCI’s writing classrooms, during sessions of pedagogical development or training, as well as during their
teacherly work—both professional and casual—outside the classroom.

**CREATIVE WRITING: DISCIPLINE, LABOR, PRACTICE**

An ever-increasing number of college and university programs offer advanced degrees—M.A.s, M.F.A.s, or Ph.D.s—in Creative Writing. A simple search of *Poet's & Writers* and AWP’s databases, using only institutions’ offerings of these degrees as its search criteria, currently return hundreds of such Creative Writing programs. Departments that oversee these programs tend to rely on student and/or contingent labor to teach their composition classes, and particularly first-year composition classes (see Crowley, 1998; Schell & Stock, 2000; Bousquet, 2008). Their selecting of composition instructors from these Creative Writing programs, or hiring of instructors who have been awarded their advanced degrees in Creative Writing, indicate that a great number of instructors with formal backgrounds in creative writing teach many post-secondary institutions’ composition classes. Further, given the training in the form of a practicum or pedagogy course many graduate students in Creative Writing programs must undergo in order to teach composition, it seems reasonable to assume that a significant and institutionally-sponsored flow of CWCIs into the composition classroom has been taking place for years, and will continue to for years to come.

That the population of CWCIs is large enough to represent a significant influence in the field need is further evidenced in a number of ways. The American Association of University Professors’ (AAUP’s) 2012-2013 “Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession” shows that from 1975 to 2011 faculty consisting of Graduate Student

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5 Studies on graduate student writing instructors by Dyer (2012) and Restaino (2012), for instances, both include a high percentage of graduate students in Creative Writing in their subject pool.
Employees and Part-time Faculty made up 45% (in 1975) to 60% (in 2011) of the national post-secondary teaching faculty. (If we were to add all the other non-tenure track faculty to this number, it would become 55 to 75%.) Former MLA president Michael Bérubé’s (2012) “Among the Majority” corroborates this finding, stating that “contingent faculty members now make up over 1 million of the 1.5 million people teaching in American colleges and universities” (n.p). Further, drawing from a statistic released by *Forum* (Spring 2010), the documentary *Con Job* (2014) ventures that “83.8% of composition instructors teach off the tenure track.” These general statistics on contingent laborers, coupled with the number of graduate programs in Creative Writing, suggest to me that assuming a substantial number of composition classes are taught by creative writers, with either formal or informal backgrounds in the discipline, would not be off-base. Such an observation opens the door further for Composition to reflect on the importance of, as well as its responsibility to consider the role this demographic of instructor—and so these instructors’ formal educational backgrounds—play in the discipline. This is especially true when we consider Composition as not only a subject of theoretical speculation, but as a “teaching subject” (Harris, 1997) in that it is, at least in part, defined by the practices that take place within the boundaries and borders of the composition classroom. In considering Composition this way, the opportunity of understanding the affordances of creative writing, or at least the habits of mind and dispositions attendant to its trained practitioners, appears all the more important. Recent works of scholarship within Rhetoric & Composition have already begun to indicate the importance of investigating these possible affordances, as well as indicating the hesitancy (or, I would argue, *seeming* hesitancy) on the part of Composition to welcome Creative Writing into its fold.

Doug Hesse (2010), for instance, in “The Place of Creative Writing in Composition
Studies,” draws our attention to Composition’s reluctance at times to entertain the possible rhetorical affordances offered by the discipline of Creative Writing. Hesse declares that while practices in writing that emphasize the aesthetic “may not be the full frontal assault on argument…[,] to imagine [they] have no effect beyond killing time is to misunderstand what is actually possible in an age surfeited by texts” (p. 48). The surfeit-statused “age” to which Hesse refers is marked, in large extent, by the proliferation of writings that exist in digital landscapes—many of which are narrative-based—and so are accessible through digital apparatus and to audiences who have immediate and broad access.

A main point of Hesse’s argument—that the aesthetic carries with it a certain “rhetorical force” (p. 48)—throws into relief the need for writers and teachers of writing to contend with what Hesse believes to be the main reason writers write. Hesse asserts that doing so “fulfills personal and social interests” (p. 47) that attain mostly in larger spheres outside the academic sphere, one that the composition classroom cannot help but bolster. And so, Hesse turns to the “assumptions and practices for creative writing” (p. 35) through which the composition instructor can help writers “to share, to learn, [and] to feel valued” (p. 47). In doing so, he also turns to the aesthetically inflected nature of a portion of public writing, as well as the reading and interpreting of that writing. Such a call only continues the project that Compositio has been undertaking the past several decades: to consider modes of composition beyond the traditionally-understood alphanumeric/argumentative rendition (see, e.g., Lutkewitte, 2014), to become further action-oriented in the public sphere (see, e.g., Deans et al., 2010), and to stave off the various ways that Composition has become both institutionally marginalized, as well as marginalized in the public’s mind (Crowley, 1998; Miller, 1991).

Even more recent literature in the field of rhetoric and composition has revisited
pedagogies and even pedagogues associated with creative writing, and they have attempted to do so in ways of framing creative writing and associated epistemologies and theoretical underpinnings within the context of composition (see, e.g., Sullivan, 2012; Berg & May, 2015; Koehler, 2017). For example, Goldblatt (2017) traces lines of expressivism, a misunderstood and what he calls “much aligned” movement (p. 439), through the work and career of Wendy Bishop. The self-proclaimed “something-like-an-expressivist” (qtd. p. 448), Bishop was a scholar and creative writer commonly thought of as straddling the lines between composition and creative writing, whose pedagogical position regarding expressivism was informed by both. This, despite the larger field’s views of expressivist pedagogies, especially those concomitant with creative writing, as those that strove for “aesthetic achievement rather than self-actualization” (p. 447). Bishop fought against this view that expressivist pedagogies cannot lead to self-actualization and kept students in a state of “naivete.” While Goldblatt recognizes the immense value of both the social turn in composition pedagogy and social-epistemic rhetorics, attributed predominantly to Berlin, he does see how expressivist pedagogies may be of use. He argues that a more creative-based and attentive approach to expressivism can nurture writers’ and students’ “desire to speak out to [their] intimate experiences and to connect with communities in need” (p. 447), goals closely associated with social-epistemic pedagogies notions of self-actualization.

However, the above does not represent an argument for the unequivocal use and value of writing in creative genres—fiction, poetry, etc.—in the composition classroom. It is important to note that while there have been calls for the outright teaching of creative writing and the production of so-called creative writing (poetry, fiction, drama, creative non-fiction, etc.) in the composition classroom (see, among others, Gammarino, 2009; Berg, 2010), the point I am attempting to emphasize here is that, as compositionists, we might
consider how certain theories, practices, and praxes from the field of Creative Writing may further inform orientations toward process, production, and student-instructor relationships. Regarding this integration of the domain of the “creative” more generally speaking, Patrick Sullivan (2015) argues that “what we are trying to accomplish here with a focus on creativity is precisely this liberated, vital, and ‘more robust’ understanding of academic discourse and academic literacies for students in our composition classes” for which scholars such as Petraglia (1995), Nicotra (2009), Rankins-Robertson et. al. (2010), Heard (2014) and other have agitated (p. 21). Such an inclusion of practices related to Creative Writing, then, may open up multiple avenues toward insight.

By inviting discourses around creativity and creative writing more openly into the composition classroom, we may complicate existing notions about the comparative epistemological dimensions of the disciplines of Creative Writing and Composition. In particular, I believe it would be productive to investigate what different approaches toward writing and the teaching of writing each discipline asks us to take, if any. It would also be interesting to deliberate further on those similar conclusions about writing and the teaching of writing each discipline emphasizes, even is those conclusions are reached (or believed to be reached) via different epistemological avenues (see Bizzaro, 2004, 2009) and across the trajectories of different literate practices. In order to begin this investigation, however, it is important that we first understand the various discourses surrounding the term “craft,” since the term occupies much of the epicenter of cross-disciplinary discussions regarding the production of creative writing.

NOTIONS OF “CRAFT”

Heeding Hesse and others’ calls for composition to adopt practices from creative writing
would require, I believe, acknowledging how the field of Creative Writing understands, discusses, and seeks to create pedagogies based in “craft,” a commonly used term across Creative Writing programs. Each of the M.F.A in Creative Writing programs that Poets & Writers (Sept./Oct. 2011) listed as the top 10 in the country in 2012, for instance, refers numerous times in their programs and course descriptions to “craft”—and does so in similar form: mostly having to do with the laborious aspects of technique, the execution of which create “style.” An informal search of dozens of other programs listed on both the AWP’s and Poets & Writer’s databases reveal the same or strikingly similar. It seems, then, to consider the “place of creative writing in composition studies” means to consider the place of craft in composition studies.

However, the term is not without its immense difficulties, and it is worth noting the degree to which “craft,” beyond resisting definition, has rarely been given lengthy definitions in terms of writing. “Craft,” according to Mayers (2005), “probably serves more to connote a broad realm or, to borrow a phrase from Raymond Williams, a “structure of feeling”” (p. 65) than it does to denote any concretized sets of socio-historical concepts. A return to the ten M.F.A programs cited by Poets & Writers would offer little help since these programs treat the term “craft” as if it were commonly understood, without need for definition, and solely associated with such understandings as “technique.” Reinforcing this claim is D.W. Fenza (2000), former the AWP executive director, who has asserted that “the goal of creative writing is to [help students] become, first and foremost, accomplished writers who make significant contributions to contemporary literature. All the other goals, like becoming an academic professional, are ancillary to that artistic goal” (n.p). While Fenza certainly does not speak for all creative writers, or even all those associated with AWP, such a statement, in its sidelining of the rigorous scholarly treatment of creative writing and, by extension, the
rigorous scholarly treatment of craft, only helps to reinforce Mayer’s claim of the hazy “broad realm” the term occupies.

According to Mayers, such a distinction made by Fenza only serves to further isolate Creative Writing from the scholarly projects of the university at large. Koehler, in “Digitizing Craft,” goes on to reinforce the problems this divide stirs up: “In this way,” states Koehler, taking up Mayers criticism of Fenza, “creative writing becomes reduced to craft, understood merely as the manipulation of the surface features of a text” (381, emphasis mine). In combination, I read Mayers and Koehler as arguing that without a scholarly voice from Creative Writing in the discussion, the sedimented view of craft as technique remains the standardized, and problematic, view of it in several, large academic spheres.

The term often remains fuzzy even in academic spheres centered on Composition. A gloss of Composition’s scholarship on Creative Writing over the past 15 years, including both College English and CCC’s special issue(s) on the subject of Creative Writing, treat the term relationally and comparatively to other, perhaps more denotatively understood terms. In these cases, “craft” is set often in discrete, single-worded or single-phrased synonymous relations with: “artfulness” (Cain, 1999); “aesthetics in a vacuum” (Root, 2003); that which along with “beauty” and “the telling of the story” comes to determine the “better writer” (Williams, 2003); that which is related to “form” (Andrews, 2009); and “technique” (Hesse, 2010). While it was not the project of any of these articles to articulate a precise and fully theorized and historicized definition of craft—nor is it necessarily true these characteristics of craft represent the authors’ direct views of the term—the various treatments of the term point to a minor crisis in Composition: the question “what is craft?” has either yet been adequately answered, or the answer has yet to be adequately circulated. The current treatments of the term continue to orbit our conversation of it around a concept of creation,
but one lacking some theorizing as to the trajectory and/or the material and socially situated natures of creating.

Possibly due to this aforementioned gap in theorization and historicizing, the term “craft” has often, by de facto, become saddled with certain Enlightenment-era connotations. Drawing on Fehrman’s Poetic Creation: Inspiration or Craft (1980), Mayers (2005) offers insight into where “the reductive sense of craft may have originated” (p. 66). Working from Romantic-era conceptions about the production of art, Mayers recounts Fehrman writing:

> When writers, artists, and musicians wish to indicate how a work of art is created, they often have recourse to images. It is possible to identify two recurrent types of image. One, prevalent in the aesthetics of romanticism, consists of images taken from the world of growth, from organic life. The other belongs to the work of craftsmanship, industry, and artifacts, and became common during the second half of the twentieth century. (4, qtd. in Mayers, 2005, p. 66)

From here, Mayers point out that theories of production could basically be broken down into two categorizations: an “aesthetics of inspiration” and an “aesthetics of work.” However, work aesthetics were to “become the concept of craft as nothing but technique,” or “the technical and mechanical aspects of composition,” which ultimately became “severed from invention.” Invention would remain in the realm of inspiration, “completely mysterious and resistant to explanation” (pp. 66-67).

Instead of treating “craft” as an adjectival description of the process of writing, of characteristics of the crafted product, or as something “mysterious,” some scholars in composition have attempted to link the term to actions and relationships among writers and readers. Robert Johnson (2010), for instance, offers that “craft knowledge is more than the theory of art (techne); it is also the activity (poesis) of the productive moment” (p. 679). The crafts person not only “creates and transfers knowledge,” but “can [also] be a teacher” (p. 678). Similarly, Koehler (2013) links craft to its role in effecting “sensory and interpretive immersion,” as well as to a method for understanding the “synthesis of readers’ affect and
participation in an unfolding narrative” (p. 387). These understandings of the term speak to potential theoretical aspects that move us beyond the “craft-as-mechanical-technique” paradigm and into an understanding of the potential activities the term entails. These activities include those that are culturally, historically and societally bound, and which reference both the embodied and the communal.

Tim Mayers, in (Re)Writing Craft (2005) has, I believe, contributed important scholarship in Composition to work out a socio-historical and theoretical understanding of the term. Mayers attempts to delineate a conception of “craft” by linking the term through Romantic-era notions of image and materiality, to commercialism and materialism, and to Heideggerian theories of technology. Mayer’s treatment of craft provides nuance to the term that addresses the aspects listed above (aesthetic, artful, beautiful, related to form and technique, etc.) in addition to its historical and philosophically based implications: craft, as per Mayer’s reading of Heidegger, not only entails “the manipulation of linguistic ‘tools’ like meter and rhyme” but also “the poet’s relationship to language” (p. 71). In linking the poet to language through this “relationship,” Mayers reads Heidegger as implying that “the poet is the medium for the language,” as well as being “a craftsperson, one who has learned the difficult art of listening to language and not forcing language to submit to intention” (p. 72).

It is probably in this relationship where the idea of craft finds purchase within the field of Composition: it “eradicates the problematic and artificial distinction between craft and talent” (p. 71) as it also asks us to consider the rhetorical relationships among the craftsperson and her or his medium (material), as well as the situatedness of the craftsperson (“poet”) “that is rooted neither in individualistic, apolitical stances of Romanticism nor in the deterministic extreme of some literary theories” (p. 74). Therefore, the craftsperson is an agent of social engagement and potential change.
That rhetorical relationship, I would argue, is less along the lines of such Aristotelian notions of discovering the “available means of persuasion,” in that in the example above, the poet is not the sole actor upon the language, but is rather worked through the language as the language works through them. Perhaps such a notion of the rhetorical is more along the lines of the Burkean sense—as that “designed to elicit a ‘response of some sort’” (Burke, 1967, p. 236) though not necessarily demanding it—or even in the Hauserian sense—the rhetorical as a “symbolic inducement of social cooperation” (1999, p. 14) toward a specific social goal or activity, or which response would qualify.

Kelly Pender (2011) further meditates on craft’s complexities, discussing the term in relation to techne, in an attempt to reconnect craft’s once-severed relationship to invention. Pender identifies “craft” as a form or loose approximation of techne, along with “art” and “skill,” with “all of these words hav[ing] to do with a process of making, that is, a process of producing or bringing forth” (p. 4). These three terms—“craft,” “art,” and “skill”—reference the knowledges and know-how needed to produce a particular sort of material object in the world—a painting, for instance, or a poem. These terms are non-evaluative in that they need not reference a particular taste-based quality we might associate with a painting—a “good” painting, a “bad” painting, or so on. They reference only the domains of knowledge required and put to use in order to produce whatever it is we understand as a painting—whether it’s something like, as examples, the portraits by Alice Neel or the “invisible” art of Lana Newstrom.

Since these three terms are not direct translations of techne, either separately or taken together, we are better served by understanding them as terms helping orient us to the discussion of techne. They are satellite terms, in other words, allowing us conceptual access to the more complex structure they orbit, more so than they are definitional terms. This
more complex structure, *techne*, Pender goes on to relate to another Greek term, *poesis*.

Pender offers a discussion of the word *poesis* as the process by which this “bringing forth” occurs. In doing so, she creates a ligature connecting *poesis* and *techne*, further relating *techne* as a particular form of *poesis*. Techne as a form of poesis:

(1) follows a true course of reasoning, (2) has its origin in a maker, (3) is concerned with things that can either be or not be, and (4) locates its end outside the process of making in the use of the thing made. (p. 5)

While Pender will go on to further examine and complicate these characteristics, she concedes that “if there were such a thing as a ‘baseline’ definition of *techne*, then arguably this would be it” (5). Such a complex of characteristics, each of which inflect the others, continues to move techne (and thus craft) away from one-dimensional ideas such “technique” or “skill.” As a form of poesis, techne “creates opportunities for students to experience writing *as* writing even when they are using it to achieve an external goal” (p. 142). This conception of techne runs counter to more descriptive uses or instrumental understandings of the term that find their primary values in the achievement of those external goals. In doing so, it “engage[s] us in a process…of bringing-forth that is aimed more at doing something than at knowing something.” This process helps to frame the project of writing, and the teaching of writing, as a “means of textual production”—which entails all the material and sociohistorical underpinnings of such production—more so than only a “means of textual interpretation” (p. 143) belying a “bring-forth” production.

Basing my definition, then, off these social, historical, and philosophical considerations of craft, for this dissertation I’ll understand the term craft as through four major characteristics: it is (1) a practice related to an aesthetic-based understanding of discipline that is (2) limited to the medium/media’s material affordances and thus the bodily senses such practices on or with the medium/media can evoke, and which (3) references a
craftsperson’s bi-directional relationship to their medium, as well as (4) underscores the co-
constructive and participatory practices of the discourse ecologies into which its outcome (the crafted work) is disseminated.

This definition of “craft” finds purchase with multiple applications of the term across disciplines and practices. First, it is frequently used among creative writers and within Creative Writing programs. It is part of the vernacular of the professional discourse of Creative Writing and, as such, represents a term all participants in my study have used extensively on their pathways of disciplinary becomings and throughout their writing careers. This does not necessarily mean that all participants used this term in the same way. (Although a nod to production was present in all participants’ descriptions, each participant advanced nuanced understandings of the term that differentiated their definition from both my own and other participants’.) This means only that the term “craft” references a structure of values for each of my participants that references the material means by which they compose their works.

I will use this definition as a basis for understanding how creative writers negotiate this term in relation to their creative work and how, if at all, this term finds traction with the term “style.” In the next section I will discuss how certain characteristics of this definition of craft may inform a number of definitions of “style” across the discipline of Rhetoric & Composition.

ITERATIONS OF “STYLE”

Scholarship on the subject of “style” over the last 15+ years has shown that the term pertains to much more than issues related to “correctness”—i.e. products of proofreading, editing, exercises in thesaurus use, and so on. The reemergence of style studies has, in fact,
linked style again to knowledge generation and cultural interpretation (e.g., Duncan & Vanguri, 2013). The issue we face in using this term, however, perhaps exists in contrast to the issue I identified above when using a term like “craft” in the field of Rhetoric and Composition, specifically. Style, as a concept, has been a subject of great debate and numerous iterations in the field and is argued to be understood better as “multiple, interlocking definitions” (Ray, 2015, p. 16) rather than as a single definition, theory, or historical perspective. Brian Ray, however, argues for the rich “value” of these multiple over “a particular theory or discipline” (p. 16, emphasis mine).

Ray’s understanding of style in many ways reinforces Paul Butler’s view of the diasporic status of style in composition studies—which is to say its often-unnoticed ubiquity across disciplines and writing practices (Butler, 2008, pp. 86-113). Butler argues that as scholars have realized the ways style has become incorporated with a host of other disciplines, “style in composition has not remained static in a priori locations but has developed dynamically as it encounters language and practices in other areas of the field” (p. 88). However, although valuing and understanding style as a series of “multiple, interlocking definitions,” it seems pertinent for this dissertation to hew down the ways that I will be using the term. I do this by limiting my use of the term to (1) how certain, though certainly not all, scholars in the field of style studies conceive of and use the term, and (2) how participants in the study consider the term theoretically, as well as in relation to their writing and teaching practices. In this way, I consider definitions of style as they relate to and are undergirded by both scholarship and practice.

Working within a framework of moves writers can make to effect and create texts, Butler begins Out of Style (2008) with this definition of “style”:

the deployment of rhetorical resources, in written discourse, to create and express meaning. According to this definition style involves the use of written language
features as habitual patterns, rhetorical options, and conscious choices at the sentence and word level (see Connors, 1997, 257) even though the effects of these features extend to broader areas of discourse and beyond. (p. 3)

Butler reinforces this orientation toward style in the introduction to the 2010 collection Style in Rhetoric and Composition. Here, he characterizes style as:

>a series of both conscious and unconscious choices that writers make about everything from the words we use (diction) and their arrangement in sentences (syntax) to the tone with which we express our point of view (e.g., ironic, formal, or colloquial) and the way we achieve emphasis in a sentence (e.g., by placing the most important information at the end). (p. 1)

In these cases, Butler sets a limit to his definition of the term to writerly choices, even though, in both cases, he considers those choices and corollary effects over which the writer has little to no control: “the effects of these features extend to broader areas of discourse” and “unconscious choices.” While these definitions of the term are somewhat problematic for the ways, by my read anyway, they reinforce certain, though not holistic, notions of the primacy of intentionality and mentalities of universal audiences (though perhaps non-monolithic ones; more on the problematics below), such a definition does inform certain aspects of the definition of “craft” posited above.

Butler identifies style as that which “create[s] and express[es] meaning,” yet does not offer a speculation as to what kinds or types of meaning can be expressed, or how they can be expressed. Such a conception of style leaves open the door to its relation to the aesthetic, and thus to related discourse communities (both in- and outside the classroom) to whom and through which the effect(s) of the craft, along with the aesthetic creations thereof, disseminates. Butler (2010) ultimately offers a characteristic of style-as-produced effect, stating “it is essential to see style for what it is: a key way to separate what is memorable from what is forgettable in history” (p. 5). Here, “style” serves as a practical method of distinction—one that is (un)intentionally produced to (un)intended effects; attempts to
account for the material dimensions of its existence, rhetorical outcomes, and circumstances; and travels through multiple discourses and discourse communities.

Iterations of this regard toward style, which further reinforce the practice of craft, can be seen in various works such as T.R Johnson and Tom Pace’s *Refiguring Prose* (2005) and Mike Duncan and Star Medzerian-Vanguri’s collection *The Centrality of Style* (2013), both of which emphasize pedagogical value. In the case of *Refiguring Prose*, after recapping the rise and fall of style studies, subsequent parts of the book focus on certain aesthetic-based qualities of composition: literary sensitivity (Alsup, 2005), art-centric approaches (Gomez, 2005), repetition that borders the poetic and stanzal (Goldthwaite, 2005), and sound (as well as the mystical and cosmological) (Johnson, 2005). And in the case of *The Centrality of Style*, this understanding of style as intimately linked to the production of effect is perhaps made even more clear: the collection is broken up into two main parts—the first, “Conceptualizing Style,” sets us up for the second, “Applying Style.” As such, we can still identify a branch of style studies concerned with production, practice, and the consideration of one’s ability to “language” on the page (or its equivalent).

As mentioned above, however, such notions of style are not without their own sets of problematics. Holcomb & Killingsworth (2013) would understand such a definition as Butler’s along the lines of the “narrow version” of style, which they would set in binary opposition to the “broad version” of style. By this “broad version,” Holcomb & Killingsworth defines style as “‘ways of doing’ and takes within its purview virtually any artifact or practice that has communicative potential.” Additionally, this view, they argue, “opens wider vistas onto social and cultural criticism” (p. 119). Butler’s definition, along with those related through it, pigeon-hole “style” to the purely textual, and forego rigorously considering the degree to which style and acts of “styling” (Coupland, 2007) may move
beyond the alphanumeric text into any number of social encounters: style as fashion (see Brummett, 2008), style as digital interface (see Brooke, 2009), style as performance (see Holcomb & Killingsworth, 2010), etc. I would argue that each of these three understandings of style take into consideration the various ways in which a message or expression—be it textual, bodily, and so on—“is delivered, shared, negotiated between an author and an audience” (Holcomb & Killingsworth, 2010, p. 61), because their iterations highlight the public dimension of styling.

To take such an orientation toward style one step further, we may also note how Butler’s definition does not consider the various ways that style, and style’s effects, are co-constructive and indexical. Andrea Olinger (2016), working in part through scholarship in both sociolinguistics and (re)mediation, offers this robust definition of the term: style as the “dynamic co-construction of typified indexical meanings (types of peoples, practices, situations, texts) perceived in a single sign or a cluster of signs and influenced by participants’ language ideologies” (p. 125). In these cases style, or, more appropriately, styling may be argued to be an identifiable action, one: that reifies semiotic constructions (Prior, Hengst, Roozen, & Shipka, 2006); catalogs multiple streams of activity that flow into the act of styling (Prior, 1998); makes use of both discursive and non-discursive modes of communication (Matsuda, 2001); positions the “voice” of the action’s originator as that which is “simultaneously personal and social” (Prior, 2001); whose meaning is chronotopically laminated and under (re)negotiation by communities and individuals across space and time (Prior & Shipka, 2003); and which references the cultural hegemony and strata of social power the act itself reinforces and in which it exists (Agha, 2003; 2007).

In terms of this dissertation and the case study that will form its backbone, such a view of style has the benefit of helping me consider not only the textual styling practices that
CWCIs perceive themselves as undertaking, but also the various literate activities and histories they bring with them to their acts of styling. Such an understanding, I hypothesize, will aid in theorizing CWCIs’ “relatedness” (Heidegger, qtd. in Mayers, 2005: p. 71) to their medium. This theorization, in turn, may aid in conversations about the relationships between style and craft, as well as how these relationships undergird participants’ professional practices as creative writers, their writerly values, and their approaches toward writing pedagogy.

With particular regard for this last point, Medzerian (2010) has considered how stylistic values in writing are taken up by students vis-à-vis their reading of instructors’ comments. While this aspect of the study on which this dissertation is based will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter, which focuses on the study’s methods, it is worth mentioning here as yet another reason understanding a discourse around style is pertinent for a discussion of creative writer-composition instructors whose written feedback to students, informed by their own disciplinary training, becomes a site of examination. I explore the affordances of this branch of style studies in greater detail in Chapter 4, where I discuss co-generated data participants and I produced over the course of our conversations about textual teaching artifacts.

LITERACY & IDENTITY

While not the first to make or imply this point, Street (2000) offers a New Literacy Studies approach that helps describe a renewed orientation toward the theorizing and study of literacy. This orientation directs our sights away from the preeminence of skill sets traditionally associated with literacy and literate practice (reading, writing, speaking, etc.) and instead suggests literacy as a “set of social practices deeply associated with identity and social
Writing studies scholarship has taken up this view of literacy, and particularly with regard to the ways it implies that literacy is negotiated across a number of social and cultural contexts, as well as developed alongside the availability of tools and uses of those tools, be those uses by design or by repurposing. This approach toward the study of literacy finds common ground with theorists who have suggested similar approaches for the study of individuals, peoples, and institutions within the context of the sociocultural (see, e.g. Lave & Wegner, 1991; Wertsch, 1998; Scollon, 2001, 2008) and from which this dissertation also draws.

Examples of this confluence include Barton & Hamilton (1998), who describe how individuals’ literate practices and knowledges as they contend with and fail to contend with both private and governmental bureaucracies often stem from their socioeconomic contexts. Additionally, Brandt (2001) identifies the many literacies and literate actions that come to define jobs and professions, and thus workers, often not associated with traditional literacy practices. And Gee (2004) identifies processes of socialization (and the performance of socialization) associated with children’s educational identities through the situatedness of their in- and out-of-school learning practices.

In their comprehensive review of the dominant metaphors of literacy and constructions of identity informed by those literacies, Moje & Luke (2009), whom I draw from and discuss in greater detail in Chapter 3, offer an eloquent summation and contextualization of the more current status of literacy study that take into account what I have discussed above. They write:

The move to study identity's relationship to literacy and literacy's relationship to identity, what we call herein literacy-and-identity studies, seems at least partially motivated by an interest in foregrounding the actor or agent in literate and social practices. This move appears to be explained in part as resistance to a skill-based view of literacy or to a view of literacy as cognitive processes enacted independently from people's motivations, interests, and other social practices (Street, 1984). That is,
the social turn in literacy theory and research (Gee, 1994) over the last three decades has generated close, in-depth research on the literacy practices of actual people, a move that has turned researchers' and theorists' attentions to the roles of texts and literacy practices as tools or media for constructing, narrating, mediating, enacting, performing, enlisting, or exploring identities. In other words, recognizing literacy practices as social has led many theorists to recognize that people's identities mediate and are mediated by the texts they read, write, and talk about. (416)

What is particularly helpful here for this dissertation is the way that Moje & Luke work to situate literate practice in particular social-based contexts. In so doing, they offer us insight into how individuals—as opposed to subject types problematically constructed through ahistorical and acontextual ideological frames—enter onto pathways of literate development through, among other things, affiliations with and participations in various communities of practice. Focuses on these pathways further upend traditional notions of literacy that are ideologically-rooted and, which Street (2003) argues, underwrite the dominant practices of some while marginalizing the practices of lesser-powered others. They do this, in part, by challenging the idea that only certain forms of literacy “count” and that these literacies can only be learned in particular communities.

Such a view as the one described above is particularly helpful when considering projects either under the banner of or taking off from traditions in New Literacy Studies that seek to challenge: (1) the idea that particular types of literate development happen only in institutional domains, and (2) the aforementioned subject types constructed through ahistorical ideological frames, which often discount both the embodied experiences of the literate individual and the places and/or spaces where literate action takes place. For example, Leander and Boldt (2013) discuss 10-year-old Lee, “a child who was seen by as teachers as failing within the framing of literacy in his elementary school” (p. 23). However, Lee’s literacy practices with Japanese manga—reading it and acting out what he read—highlight the ways the act of “reading” can be reconceptualized as, in part, an embodied
practice and referencing acts of non-traditional engagement with texts. The young Lee, Leander and Boldt assert, “was seen as a failing reader in school and yet he was an enthusiastic reader at home” (42), which challenges the primacy of school-based learning as the principal mode of literate development. (See also Hull & Schultz (2002)).

Other researchers have examined individual’s engagements with places and spaces as they relate to literate development and the process of performing multiple literate activities, including writing (e.g., Rule, 2018). Still others have discussed these spaces insofar as they can be conceived of as, for example, barriers excluding agents (such as students) from—or entranceways inviting them into—physical areas of potential literate development, including, but not limited to, college campuses or Writing Centers (e.g., Williams, 2017). In Chapter 5, I discuss institutional spaces and how they can affect teacher-writers’ negotiations of professional identities, much of which process has to do with teacher-writers imagining of these institutional spaces as sites of disciplinary expertise that inhibit negotiation.

Kate Pahl (2014), discussing what I see as the repurposing of space through a process of recontextualizing its socio-political situatedness, considers how “spaces are relational and can be transformed through interaction.” She recounts an interview with “a young person talking about their experience of being outside on a cold night in Rawmarsh”—who describes the space as containing “no shelter,” being “all collapsed,” and offer him “nowhere to go” (p. 33). Regarding this and other descriptions, Pahl offers how this site and others like it become “mapped through repeated encounters” and “a potential space that can be used by storytellers” (p. 34), a space, “ideologically and politically structured” that “imagination seeks to change” (p. 35). In Chapter 3, I illustrate and discuss the importance of such acts of “changing” with regard to helping blaze new pathways toward the construction of writerly identities.
Prior & Shipka (2003), in their discussion of “chronotopic lamination,” identify the various ways that emphases on examinations of literate practices across contexts, spaces, and time, bring many of these lines together. They suggest a mode of examination that entails looking to the way these aforementioned practices become “tied together in trajectories of literate action” and analyzed alongside the ways these trajectories inform the “ways multiple activity footings are held and managed” (p. 240). Bringing together these “chains of activity” (Prior, Hengst, Roozen, & Shipka, 2006, p. 734) that are distributed across peoples, sites, tools, and contexts, we may identify for further examination the greater vectors of participation by which individuals become their literate selves. In the next and last section of this chapter, I describe the framework by which co-researchers and I will examine and consider the host practices and participations that form innumerable links in their chains of activity that will provide insight into their processes of semiotic becoming.

**TRAJECTORIES OF BECOMING**

Scollon’s (2001) theories of mediated discourse offer us insight into the role that social actions play in the formation of practices across contexts. The practices on which Scollon focuses in particular are embodied actions (such as handing over a crayon to a toddler, or receiving said crayon from that toddler), which, in turn, inform conceptual practices that interanimate our network of discursive engagements with and within the world around us.

Describing the action of having a conversation with a friend over a cup of coffee at a local chain shop, for example, Scollon writes:

In having this cup of coffee I could say there is just a single action – having a cup of coffee as is implied in the common invitation, ‘Let’s go have a cup of coffee.’ Or I could say there is a very complex and nested set of actions—queuing, ordering, purchasing, receiving the order, selecting a table, drinking coffee, disposing of our cups and other materials, and the rest. Likewise, I could say there is just one discourse here—a conversation among friends. Or I could say there are many
complex discourses with rampant intertextualities and interdiscursivities—international neo-capitalist marketing of coffee, service encounter talk, linguistic conference talk, family talk and the rest. (p. 1)

In this, Scollon offers a picture of the vast and nuanced ways with which individuals’ interactions with their environments, with one another, with objects, etc. are always intervened on by a complex, almost dizzying array, of mediations. “Mediated discourse analysis,” Scollon goes on to say, “is a position which seeks to keep all of this complexity alive in our analyses without presupposing which actions and which discourses are the relevant ones in any particular case under study” (p. 1). It is a way, in other words, by which one can link the discourse of such mundane things as Starbucks ordering—with such lingo as “tall,” “shot,” “drip”—with the discourse of banter among peoples engaging with one another across various possible spectrums of friendship—casual, professional, fraternal, etc.—without giving “undue weight” (p. 3) to either form of discourse over the other.

Over time and across contexts, the multitude of discursive practices and the multitude of contexts in which we engage with these practices come to form what Scollon calls a “nexus of practice,” “a network or matrix of intersecting practices which, although …never perfectly or inevitably linked into any finalized or finalizable latticework of regular patterns, nevertheless form a network or nexus” (p. 16). By acknowledging individuals’ nexuses of practice, we may begin to understand how seemingly unrelated activities with which individuals engage can be viewed as intimately connected. Roozen (2009) offers a lucid argument of how Scollon’s nexus of practice may be considered in regard to literate engagement and the tracing of literate activity across individual’s histories. He writes:

Conceptually, situating literate activity within a nexus of practice that links together multiple activities and domains foregrounds several key issues. First, it unanchors literate practices and tools from any single domain and maps them onto more extensive networks of circulation that link multiple sites of engagement…Second, it attends to the creative repurposing of literate practices and tools across activities, to the ways they are taken up and transformed throughout the entire network…Third,
it highlights the profoundly heterogenous array of literate practices that are mediating action at any historical moment, some local and some spun-off from other sites, and the potential synergies and tensions among them. Finally, it posits multiple and diverse forms of literate participation rather than any single for the basis…of what others have referred to as a “literate identity,” one’s sense of oneself as a literate person in the world. (pp. 140-41)

Examples of manifestations of the above include Roozen (2009) noting the multiple literate practices across various sites that informed a student’s efforts to craft fan-fiction; Woodward (2015) identifying how a high school teacher’s networked online writing practices helped him develop an approach to teaching that emphasized to students the affordances of advocating and promoting themselves in public-facing contexts; and, Roozen & Erickson (2017) tracing the “developmental pathway” of a student's practices in “physical manipulation” (5.01) of material, textual, literary objects as a way to study literature through her engagements with graphic design, creative writing, and the rigors of graduate coursework. In each of these cases, the researchers mapped activity across nexuses of practice by looking to the ways that participants repurposed “literate practices across activities” and focuses their analyses on “the synergies and tensions that texture[d] such interactions” (Roozen, 2009, p. 136).

I argue that we can do something similar in order to frame and discuss the disciplinary and professional formations of creative writerly identities across individuals’ nexuses of practice. Further, since “teaching is not just one social practice, but a conglomeration of multiple practices, actors, and artifacts” (Woodard, 2013, p. 27) informed by activities “across time and space and multiple modes” (Scollon, 2008, p. 241), then we may also frame and discuss where, how, and to what effect individuals’ creative writerly identities link up with their teacherly identities. Informed by mediated discourse theory, this work also draws from cultural historical activity theory (CHAT) (Engeström, 1993) for the way it situates activity in “concrete interactions that are simultaneously improvised locally
and mediated by historically provided tools and practices” (Prior et. al., 2007, p. 3). In particular, CHAT here is useful for the way its focus on “dispersed, loosely institutionalized, complexly networked, social activities…that seem to lie at least partly outside of the more highly regulated and organized worlds of work, school, and government” (Prior & Schaffner, 2011, p. 51).

This focus aligns with a particular emphasis of this study, which stresses those activities that are situated “outside of the more highly regulated and organized” institutional domains, and which do so more than “partly.” With regard to creative writer-composition instructors’ “semiotic becomings” (Prior, 2018), the formation of learning-based identities informed by “deeply dialogic” interactions across and among collections of “deeply entangled” semiotic resources, this study examines those extra-literate and extra-disciplinary activities (terms I discuss in more detail in Chapter 3)—e.g., musical training, retail work, group therapy sessions—insofar as they vitally inform the literate activities more traditionally associated with disciplinary and professional identity formation within the context of writing-based, writing-centered, and writing-oriented practices.

For this reason, I centered my study around tracing activity (be it (extra-)literate and/or (extra-)disciplinary) and its fluid, potentially multi-contextual and repurposed practices in scholarship from Wertsch (1998), Scollon (2001) Beach (2003), Roozen (2009), Roozen et. al (2015), and others who have taken up various, similar projects. Wertsch states that many of “the cultural tools we employ were not designed for the purposes to which they are being put” (p. 59) and illustrates this with a discussion of fiberglass originally

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Note: CHAT has influenced my work in this study and dissertation by informing my focus on the array of activities that inform CWCIs’ disciplinary becomings, as writers, and professional becomings, as teachers of writing. With regard to the study of these teacher-writers’ literate developments, I take as my unit of analysis not mediated activities, but rather the “semiotic becoming” (see below) itself.
developed for military vehicular use repurposed for non-military and commercial uses. Roozen (2009) notes such repurposing is “the rule rather than the exception” (p. 139), implying that a far greater number of actions and modes of action are afforded through a tool than that tool’s original design purpose and intended use might indicate. Relatedly, Scollon (2001) in his investigation of the toddler Brenda’s evolving and changing use of a crayon (first as a tool used to color, and later as a tool used to understand the concept of “color”), stated that “we cannot argue that the mediational means by which those acts are performed are uniquely fit to specific actions or practices” (p. 123). That which is designed as a tool for coloring can become a tool for inciting abstract thought. Those habits of mind and methods of process that are seemingly developed in one context—affiliation with and participation in a community motorcycle club, as an example from this study—may become tools for learning about writing in another. This further entails that those habits of mind and methods of process that are seemingly developed in one discipline, such as Creative Writing, may not only become tools for teaching writing for various, different ends but are in themselves informed by activities that often pre-date or co-date them.

Such “spin-off” practices, what Wertsch (1998) would identify as the repurposing and/or re-utilization of cultural tools across contexts, assist in forming that larger, aforementioned “nexus of practice.” In addition to being viewed as linked “intersecting practices” (Scollon, 2001, p. 16), this nexus can also be understood in terms of developing identity. These nexuses may, in other words, reference “matri[ces] of linked practices which are the basis of the identities we produce and claim through our social [and professional] actions” (p. 7). Drawing from Scollon (2008), Roozen (2009) concludes that “methodologically, unraveling the dense networks rendered visible by such a perspective demands [a] kind of ‘nexus analysis’” (p. 141) in tracing pathways of literate practices across
time, space, and mode (see Scollon, 2008, p. 241). He looked to extend those elements’ trajectories “as a way to develop a sense of the nexus of practice…in which [these] elements were being used” (p. 143). Leaning on analogous lines of thought, I was able to use the literate, extra-literate, and disciplinary histories I compiled with my participants/co-researchers, in addition to the various textual and artifactual materials they provided me, to help extend my thinking of their own trajectories of becoming the creative writers and teachers they are and as they self-identify.

In the following chapter, I further detail the methods I used to compile this data along with my co-researchers and participants. Additionally, I discuss how these methods afforded us an opportunity to closely examine the seemingly unrelated activities and participations that intimately inform and interanimate one another in the process of these writers’ professional becomings. These activities have come to describe the developmental pathways these teacher-writers have taken as they constituted, through mosaic, the identities they claim.
CHAPTER 2:
RESEARCH DESIGN – METHODS & METHODOLOGIES

In order to understand the complex milieu constituted by Creative Writer Composition Instructors’ (“CWCIs”) literate practices, participations, and interactions both through time and across a variety of social and professional structures, I chose to employ methods of qualitative investigation. Writ large, the qualitative investigative framework emphasizes that perspectives of participants are valuable data and that these perspectives are situated culturally, historically, temporally, and materially (see Erickson 1986). More specific to this particular study, I take a social constructivist view of knowledge and the production thereof, which privileges an understanding that “truth” is relative to the perspectives that express it (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). However, though this particular template of thought “recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning,” it nevertheless “doesn’t reject outright some notion of objectivity” (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 10). A strict application of consistent and regulated methods should help to produce data that is both particular to my participants and can help form the foundation for producing potentially reliable generalizations about the broader population that the CWCIs in this study represent.

For myself, Bogdan & Biklen (2003) have helped cement my understanding of the foundations of this paradigmatic framework, as well as the qualitative researcher’s part in and relationship to it. They state:

[Q]ualitative researchers do not see themselves as collecting the “facts” of human behavior, which when accumulated will provide verification and elaboration on a theory that will allow scientists to state causes and predict human behavior.
Qualitative researchers understand human behavior as too complex to do that and see the search for cause and prediction as undermining their ability to grasp the basic interpretive nature of human behavior and human experience. (pp. 42-43)

Bogdan & Biklen go on to further articulate some of the more specific goals and methods of qualitative researchers, which include “grasp[ing] the processes by which people construct meaning and to describe what those meanings are”; using “empirical observation because it is with concrete incident”; and “empower[ing] their research informants” (p. 43)—all of which may describe a host of goals and methods of my study. I also share with Bogden & Biklen (2003) a position that places emphasis on how “various participants see and experience” and form “multiple realities rather than a single reality” (pp. 29-30) that can be discussed in combination. A study featuring multiple participants of myriad ages, locations, ethnicities, and cultural identifications across multiple sites of participation might help me to more effectively consider the complex relationships individuals hold with creative writing, composition, writing pedagogy, as well as the habits of mind attendant to all three.

While this study was not designed (nor could be designed) with the intention of acknowledging every such relationship a participant has within and across these sites, or acknowledging what has influenced each of those relationships, it was nevertheless designed with an idea of a methodological “wholeness” in mind. This idea of wholeness I take from, among others, Hatch (2002), which considers the complex and often messy nature of qualitative work with the intention of constructing “detailed narratives that include the voices of the participants being studied,” which can then “build the case for the researcher’s interpretations by including enough detail and actual data to take the reader inside the social situation under examination” (9, emphasis mine). The construction of any such textual situation into which a reader may venture, I would argue, entails the construction of a “whole” site of reader participation. I am under no illusion that the “detailed narratives” I
have constructed offer full and objectively holistic views of participants’ infinitely complex lives. Instead I only suggest that these narratives are “whole” insofar as they frame single, complete (albeit perhaps impressionistic) pictures of participants’ lives with regard to their relationships with creative writing, composition, and pedagogy. Other pictures, of course, would be painted in different colors and represent sets of data just as valid.

More to this point, in their discussion of the distinctions and affordances of case study research, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) overview scholarship indicating that:

a distinguishing feature of case studies is that human systems have a wholeness or integrity to them rather than being a loose connection of traits, necessitating in-depth investigation. Further, contexts are unique and dynamic, hence case studies investigate and report the complex dynamic and unfolding interactions of events, human relationships and other factors in a unique instance. (p. 253)

Yin’s (2003) definition of the case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). To identify those areas that are not “clearly evident,” or are seemingly self-evident but which have not yet been thoroughly investigated, is to call attention to our need as researchers to inquire into those areas. The case study may act as a tool through the use of which the very boundaries (i.e. parameters) of the study, and thus the subject(s) of the study itself, may be described and made distinct. When discussing the parameters of case studies along with their uses, Cohen, Manion, and Morrison go on to state:

the case study researcher typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit…The purpose of such observation is to probe deeply and to analyze intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with a view to establishing generalizations about the wider population to which that unit belongs. (p. 258)

In this study, the individual units in question—the CWCIs—became a set of illustrations of social, literate, language processes, the influence of which, either directly or indirectly,
informed how instruction in writing came to be understood and performed in the composition classroom. This study does not claim that views and practices of the participant CWCIs speak for the views of all persons who might be counted as part of this demographic, either domestically or abroad. Through this study I only suggest that an analysis and discussion of the data collected from participants may begin to inform certain, limited sets of knowledge about social/professional sensibilities and characteristics shared by a significant number of persons within this demographic.

This research claims only to report on their beliefs about the various social contexts across which they participate and offer an analysis of the “dynamic and unfolding interactions of events” that help constitute a particular dimension of participants” lives. As for researcher bias, I am aware I bring my own unique perspectives and sets of subject positions to the interviews, readings of artifacts produced by CWCIs, and analyses thereof (including analyses based in stylistic and/or craft-based interpretations of produced artifact, more of which is discussed below), and in no way do I argue that the data collected or discussions based on those data are “objective.”

For the remainder of this chapter, I further introduce the more specific methods and nuanced methodological paradigms that undergird my study and research. Throughout it, I will detail and offer my rationalizations for the following: the professional site wherein I investigate the laminated trajectories, identities, and pedagogic habits of mind of CWCIs—namely, the post-secondary institution; the two types of participants who contributed to this study—primary participants and, to a lesser degree, their students—the methods I employed to recruit them, and the roles they played in the study; the structure and purposes of the consent forms participants were required to sign prior to contributing to the study and which themselves acted as sites of negotiating consent and identifiability; the multiple
components of the study through which data was collected; the methods by which these data were organized, analyzed, and presented; the limitations of this study, as well as the limitations of the methods and methodologies employed; and, finally, the role that the researcher played throughout this study.

SITES OF RESEARCH

Primary participants of this study spoke about their work from a number of sites across (the primarily eastern third of) the United States, including: University of Louisville (Louisville, KY), University of Kentucky (Lexington, KY), the City University of New York system of colleges (New York, NY), Susquehanna University (Selinsgrove, PA), Binghamton University (Binghamton, NY), Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (Tifton, GA), Penn State University (State College, PA), and Syracuse University (Syracuse, NY). With the exceptions of most of the interviews conducted in Kentucky, all interviews were conducted over Skype.

PARTICIPANTS & METHODS OF RECRUITMENT

Primary Participants

Primary participants included graduate students, contingent faculty members, full-time faculty members (tenured and not), administrative professionals in higher education, those who have been but were no longer formally associated with the post-secondary institutions, and those who were simultaneously professionally associated with the post-secondary institution and other institutions (such as participants working as out-of-school tutors and also teaching classes at a college). While such a process of narrowing participants down to a particular site (the post-secondary institution) was a necessary condition for this multiple
unit case study, it was not in itself a sufficient condition to justify the participants of this study. Stake (2006) argues for the need for participants in a multiple unit case study to have “some” (p. 1)—which I read as meaning significant and numerous—features in common. Included among these commonalities was that each primary participant received formal training in Creative Writing, which either lead to a graduate degree (M.A. with emphasis in Creative Writing, M.F.A, or Ph.D.) or was in the process of leading to a graduate degree—such as the case with Austin, who, at the time of this study, was enrolled in an M.F.A program at the University of Kentucky. In addition, when interviewed, each primary participant taught, had taught, and/or was slated to teach a composition course or equivalent in the near future. And finally, each participant was at the time of the study engaged in one or more creative writing projects and self-identified as a creative writer, even if they were not wont to outwardly do so.

To identify potential primary participants, I used two main sampling methods: convenience sampling and snowball sampling. As a newer researcher in the field who is on a limited timetable for conducting research and finishing his dissertation, I admittedly chose this former method for its expediency and ease. Having come from a Creative Writing background myself (I hold an M.F.A from CUNY City College of New York) and being a member of both formal and informal creative writing communities, I personally knew and had/have amicable, intimate relationships with many individuals who fit the criteria. In addition to its expediency, the benefits of convenience sampling included possessing a rapport with participants that often led to intimate, rich conversation and accumulation of data. As well, since these participants were generally friends, I was confident that I could rely on them to make time in their schedules for our interviews and for compiling documents to which they could provide me access. Of course the limitations of convenience sampling
include the method lending itself to difficulties in making general claims based on the population interviewed, as well as problematics in representation—in other words, with convenience sampling, the question remains as to whether the population part of the study represents an appropriate cross-section of the demographic in question.

It is important to note the significant amount of literature on qualitative research devoted to some of the more difficult and often ethical questions about relying on preexisting friends and intimate relations—as opposed to friendships and relations that are newly formed with participants during the research process—for the generation of data (see, for instances, Tillmann-Healy, 2003; Ellis, 2007). In general, this research appears to be in agreement on the large degrees of potential bias, the element of unpredictability, the degree to which the friendship may skew the interpretation of the narratives shared, and the ethical dilemma on the part of the researcher for choosing what of their friends’ narratives to share, what not to share, and in what context(s). Tillmann-Healy (2003), however, also notes benefits of including friends as participants in qualitative research, stating that these contributions may help “participants to feel heard, known, and understood” (p. 737). This sentiment expresses one of the goals of my study for all participants, as well as an instance of reciprocity. In addition, and biases aside, such an assumed invitation to intimacy could potentially lead to the sharing and generating of rich data that may not otherwise occur in non-friend participants.

As for the latter method of potential participant identification, snowball sampling—participants recruiting other participants or helping me form contacts with other potential participants—proved to be additionally useful. A form a snowball sampling led to the recruitment of the participants Austin Baurichter and Ashley Farmer. Here, I say “a form of snowball sampling” because those individuals who connected me to Austin and Ashley did
not themselves ultimately become participants. And although snowball sampling can act as a recruitment method for performing research around social networks, which when working with minority and/or marginalized communities assists in sharing knowledge and values of “hidden” populations (Browne, 2005), I, admittedly, used snowball sampling as another expediency for similar reasons as those listed above. Even though CWCIs have not been the subject of outright and long-term study and often teach as contingent faculty members (a marginalized labor demographic), since they make up a substantial demographic of composition instructor across the U.S, I would be reluctant to label them as “hidden.” As with convenience sampling, personal bias might have been an issue when conducting interviews with participants recruited via snowball sampling.

The goals of the data collection methods employed with this group of participants, the details of which I provide below, were manifold. Similar to Roozen & Erickson (2017), one goal was to develop and arrive at “a detailed sense of co-researchers’ [in my case, the participant CWCIs’] richly literate lifeworlds and the kinds of literate practices that texture those engagements” (2.07). To do this, the initial data collection not only focused on “literate activity[ies] that each of the co-researchers identified as important or significant to them” (ibid.) with regard to their creative writing practices, but also on their literacy and professional histories vis-à-vis the acts of creative writing instruction and composition instruction with which they were or had been engaged. The purpose of these literacy and professional histories was, again similar to Roozen & Erickson (2017), to “develop a sense of co-researchers’ broader literate landscapes” (“ibid.”) wherein the multitude of literate and professional activities might overlap and/or affect one another, or, in the least, affect participants’ perceptions on how they affect one another. These “broader literate
landscapes” included both writing and non-writing practices alike, which included practices that seemed wholly unrelated to writing.

For example, Sandra spoke about her past experiences with gymnastics and coordinating gymnastics as significantly informing her identity and sensibilities as a creative writer. And Steve discussed mentalities pertaining to certain at-rest poses that were part of his training as a martial artist, which he used to metaphorically transform his writing nook into a space of mindfulness, reflectiveness, and disciplined labor. Examples such as these perhaps illustrate Beach’s (2003) contention that knowledge may be recontextualized for different tasks, instead of only drawn from and applied to analogous, new tasks. The last goal of producing these histories was to develop along with the co-researchers / CWCIs their senses about the institutional dimensions (including complexities, complications and, often times mysteries) in which their teaching work was situated and practiced.

At first, two primary participants in the study opted to go by pseudonyms, although at the time we did not designate those pseudonyms. However, both these participants changed their minds and, ultimately, all primary participants consented to allowing me to use their real names in the study. The following is a master list of the 10 primary participants, which includes: names, genres of creative writing, types of courses taught, recruitment method, and phases of data collection in which they participated:

Table 2.1: Master list of primary participants and data collection statuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Participant</th>
<th>Creative Writing Degree</th>
<th>Institutional Role (at time of study)</th>
<th>How I met them</th>
<th>Data Collection Phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balun, Robert</td>
<td>M.F.A</td>
<td>Adjunct Lecturer</td>
<td>Former classmate at City College of</td>
<td>Phase 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These phases are detailed below. But in brief, there were three primary phases of data collection: interviews about participants’ literate and professional histories, interviews about participants’ creative works, and interviews about participants’ evaluations of student work.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Relationship to Study</th>
<th>Phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baurichter, Austin</td>
<td>M.F.A. (in-progress, then completed)</td>
<td>Graduate student (M.F.A. in Creative Writing)</td>
<td>Friend. Met through an M.A. student at University of Louisville. I was originally considering this M.A. student to be part of the study.</td>
<td>Phases I, II, III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer, Ashley</td>
<td>M.F.A.</td>
<td>Former GTA and Adjunct Lecturer</td>
<td>Friend. Met through a friend and associate at University of Louisville. I initially investigated whether this friend and associate could be part of this study.</td>
<td>Phases I, II, partial III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giles, Sandra</td>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>Professor of English</td>
<td>I was contacted through Facebook after posting a call to the Creative Writing Pedagogy wall</td>
<td>Phases I, II, III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozer, Robin</td>
<td>M.F.A.</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>Associate at University of Louisville</td>
<td>Phase I, II, partials III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman, Jessica</td>
<td>M.F.A.</td>
<td>Graduate student (Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition)</td>
<td>Friend and classmate at University of Louisville</td>
<td>Phase I, II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg, Dan</td>
<td>Ph.D.</td>
<td>Assistant Professor of English</td>
<td>Acquaintance. Met in my role as Asst. Dir. of Creative</td>
<td>Phase I, II, partial III</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*“Partial” denotes that while participants and I did not directly discuss their students’ work (in the form of artifacts) or participants’ written feedback to students, we nevertheless discussed various course materials they provided me.*
In addition to recruiting participants of different affiliated genders, ethnicities, ages, regions, and educational and professional backgrounds, it was my hope to recruit a selection of primary participants who could represent an array of personal creative writing genre preferences. I believed that by doing so, I would introduce into the study additional craft-oriented and stylistic practices against which I could both further probe participants’ responses and compare those responses across participants. Considering genre preferences as linked to stylistic preferences, I’d argue, has helped me to understand what CWCIs value

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9 At the time of the initial interview, I did not realize that Steve Smith neither possessed an undergraduate or graduate degree in Creative Writing, nor was pursuing one. This was my oversight. While Steve’s interview data offers immense insights into themes I take up throughout this dissertation, his data is not included in any discussion herein.

10 Admittedly, while I believe I succeeded in number of my recruitment goals, I certainly did not succeed in others. Hasanthika, for instance, represented the only person of color in my participant pool. No participant identified their gender as non-binary. And I did not ask participants about their sexual orientations.
in writing in a number of ways. Butler (2010) states that style is a “key way to separate what is memorable from what is forgettable in history” (p. 5). This emphasis links up nicely with Irvine (2001), who takes a sociolinguistic view of “style as distinctiveness” and as a mode of “differentiation.” It is, after all, differentiation that would have a hand in making something more “memorable.” I’d add these perceptions of one’s more idiosyncratic and “non-normative” forays into writing have helped me gauge CWCIs’ writerly values. And while I am not a fan of thinking of forms of creative writing genres in cut and dry boundaries—at what point anyway does fiction become experimental, or prose poetry become flash fiction?—for the purpose of discussion it does, at times, seem necessary to do just that. Reluctantly, I say that participants displayed preferences for the following: fiction, experimental fiction, flash fiction, poetry (verse and prose), creative nonfiction, and innovative nonfiction. One easy-to-identify gap here is the lack of a participant who readily and centrally identified as a dramatist (or even screenwriter).

Other Participants

Additional participants included primary participants’ undergraduate students. (In the IRB-approved application, these participants were called “tertiary participants”—more on this below.) Undergraduate students became part of the study in one of two ways: being students enrolled in a class I observed or providing examples of their written work for which primary participants provided written feedback. I gained the consent of participants who provided their written and commented-upon work prior to studying or recording their participations, including as the original composers of evaluated and/or commented-upon work. In the event that participants and I did not gain these students’ consent, primary participants would share with me their (the primary participants’) comments and feedback to students.
decontextualized from the students’ work. (For instance, Franklin provided me letters he wrote to students but not his students’ work or his students’ feedback/comments back to him. He did not include students’ names on any materials of this type he sent me.)

**In Summary**

Even though I conducted initial interviews with primary participants, it was those participants who contributed to additional levels of the study I focused on more. As I went through each additional phase of data collection, as predicted, a fewer number of participants were in a position to contribute. Accordingly, those from and on whom I gathered more data, I discuss at greater length than those from and on whom I gathered less data. (See APPENDIX A for a summary of the data collected from each participant.)

**CONSENT: PARAMETERS, NEGOTIATIONS & OVERTURES TO DEFERENCE**

Primary participants, or co-researchers, in this study had ultimate authority on the amount of data I was able/allowed to produce as a result of their participation, and how that data was used. Co-researchers were also informed, both over email and in discussions prior to interviews, that any consent they provided or did not provide binds only me. In other words, in order to offer my participants as large of a degree as comfort as I could, as well as to proceed as ethically as I could imagine, participants were informed that at any point in time they may change the parameters of their consent, revoke their consent, and/or ask for any and all data produced as part of their participation to be deleted and excluded from my records and notes. Participants were informed, however, that bells cannot be unrung and so any data I published or presented on prior to their limiting or revoking their consent could not be taken back or undone.
Along these lines, co-researchers also had ultimate authority over whether to appear in the study under their real names, under pseudonyms, or as anonymous participants, and were allowed to choose the medium/media through which they were recorded, such as audio recordings, video recordings, and photographic recordings. (Since the goals of the interviews did not include any sort of body analysis, I did not end up video recording or photographing any of my participants in our meetings together.) Participants were informed of their role as “co-researchers” so that they may better understand they held a degree of authorship over the study, as well as any texts produced as a result of the study. I provided such information in light of participants” choices over anonymity in the event that issues of attribution were concerns one way or another.

Consent forms for primary, secondary, and tertiary participants are reproduced in full in APPENDIX B. Even though this study received IRB approval for generating data with secondary participants, no secondary participants were recruited for this study. Secondary participants would have been individuals who could provide insight into primary participants’ writing and teaching practices. These individuals could have included former or current classmates, former or current teachers, members of a writing group, writing program administrators, editors, agents, and so on. Because the data I generated with primary participants was so rich, I decided that, for the purpose of this dissertation, I would focus only on the data generated with primary participants.

Figure 2.1 reproduces the consent options provided to primary participants. Similar options were also provided to secondary and tertiary participants:
As the first part of all follow-up interviews and meetings, participants were informed of their ability to change their permissions. If they did change their permissions, new identical forms were filled out in order to represent those changes, and then put on file. All versions of consent forms were digitally saved, which sometimes first required scanning physical forms, and digital copies were sent to participants for their personal records if they did not already have them.

There existed the potential risk of conflict among connected participants. In the event that secondary and/or tertiary participants requested different choices over anonymity...
than that of the primary participant to whom their interview and/or work was connected, then renegotiations and new agreements would have had to have been made. As one can imagine, other configurations of this general type of conflict were also highly possible. Luckily however, these issues never arose during the portion of the study on which this dissertation reports.

Issues Surrounding Publication

Participants were made aware that in the event they chose to proceed under a pseudonym or anonymously, there always existed (and still does exist) the possibility of their identity being discovered. Primary participants especially were made aware that should I reference any of their published works, I would have to do so under appropriate and legal processes of attribution. This would mean that participants’ real names would have to be used if I quoted or paraphrased from published texts of theirs, whether they be “creative” works or otherwise. Given the professional backgrounds of the participants, the likelihood that their attachment to the study could be discovered was most likely higher than average. Consent forms for all categories of participants stated the following:

Please also keep in mind that if I quote from any of your published work (for which I would seek your consent before doing so), I will have to use the name associated with the publication (whether that is your legal name, nickname, pseudonym, etc.), which could entail your exposure.

I did have one last, somewhat stickier concern over drawing from co-researchers’ creative works in my own writing that was informed by the narratological conceit of the “implied author” (Booth, [1961] 1983). This conceit references what Wayne Booth believed was an image or sense of a fictional work’s author that is (co-) constructed by the reader of that work. As something of a workaround to the “intentional fallacy” (Wimsatt & Beardsley, [1946] 1976) that would allow him to still talk about authorial project or objective, Booth
(1983) conceptualized the entity of the implied author, arguing that “however impersonal [an author] may try to be, his [sic] reader will inevitably construct a picture of the [author] who writes in this manner” (p. 71). While this conceit has been criticized in the field of narratology by some as a useless or even distracting focalization (see, e.g., Bal 1981; Genette 1983; Kindt & Müller, 2006), I would venture that, regardless of its benefit or detriment to narratological study as a field, readers often do (co-)construct this image of this “author character” when reading. Since this “author character” (co-)constructed is at least based in part upon the text read, one can imagine that the flesh-and-blood reader’s constructed image of, for example, an author of gruesome murder mysteries would be vastly different from that of an author of scholarly anthropological work.

It’s not for me to determine the potential molding and curation of that image on the part of the author, how the author through various actions might influence the co-construction of this image, or how the author may operationalize, consciously or not, that image in their social and professional lives. My concern here is that in citing in my study “creative” work by the CWCIs, I risk the potential of conflating multiple public-facing identities, included among them: the CWCI’s identity as a flesh-and-blood professional in this world, and the CWCI’s identity co-constructed with their readers as an “author character.” It’s been noted the degree to which, for example, Stephen King’s in-person persona has been “at odds with his writing persona” (Beahm, 1999, p. 126), which at times he has reportedly played up for certain effects. And of course, it’s commonly thought that allure and popularity over the writer J.D. Salinger, as well as his books, only grew when he became a “recluse” or went into “hiding.” However, the citizens of Cornish, NH, where Salinger spent his final five decades and the majority of his life, reportedly knew him as very much a “towns-person” who “loved church suppers” (Zezima, 2010).
I will neither speculate about the potential dangers here, nor detail the theoretical frameworks and agents through whom the “implied author” is constructed—such a project is not within the bounds of this study. Suffice to say, however, that drawing from and representing CWCIs’ creative works in this study does run the risk of depriving those participants of some of the agency they may or could possess over the creation, curation, and dissemination of this “author character” image / identity.

DATA COLLECTION:
I collected over 35 hours of interview data—audio recordings and transcripts of those recordings—and various textual/artifactual data. This data was collected in a number of phases: (1) interviews about literacy and professional histories; (2) text-based interviews that focused the discussion on both teaching materials and creative work; (3) discussion of students’ commented-upon work. In addition, any lingering questions or concerns were followed up on via email exchange with participants. See APPENDIX C for sample interview questions and topics of discussion.

Phase I: Interviews about Literacy and Professional Histories
Phase I consisted of the literacy and professional histories interviews and text/artifact collection. These interviews were originally estimated to last upwards of an hour, but almost every Phase I interview went beyond an hour. Multiple interviews even went beyond two, and multiple interviews were conducted over two or more meetings. These audio-recorded conversations were conducted over Skype or Facetime, in-person, or over the phone. I conducted these interviews with 11 primary participants and went on to collect texts (class materials and creative writing work) and artifacts from 7 among them. The class materials
came from participants’ composition classes, as well as their creative writing classes (should they have taught any). While the emphasis in this study is primarily on CWCIs’ relationships to and actions within the composition classroom, class materials from creative writing classes offered the opportunity for a comparison of CWCIs’ perceived writing values across the “disciplinary divide.” In other words, discussions of CWCIs’ creative writing courses were intended to throw into relief their conceptions of their composition courses and their roles as agents within them. Of the four participants from whom I did not collect texts, one dropped out of the study after the initial interview, one did not show interest in continuing with the study, one was interested in continuing with the study but could not find the time to do so, and one, Steve Smith, was discovered to not meet the criteria of acting as a primary participant in the study. (A mea culpa—this oversight was entirely on my part. In no way did Steve Smith try to hide or obfuscate relevant information.)

During our first meeting, the primary participant and I would begin by discussing the consent form, which I had provided them (either physically or as a digital attachment over email). In the case of one primary participant, Robin, the consent form was not signed prior to conducting our first meeting. I informed Robin that no data, including interviews, would be transcribed, shared, or discussed (publicly or privately) until she could submit a consent form. She agreed that this was a suitable arrangement and backdated the consent form she did submit to cover the first interview we conducted.

I conducted semi-structured interviews, which involve “asking questions that have been worked out to some degree in advance, but also involves leaving the script behind” and “mov[ing] between scripted questions and open-ended conversations” (Prior, 2004, pp. 187-188). I did this in order to engage participants in more organic and amicable discussions about their literacy histories (see Brandt, 2001) and professional histories. These histories,
especially the literacy histories, were not limited to only acts and experiences reading and writing. Instead, I took a broad approach to the idea of literacy, considering the concept to refer to the negotiation of meaning from a set of signs that can be interpreted as transmitting information and which, in turn, may or could implicate the practitioner as a part of, or an outsider to, a community centered around particular literate activities. Thus, I often saw literacy as an action and means of social interpretation, and I saw literate practice as “what people do with literacy” (Barton & Hamilton, 1998, p. 7). Lankshear & Knobel (2006) remind us, however, that “(literacy) practices are not wholly observable units of human activity because they involve various kinds of non-observable…elements, like values, feelings, knowledge and beliefs, attitudes, etc., including how participants think about literacy, make sense of literacy, talk about literacy, and so on” (37; see also Barton & Hamilton, 1998, p. 6). Semi-structured interviews, based in autobiographical telling and assessment of participants’ histories, enabled participants and I to identify and discuss some of these “non-observable elements.”

It was my intention to make the interview an occasion for generative interaction. Creswell (2003) details an understanding of the interview as something of a space where meaning may be equally co-constructed by the participants, regardless of who holds the title of interviewer and who of interviewee. By making the interviews “dialogically and discursively engag[ing],” I attempted to orient the goals of the interviews less around “extracting information” and more around “sharing knowledge” (Selke & Hawisher, 2012, pp. 39, 36). To that end, I began by asking participants open-ended questions about their writing and teaching backgrounds. A portion of each interview focused on participants’ developments and subsequent constructions of identity as creative writers. During this time, participants and I identified and discussed, at least in part, their “autobiographical” and
“authorial” selves (Ivanič, 1998). Ivanič (1998) identifies the autobiographical self as that which is both “associated with a writer’s sense of their roots” and which “is itself socially constructed and constantly changing” (p. 24). She identifies the authorial self as how “writers see themselves to a greater or lesser extent as authors and present themselves to a greater or lesser extent as authors” and which often concerns itself with the “writer’s ‘voice’ in the sense of the writer’s position, opinions, and beliefs” (p. 26).

A portion of this interview was also devoted to participants’ developments and identities as composition instructors, as well as any related training in these areas, formal or informal, they have received. Participants and I discussed both writing and non-writing practices that have informed their development as writers and teachers. Roozen et al. (2015) suggest we pay “increased attention to...[how] linking teachers’ pedagogical practices to their everyday literate engagements can open up opportunities for transformation, as well as critique, of classroom practice, and for more fully recognizing, valuing, and promoting such linkages as a key element in the production of pedagogical practice” (p. 213). Considering these non-writing practices might be overlooked parts of participants’ “everyday literate engagements,” I asked questions and opened lines of discussion about these engagements in particular.

Participants and I also discussed the following: their professional identifications; years of work experience and types of classes taught; structure of composition classes, including structure of assignments; how they believed their teaching practices might be similar and/or different from other composition instructors; their perceived programmatic differences between composition and creative writing programs; and, finally, views on the institution that is the “English Department.” Since this study was also focused on participants’ conceptions of the terms “style” and “craft,” as well as how these concepts
informed their own practices, attendant habits of mind, and writerly values, I initially withheld from offering my view of these terms in order to avoid introducing any additional bias. I would first ask participants how they defined or understood “style,” then “craft,” and, then, ask about any relationship they believed existed between the two terms, or any material actions or items these terms reference. I followed up these questions by asking participants to discuss and/or describe their own styles and craft-based practices. (Most participants did not report on possessing a singular style; they mainly saw style as a product of craft and style as something that is mutable given the rhetorical situation.) Once I asked these questions, I felt free to participate in the conversation about these terms, which at times included offering my own understandings of them.

Toward the end of the interview, I invited participants to add any of their thoughts that would be related to the study, but which were not prompted by a question or subsequent conversation. I also informed participants that should they think of anything else that might be pertinent, we could either schedule a shorter supplementary interview or they could email me with the additional information.

As the last stage of this phase, I discussed with the CWCIs what materials of theirs I might collect, examine, and discuss with them in the follow-up interview. Again, these artifacts would all be related to their teaching and/or creative writing practices. These shared texts could include: finished creative works, creative works in progress, drafts of creative works abandoned, drafts of creative works that were eventually completed, current and older teaching materials, and written feedback to students (with students’ permissions when needed). Soon after the interview was completed, I emailed participants to quickly recap some major points of our conversations and invited them to continue into the next phases of data collection.
Phase II: Text- and “Craft”-based Interviews

Phase II of data collection consisted of follow-up interviews with participants from whom I collected texts and artifacts. These interviews primarily centered around discussions of their provided texts/artifacts, which included teaching materials (such as class syllabi, lesson plans, assignment sheets, rubrics, etc.) either produced by the participant or else taken and re-appropriated for use in their classrooms. In addition, participants and I also discussed their creative works, which they either sent to me, provided me access to, or gave me permission to seek out as part of this study. This creative work was discussed both within and outside the contexts of their work as composition instructors, as a way to facilitate discussion of what participants valued in writing. During this phase of data collection, participants were also asked if they wanted to add any new information to their previous interview responses. As well, I kept open the option of returning to previous questions if, upon review of their answers, I needed further clarification or felt it was pertinent to the study to follow up or “dig deeper.”

At the beginning of our second interviews, I recapped for each primary participant some of the main discussion points of the previous interview and invited each to clarify, add to, or retract any of their previous responses. The majority of the time spent during these interviews, however, was devoted to discussing those teaching and creative writing artifacts participants provided me between the two interviews. I drafted discussion topics based on previous interview data and artifacts I reviewed ahead of time.

If applicable, and unless participants specified that they were not going to continue past Phase II of the study, at the end of Phase II interviews with participants, I asked if we could schedule a time when I might observe them teaching a composition (or equivalent)
class. Also, if applicable, I asked participants if they would be willing to contact current and/or former students to serve as tertiary participants in the study, and/or asked participants if I might review the aforementioned “lesser contextualized” evaluations and comments they wrote about and on students’ works. Last, I summarized for them the role secondary participants might play in the study and asked if they could suggest anyone to whom I may reach out to fill this role.

During these interviews I employed text-based interviewing strategies in order to prompt discussions about CWCIs’ understandings of their writing practices, be those practices in service of producing teaching-related materials or “creative” materials. Text-based interviews of this particular sort relied on “stimulated elicitation,” which in this case is to say the use of “object[s] that can trigger and support memory as well as serving as a source for new reflection” (Prior, 2004, p. 189; see also Prior, 1991). By relying on textual artifacts, participants and I were able to ground our discussion in the present and the material, instead of in the solely abstract and/or completely memory-dependent. In these text-based interviews, participants and I focused on the pedagogic affordances of the composed teaching materials, how these teaching materials constructed teacherly ethos, and how other practices either emphasized or contradicted this ethos. With the creative work participants shared, we focused on elements of craft and process, writerly intention, and writerly values that might be gleaned from or discovered in the work. As well, we would discuss the construction of the “discoursal self,” which Ivanič (1998) would identify as a writer’s impressions of what she or he “consciously or unconsciously convey[s] of themself in a particular written text.” This self, Ivanič argues, can “relate to values, belief, and power relations in the social context in which they [the texts] were written” (25). At times,
participants and I would discuss these relations with regard to writing values discussed and emphasized in participants’ composition classrooms.

In what follows I further detail the affordances and limitations of the text-based interview strategies I employed, which were framed within a practice of stimulated elicitation. I describe types of both teaching texts and creative texts selected for discussion, as well as features of these texts on which co-researchers and I set our combined focus. Finally, I provide a rationale for what I see to be an extension of the text-based interview to that of a “craft”-based interview and discuss some of the complexities involved in generating interview data over art in an empirical, qualitative investigation.

Affordances, Limitations, and Nuances of the Craft-based Interview: The craft-based interview is a form of text-based interviewing. However, within the primary context of the craft-based interview, we may understand stimulated elicitation to rely not on the text-based objects themselves but rather on identifiable technical choices that gave rise to literary and thematic effects (intended or not). In turn, a discussion of technical choices and literary/thematic effects helped pave the way to discussions of values writers believe they could glean from their composed texts and articulate through a discussion of them. This focus on technical minutiae contrasts with certain text-based interviewing approaches that tend to engage participants with questions about more generalizable features of a work:

• How did you interpret your writing instructor’s feedback and what action(s) did you take in response?

• By reviewing this student’s paper, what can you tell me about the text’s history and the student’s history vis-à-vis the construction of this text?
• Looking over your syllabus, can you explain the general arc of your course?

(all above question examples are adapted from Prior, 2004).

The craft-based interview also shares similarities with the discourse-based interview (“DBI”) (see Odell, Goswami, & Herrington, 1983), a staple and popular form of text-based interviewing. The craft-based interview is used to help identify choices writers made when composing. But unlike the DBI, it does not do this by way of the contrastive document-based inquiry. For example, performing a DBI on a student’s email might entail “cross[ing] out the salutation ‘Dear Professor Hujwiri,’ and writ[ing] in a proposed alternative salutation ‘Anisa,’” followed up by asking the student about the merit or effect of those changes (Prior, 2004, p. 189). The craft-based interview I practiced did not seek to offer and discuss alternatives to participants’ writing, but rather explored potential, interpretable literary effects and what technical choices gave rise to those effects.

Further, I hesitate here to say that the craft-based interview identifies the “rhetorical” knowledge writers have, as is the purpose of the DBI according to Odell et. al. (1983). Doing so frames these choices too squarely within the disciplines of Rhetoric & Composition or Writing Studies. While this might be fine for certain researchers in those disciplines and for certain studies, my participants, who often do not identify themselves with these disciplines or the ideas associated with them, might not frame their choices as such. They might, for instance, be wont to frame their choices within the context of the “artistic,” “aesthetic,” or even the “mysterious” or “mystifying.” Since the goal of this study is, in part, to identify the writing knowledges CWCIs bring to studies in Composition, this study also acknowledges participants’ understandings of how this knowledge is created, shared, and attained. As such, I let participants frame the discussion of their writing choices in ways they felt were appropriate to their writing goals, beliefs, and values.
In contrast to the example questions above, the questions in a craft-based interview might be more directly about the construction of literary effect. When co-examining a short story, I might ask a participant questions that touch on the following:

- How does this piece of dialogue function as character development? What is or what are the mechanisms of this functioning?
- Why does this character interaction take place at this juncture in the story, and how does this interaction contribute to your thematic goals for the work?
- How is your description here further contextualized by other technical choices and writerly moves you’ve made prior this point (i.e., earlier in the story)?
- In what ways do writerly moves and techniques we’ve discussed so far connect to your larger thematic concerns for the collection of which this story only one part?

In sum, this type of interview focuses on the formal and technical choices participants made to construct their texts, as well as on the effects of those choices. Also similar to certain text-based interviewing procedures, my participants’ accounts of their creative works are retrospective ones. They were made after-the-fact an upon examination, as opposed to *in situ*, as would be the case with think-aloud protocols or other forms of concurrent accounts.

I believe the interviews my participants and I conducted have provided us access to and insight into data that could not otherwise be captured by intertextual analysis. Prior (2004) recognizes that by interviewing writers about their texts, we may produce data on “the writer’s thoughts, feelings, and sense-making; contexts that do not appear in the text” (p. 179). He states that interviewing writers about their produced texts may help “elicit
writers’ accounts of their goals, their contexts, their processes, their feelings, the meanings they see in their texts, the influences they are aware of or can reflectively construct for what they’ve written and done” (ibid). The data participants and I produced during these interviews largely correspond to these predicted outcomes.

As alluded to earlier, however, we must keep in mind that the retrospective account of the texts in question must be “considered as reflections and constructions turned to the social situation and time in which they are produced” (p. 185). Participants’ creative works act as sites not of static writerly values, but values negotiated within the specific context of the study, during a specific portion of the study, and at a specific time. In other words, my participants’ accounts of their own work are in response to the case study in which I have requested they participate; those accounts have been framed by both them and me as such (see Chin, 1994a). Additionally, they have most likely been colored by the data interviewees and I produced in previous interviews. This suggests that writerly values gleaned from the interviews that are the focus of this chapter might be different from those gleaned on other interviewing occasions, or from discussions within different professional contexts—for a different sort of case study, for instance, or for a job talk. That participants’ responses are always context-specific also reinforces the idea that trajectories of both participation and becoming describe rich and complex maps of literate activity—including textual interpretations and analyses—through only-ever accretive processes. To examine activities related to participants’ writerly values—in- or outside the classroom, regarding or regardless of their own practices—is to further enrich and detail the map of participants’ historical becoming always in the making.

Across interviews participants and I would discuss various formal and technical aspects of creative writing. These discussions would often reference their own creative
works, as well as other works that have influenced them as creative writers. Even though my
interview questions do specifically ask about the term “craft,” the frequency with which it
came up in interview prior to my asking the questions related to them was high. Additional
terms such as “style,” “voice,” “feeling,” “effect,” “aesthetics,” or any other such related
ones, would also often come up during these discussions. The frequency of these terms’ uses
in initial interviews tracking professional and disciplinary becomings was, I felt, enough to
warrant establishing for myself a more formalized approach toward their discussion. This
would be especially useful for future interviews that would focus on co-analyses and
interpretations of participants’ creative works. Formalizing this approach entailed
determining a framework of discussion that acknowledged “craft’s” relation to practice,
theories of practice (including material production), and scholarship.

Selection of Texts to Include for Review/Identifying Features for Discussion: Co-
researchers were not asked to include composition teaching and/or creative materials of any
specific type, though I did provide examples of what they might include. Instead, they were
invited to submit as many texts as they deemed appropriate and fitting. I chose not to
specify materials to include, as I did not want participants to feel as if I only wanted to
review and discuss certain types of texts. Doing so might have limited the type of class or
creative materials I might have received. (For instance, if a participant edited together a
video for a class but I did not include “videos” on my list, I did not want to tacitly imply that
video artifacts were not welcome simply because I did not think to include them on a
specific list of acceptable materials.)

11 For a discussion of how I use the term “craft” and how I arrived at that use, see Chapter 1.
The following table shows all artifacts participants shared with or made accessible to me for this phase of the study:

**Table 2.2: List of artifacts primary participants shared with me**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Participant</th>
<th>Creative Writing artifacts</th>
<th>Teaching artifacts (from Composition classes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baurichter, Austin</td>
<td>Numerous short stories part of thesis; collection of unpublished poetry</td>
<td>Syllabi, course assignments, student work, written feedback to students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer, Ashley</td>
<td>Two book-length, hybrid works; one short story</td>
<td>Syllabi, course assignments, handouts/worksheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giles, Sandra</td>
<td>Numerous short works of creative nonfiction, published and unpublished</td>
<td>Syllabi, course assignments, student work (and tertiary consent forms), feedback to students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozer, Robin</td>
<td>Two short works of creative nonfiction</td>
<td>Syllabi, course assignments, exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newman, Jessica</td>
<td>Numerous short stories, published and unpublished</td>
<td>Syllabi, course assignments, lesson plans, handouts/worksheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg, Dan</td>
<td>Two collections of poetry</td>
<td>Syllabi, course assignments, worksheets/handouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winslow, Franklin</td>
<td>One collection of hybrid fiction/poetry</td>
<td>Syllabi, course assignments, written feedback to students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the sake of time, I could not discuss in as much detail as I would have liked every significant artifact or, when applicable, a revision of or addition to an artifact made throughout the course of the study. But as an insider to the Creative Writing discipline, I felt the lines of discussion I opened about textual features of creative works specifically were reasonable, even if they did not include all possible reasonable lines.

When participants submitted class materials—which often included syllabi, assignment sheets, rubrics, etc.—discussion often focused on identifying what was of significance to CWCIs in their roles as instructors and how and to what end a teacherly ethos was discoursally constructed in the documents. I had to pay special attention to the large chunks of such materials as syllabi or rubrics that were often standardized across the department and/or the institution. In these cases, participants and I would discuss how such
standardized language affected the construction of that teacherly ethos and how useful they felt this language was to their personal teaching goals. As mentioned above, class and creative materials were often discussed together as a way of further identifying what the CWCI valued in their writing projects and how, if at all, those values, or forms thereof, were made apparent in the classroom.

*Phase III: Students’ Evaluated Work and Follow-Up Interviews*

After Phase II interviews took place, participants were invited to share evaluated and commented-upon work of their former or current students. Phase III of the data collection consisted of collecting, reviewing, and discussing in follow-up interviews participants’ delivered evaluations (written or otherwise) and comments upon student work, collected for composition classes. These delivered evaluations and comments came in one of two different forms. First, in cases in which students current or former could be contacted, CWCIIs generally emailed students asking for their permissions to share their, the students’, written work with me. The CWCI also provided these students with the consent form for tertiary participants (further detailed below) to grant me permission to review and discuss these materials with the CWCI. Second, in cases in which students could not be or were not contacted, CWCIIs, in accordance with IRB regulations, still had the option of sharing with me lesser-contextualized evaluations of students’ work. For example, although Franklin was not able to contact any of his former students, he was able to provide me feedback letters he wrote those students, omitting any biographical information about the students. We discussed those course letters, though not the students’ written work to which they were responses. Four participants shared such feedback with me. Similar to above, I intend to
continue this study and so assume that additional participants will at some point also share this work with me.

For co-researchers participating in this phase of the study, these artifacts would take one of two forms. Either the co-researcher or I would contact current or former students of the co-researcher about the study (if I contacted students about the study, the CWCI would first contact her/his students to notify them). If students agreed to have their work shared, they would have to fill out and send back a tertiary consent form. At which point, the co-researcher would send me work from that student along with written evaluations and comments they, the co-researcher, produced. If the student could not be contacted, or if the co-researcher felt it would be too difficult to contact the student, the co-researcher could still send me artifacts such as evaluative letters written to students with any biographical information about the student omitted from the document(s).

As mentioned above, I viewed these documents as sites where writerly values might be identified and discussed, as well as sites of style-oriented pedagogical response. Since a purpose of this study is to elucidate an understanding of craftful or style-oriented emphases toward writing practiced in the participant’s composition classroom, discussions around these artifacts included how, if at all, the participant saw or interpreted her or his stylistic practices manifesting in the classroom. Despite whatever reservations a writing instructor might have to teaching style, “in our classrooms, style exists in student writing and is considered in our responses to student writing” (Medzerian, 2010, p. 188). Either directly or indirectly instructors do often comment on students’ writing styles. These comments are further contextualized by articulated or tacit stylistic preferences on the part of the instructor.

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12 As it turned out, I was never asked or required to contact students directly.
who promotes these preferences as part of their quotidian pedagogic practices. Because of this, Medzerian argues that often “students learn that writing well means anticipating and somehow meetings teachers’ unarticulated stylistic preferences” (p. 199) and do so by producing texts within the stylistic boundaries of those preferences. In cases such as these, certain ideologies of style are circulated within and outside the classroom.

Participants and I discussed their views on these processes of style pedagogy, circulation, and ideological instruction. Similar in spirit to the discussions during the Phase II interviews, participants were asked about the intended effect of particular marginal comments made on student work, what writerly values they hoped their letters of evaluation would inspire, and how teacherly ethos was discoursally constructed in these comments and evaluations.

**DATA ANALYSIS:**

Burke tells us that “a way of seeing is also a way of not seeing—a focus on object A involves a neglect on object B” (1984, p. 70), or for that matter objects C through Z. I recognize that the first steps of my data analysis took place long before any data was even collected, during both study design and study implementation. I was seeking answers or ways of understanding CWCIs’ trajectories of semiotic becoming, multi-literate lives, tensions thereof, and how these all informed pedagogies and pedagogical dispositions and habits of mind. The data I collected was contextualized by the particular qualitative frameworks I consciously employed (as well as by the covert, ideological frameworks I cannot help but to employ). Further “pre”-analysis of this sort took place during the transcription portion of the data collection. These types of analyses included the construction of rough transcripts, which would be reviewed and portions of which would be further developed/polished if I
determined them relevant to the study’s research questions. Choices of transcription conventions and adaptations/applications of those conventions can be understood as yet another “way of seeing” that “is also a way of not seeing.” For instance, this study chose not to focus on an analysis of certain verbal idiosyncrasies participants’ exhibited, such as “fillers”—“umm,” “uhh,” “like,” etc.—and so these were not captured in the transcripts. However, I do not deny that an analysis of such verbal idiosyncrasies could prove invaluable to the further study of this demographic of writer and teacher.

In most cases, data from any previous phase of collection were analyzed prior to moving on to the next phase of data collection. This was because the data collected in a previous phase formed the basis of many of the questions and lines of discussion I would open up with participants in subsequent phases. For instance, in the first phase of data collection with Austin, he often identified that his experiences with emotional trauma greatly informed what subjects and themes he explored in his fiction. When I read through and made notes on the works of short fiction Austin shared with me during the second phase of data collection, I did so with this information in mind. Further, some of the questions I drafted and asked Austin in follow-up interviews sought to expressly address the connections he had already made between emotional trauma and his creative work.

However, in some cases data from two different phases were collected in one interview session or in a string of interview sessions. In these cases, any data collected from a single interview session would be analyzed prior to conducting any follow-up interview. For instance, because of time constraints and scheduling difficulties, Robin and I had to meet a number of times to complete what was technically the first phase of data generation and collection. Because of the number of interviews we conducted, time we had to reflect in between sessions, and email correspondence between interview sessions, we found it
difficult to stick to the constraint of generating data only about literate and professional histories. As such, Robin and I veered into discussing her creative and teaching materials during what were still ostensibly Phase I interviews.

When I began collecting creative and teaching materials from participants, I read through those materials in the order in which I received or collected them. For instance, I gained access to Dan’s poetry prior to receiving his teaching materials, and so reviewed the poetry first, and then his teaching materials. I gained access to Sandra’s artifacts in the reverse order, and so read them in that order instead. My rationale for this is simply that artifacts provided (and so originally read) earlier might contextualize or influence participants’ decisions about what artifacts to provide later, as well as my readings of those artifacts. As mentioned above, I used themes from previous interview data and corresponding transcripts to generate questions and topics of discussion for interviews about these creative and teaching materials. I then created transcripts of these interviews and, when necessary, used these, along with Phase I transcripts, to form the basis of questions and lines of discussion for any Phase III interviews.

I coded for recurring themes across participants and within individual participants. Primarily, I coded for tensions or feelings of “not belonging” when in site-specific professional contexts (e.g., CWCIs’ views of themselves as professional teachers and their perceptions of how their departments discredited their professional identities); self-identified feelings of difference in certain social groups centered around particular literate activities (e.g., the practice of reproduction of Standard Written English); forms of discourse employed in the discussion, written or verbal, of specific topics (e.g., how formally-trained creative writers speak of craft in contrast to those not formally trained); the ways various literate and disciplinary activities, as well as activities extra-literate and extra-disciplinary
I coded for the aforementioned tensions, forms of discourse, and contexts of literate activities (among others), in both interview transcripts and textual artifacts provided to me, and I drew conclusions about participants’ perspectives on the sites of activity in which they participated (socially, professionally, etc.). For instance, I often coded data highlighting tensions between CWCIs’ understandings of writing and teacherly practice (as well as how they formed those understandings), and the oft-characterized monolithic perceptions they had of “Composition’s”—as something of a personified entity—understanding of these practices. Such tensions were important to identify because of the imbalanced power dynamic they informed, which at times resulted in participants’ beliefs that they could not “innovate” in the composition classroom or were not teaching composition the way they wished to teach it.

As an ethical consideration I, when able, kept in contact with participants and shared sections of my analyses with them. This was done in the event that what I concluded grossly misrepresented their histories, experiences, and outlooks insofar as participants saw them.

THE RESEARCHER

Yin (2003) reminds us that “the demands of a case study on [the researcher’s] intellect, ego and emotions are far greater than those of any other research strategy. This is because the data collection procedures are not routinized” (p. 58). Due to the prominence of these more fluid and irregular procedures, the task for any newer case study researcher, such as myself, can become even more daunting than originally thought. Since a “well-trained and experienced investigator is needed to conduct a high-quality case study because of the
continuous interaction between the theoretical issues being studied and the data being collected” (p. 58), I concede that as a newer researcher I run the risk of overlooking much that a more experienced researcher would not. Yin outlines the “shoulds” of a good case study researcher, and I can only question whether I “ask good questions,” am a “good listener,” can be “adaptive and flexible,” and possess a “firm grasp of the issues being studied” (p. 59). And while I question anyone’s ability to “be unbiased by preconceived notions” (ibid.), I also admit that I am most likely more biased than a veteran researcher as I may not have learned through experience yet how to minimize my bias.

Since the vast majority of data for this study is derived from interviews, I also must be keenly aware of the shifting power relations that the interview-model of data collection can give way to, and attempt to be aware of how these different power relations can manifest and how they might affect the data I collect. Gubrium & Holstein (2002) identify how the basic model of interviewing that can relegate interviewees into a passive role, which “locates valuable information inside the respondent and assigns the interviewer that task of somehow extracting it…the image of the subject is not of an agent engaged in the production of knowledge” (p. 12). Rather, it seems, that subject is often treated as an object to be acted upon. The image conjured in my mind over the term “extracting” is one linked to exceeding a boundary, regardless of whether a consent form was signed. While the “dialogically and discursively engag[ing] way” (Selfe & Hawisher, 2012, p. 39) I attempted to interact with interviewees hopefully mitigated such treatments, I cannot help feel that, as a lesser experienced researcher, I nonetheless ran the risk of emotionally and intellectually infringing upon my participants. While I do not believe this happened at any point during the study, it remained a possibility and concern of mine throughout the study.
Hoffman (2007) speaks specifically of power dynamics and emotional labor within the context of the interview and interview settings and, leaning on research by Kleinman and Copp (1993), states, “when researchers act without awareness of their own emotions and the emotional labor they perform in the field, they will be more influenced by their emotions rather than less” (p. 322). Given my background as a creative writer who teaches composition, and who did so for many years under the precarious title of “adjunct,” there is certainly more than an intellectual desire to discuss CWCIs, claim that they possess expertise, and argue that an investigation of them has much to add to Rhetoric & Composition. Motivating this work, then, is a concern for how CWCIs are perceived in the field of Rhetoric & Composition, especially by WPAs and other administrators responsible for running Composition programs. As such, another of my goals is to offer a new perspective of CWCIs and to highlight the richly literate lives they share with their students.

Last, I recognize a simultaneous fellowship with and distance from many of the CWCIs part of this study because of both the social/professional spheres of which we are a part and the roles we must play in this study. This paradoxical outlook required that I be cognizant of the various ways, positive and negative, such associations can influence me, and thus the study. Hoffman (2007) further notes that “the interviewer’s emotional labor is further complicated in that she must perform multiple, at times conflicting roles for the interviewee” (p. 323). Among these roles, Hoffman includes such things as “student,” “teacher,” “confidante,” etc., but here, for myself in this study, I recognize expectations exist (from both myself and my primary participants) that I “perform” fellow creative writer, fellow teacher, graduate student, the Rhet/Comp initiated, and qualitative researcher. As such, I feel that juggling these multiple roles, or failing to juggle these multiple roles, has potentially impacted this study, though in ways I cannot currently identify.
LIMITATIONS

There exist a number of limitations to this study’s methods and methodologies, some of which would make the study more effective if properly addressed and others that simply point to areas that might be productively explored in the future. I’ve already mentioned some of these limitations, among which I’d include my personal relationships with certain primary participants, my relative neophyte status as a primary researcher, and my own biases concerning the CWCI demographic and my perceived institutional treatment of them. In this final subsection, I would like to quickly touch on and discuss two more related limitations, both of which have to do with sample size. The first has to do with the overall sample size and periods of time I was able to spend with each primary participant. The second has to do with how I approached the issue of CWCIs’ “preferred genres” of creative writing.

In order to properly gauge the ways that multiple, literate trajectories form throughout an individual’s history, Roozen offers “nexus analysis” as an optimal approach. However, given the limited interactions I had with some participants (such as Robert and Steve Rosenstein), it is questionable whether the data produced thereof is ripe for such analysis. Preferably, a more longitudinal study of every participant, which included each participant participating in all phases of data collection, would come closer to producing the data I initially desired. Such a collection of data would, perhaps, make the findings of this study more generalizable than they are. However, I also recognize that statistical generalizability is not the primary purpose of qualitative research. Sharan Merriam (2009) goes so far to argue that such generalizability is often not possible in qualitative research and that, instead, the aims of qualitative research should be transferability of a study’s application
to future research situations, generation of hypotheses for further exploration, and rich evidence-based descriptions that aid in the project of transferability and hypothesis building. I would argue that this study accomplishes each of these.

Similar to the above point, the spread of “preferred genres” across participants is even more limited. Roughly half the primary participants in this study identify their preferred genre of creative writing as fiction, and only a couple of each identified their preferred genres as poetry and creative non-fiction. As previously mentioned, no one in this study identified their preferred genre as drama, screenwriting, or any other genre of creative writing that would take a comparable form. The problem here is that if I speak about creative writerly practices, habits of mind, and histories across participants, I might be assuming that any preferred creative genre offers the same or similar affordances as any other. To lump together the writerly identity that is (in)formed via Hasanthika’s practice in writing fiction with that (in)formed by Robert’s practice in writing experimental poetry might represent a gross misstep on this study’s part. Future research and writing on this study must better take into account the differences that these preferred genres might make explicit among the participants of the study. Further research into literate trajectories vis-à-vis individual, practiced genres of creative writing seems intellectually and ethically necessary.

There’s no such thing as bad data, so long as that data is properly and ethically collected. I believe that the methods and methodologies I have outlined and discussed above detail a framework and process that have produced solid data on which to begin basing my claims. This research design, although imperfect, can be built upon in order to provide a pathway for future research in the years to come.
CHAPTER 3:

STORY ANIMALS: THE DISCIPLINARY BECOMINGS OF FORMALLY-TRAINED CREATIVE WRITERS

“My primary way of understanding the world is through stories…I think internally that’s how I make sense of stimulus and information. I make stories out of it myself. And I also think the primary way I share that information with other people is that I turn it into stories for them, for me to be able to transmit that information to them. And so that to me is like…if we think of man as a language animal, the extension of that for me is I am a story animal.” – Franklin Winslow

Early in our first interview together, Franklin discussed growing up in a community where acts of storytelling were practiced between both intimates and strangers, in one’s home or at public cookouts sponsored by the local motorcycle club. These acts of narrativizing life events, be they to aggrandize one’s self or vilify a party who has supposedly wronged the storyteller, served as ways to (re)contextualize and historicize information, as well as ways to manage one’s public-facing persona through largely oral performances. In discussing the role stories played in his upbringing, Franklin identified literacies in the forms of “story making” and story understanding, of an ability to “hold” readers and listeners “in order to deliver on the line” (Interview October 18, 2017) and to understand that line oneself, as modes of knowledge production within this community. And he further identified these modes as intimately related to his sense of self and sense of project as a creative writer. For Franklin, these modes of storytelling preceded a practice of creative writing that would come later in his life, but which would nevertheless crucially inform that practice.
While of my participants only Franklin referred to himself as a “story animal,” most, like Franklin, reported they established their relationships with creative languaging practices beyond the scope of disciplinary concerns. Participants reported that their pathways toward becoming creative writers were set off from the more direct and commonly-assumed lanes of tutelage, practice, and professionalization. In fact, the formation of professional, creative writerly identities seemed to rarely, if ever, conform to these more “common” narratives of artists’ developments. This romanticized lore regarding the development of artists—in this case writers of prose, poetry, drama, and hybrid works—often reinforces a narrative consisting almost exclusively of an early fascination with the artist's future medium, unrelenting practice and tutelage (perhaps under a mentor or “master”), and the production of artifacts that formally adhere to a number of stylistic conventions of an art form or medium and so solidify that artist’s status as a bona fide member of the associated community. Because they are able to create artifacts inspired by thoughts outside the conventional, this view also holds the artist as an outsider and, in certain ways, near-godly or singularly great (see Pope, 2005). These romanticized narratives have often been accompanied by views that “hold narrowly individualist and humanist views of creativity as a product of purely human genius and personal talent” (Pope, 2005, p. 144). In this, they have eschewed the roles that the social, economic, communal, and political dimensions of literate and extra-literate activity have played in developing one’s writerly identity.

Paul Prior’s (1998) analyses of graduate students’ academic writing development affirm the advantage of viewing disciplinary development through this wider lens. “In order to understand writing and disciplinarity from a developmental perspective,” he writes, “it is important to take up perspectives that are longer in term, more diverse in setting, and, not incidentally, less grounded in the dominant institutional perspectives” (p. 134, emphasis
mine). Here Prior identifies the need to break away from the standard perspective that disciplinary development, and so professional development based thereon, is homogenous, linear, monochronic, and only hierarchical. Roozen & Erickson (2017) further challenge prevailing methods of development that entail unidirectional mappings of literate progress within disciplines involving writing. They suggest that such methods of mapping end up “locat[ing] writers and their writing within a particular disciplinary world and chart development along a pathway that begins on the periphery and leads toward some central core…” (1.01), often imagined as a hub of power, knowledge, and agency.

These maps of unidirectional mapping take off from two erroneous premises. First, produced maps often and mistakenly characterize these “central cores” as stable reifications of values shared by singular discourse communities that hold them. Second—and more directly germane to the discussion in this chapter—in this process of charting, this assumed methodological stance fails to consider the heterochronic and multicontextual activities in which writers participate. Put another way, these maps identify ecologies of literate activity as discretely bound and so fail to account for the depth and breadth of writers’ lifeworlds. The heterochronic and multicontextual activities writers practice, however, not only come to describe writers’ multiple identities (personal, professional, social, etc.), but they also constitute the trajectories by which these aforementioned pathways progress, and have always progressed.

The view both Prior and Roozen & Erickson offer instead is one of disciplinary development as heterogeneous, temporally unfolding, and laterally-situated. These identities are constructed through the innumerable, lived moments that have and continue to reinforce, erode, and remake one’s sense of self as an agent in one’s social world(s). Many of
these moments are therefore extra-disciplinary\textsuperscript{13} in that they reference forms of work and learning, which, although outside the commonly-assumed bounds of disciplinarity as understood only within institutional contexts, find purchase with that which is done within those contexts. These forms of learning have contributed to participants’ disciplinary developments as creative writers as vitally, I would argue, as studying literature, nurturing a fascination with language, and working with peers and mentors within the context of the academies where they received their graduate training—all activities that participants across this study shared.

Numerous studies on literate action have been conducted (see, e.g., Barton and Hamilton, 1998; Brandt, 2001; LeCourt, 2004; Pahl, 2007; Ito et al., 2009; Haddix, 2012; Vasudevan, 2014; &c.) which focus on the role extra-literate and extra-disciplinary activities play in the formation of meaning making and identity, frequently as they relate to participants’ developments as writers or producers of other communicative forms. The primary approaches to these discussions, while not focused on the direct analogous transfer of one set of literate skills to another context, have commonly focused on stabilized practices at multiple discrete sites insofar as they may be placed in institutional relation. These focuses have allowed us to identify not only how these practices are mobile and can affect one another across their local sites, but also how they may alter the writerly values of practitioners at those sites, as well as conceptions of those sites. Similar acts of mobility and change can be seen in the demographic of artist on which this study focuses. However, by

\textsuperscript{13}The term “extra-” in this context is something of a misnomer. While “extra-” as “beyond” is fitting, “extra-” as “supplementary” is not. If learning and disciplinary development happen across the trajectories of a life, no singular domains of learning need be thought of as holding a privileged place over others. Work and learning done beyond the disciplinary is complementary to that done within it. This said, for clarity’s sake, I still use the prefix “extra-” to denote activities and engagements outside the normative conceptions of disciplinary and institutional structures.
purposefully foregrounding the influence of extra-literate and extra-disciplinary activities on these writers, this study adds much to the discussion of disciplinary development. Beyond informing us of the literate trajectories of this specific demographic of writer, this study helps dislodge the hierarchical notions still often held about disciplinary and professional becoming. Namely, that the activities outside the institutional domain can only be, at best, supplemental to institutional learning and development and, at worst, irrelevant to that learning and development. This foregrounding suggests instead that professionals’ disciplinary development is always negotiated along their lengthier, wider, and thus more encompassing trajectories of learning.

Serving as a bridge, then, to the data chapters to come, which explore, respectively, Creative Writer-Composition Instructors’ (CWCIs’) writerly values and the negotiation of their teacherly identities, this data chapter tracks the trajectories of participants’ “semiotic becomings” as creative writers. I take this term “semiotic becoming” from Prior (2018), who suggests it as a model of learning that exists in contrast to models that emphasize learning that progresses “step-by-step along a sequentially graded curricular path.” Prior states that the story of learning he tells, which he describes as “a trajectory of semiotic becoming,” sees learning instead as:

…embodied, dispersed, mediated, laminated, and deeply dialogic. Becoming happens not inside domains, but across the many moments of a life, where no space is pure or settled, where discourses and knowledge are necessarily heterogeneous, and where multiple semiotic resources are so deeply entangled that distinct modes simply don’t make sense. (n.p)

Viewing interviews as data that tell portions of participants’ stories of semiotic becoming, I consider the roles literate and, even more pointedly, extra-literate and extra-disciplinary activities have played in these becomings. These activities take place across participants’ lives and play out across myriad “timescales” (see Lemke, 2000). They take such forms as
practices in the martial arts, employments in non-creative writing fields, and familial literacy communities structured around music education and practice, among several others.

Following a short review of literature particularly pertinent to the discussion of this chapter and a description of this chapter’s methodology and snapshots of participants, I discuss participants’ myriad literate, extra-literate, and extra-disciplinary activities. Participants identified ways they repurposed and recontextualized their engagements with these activities for both their practices of creative writing and habits of mind attendant to them. These engagements occurred across a variety of sites including those associated with work, family, and other social communities. In the next section, I expand on this idea of recontextualization to explore communities in which participants participated but ultimately either rejected or believe they were rejected from. Participants’ movements toward creative writing and creative writing communities often found provenance in movements away from other literacy communities. Engagements with these other communities tended to inform or highlight participants’ perceived social or personal distinctions from members therein. Instances of these distinctions included those highlighting ethnic, language-based, writing-based, and even artistic differences. I then characterize their relationship with a particular activity, or set of activities, as different from other community members’ relationships, participants also characterized themselves as distinct from or as an outsider to that community of practitioners. This process of distinction often threw into relief the affordances of other communities that either offered participants’ opportunities the prior communities could or would not, or else shared in participants’ writerly values.

Overall, I argue that participants’ extra-literate and extra-disciplinarily activities should not be viewed as obstacles on their pathways toward becoming creative writers, but rather as vital components to that becoming. Viewing the construction of one’s identity this
way destabilizes the idea that disciplinary identities are static and pre-determined, waiting only to be assumed by individuals who participate in that discipline via practices and habits of mind that are likewise static. By discussing the above, I lay the groundwork for a discussion of my participants’ writerly values and negotiations of their teacherly identities in chapters to come.

**TYPOLOGIES OF ACTIVITY & THE RESTRUCTURING OF ENGAGEMENTS**

The activities with which participants practice and engage, and which I detail below, include both those “marked” and “unmarked.” I take these terms out of scholarship in Linguistics that Rhetoric & Composition and Writing Studies taken up. Specifically, I arrive at these terms by way of Buell (2004) and Prior (2018). Overviewing the “markedness model” discussed in Myers-Scotton’s 1998 *Codes and Consequences: Choosing Linguistic Varieties*, Buell identifies how it holds that speakers and writers will use unmarked or neutral language until they feel there is a need to use special forms to define social relations, establish solidarity, take on authority, or signal nuance. However, what is considered marked varies across situations and speakers as illustrated in discussions of literary moves and cross-lingual translations[,]…interactions within families or workplaces…[&c.] (p. 121)

As per Jakobson (1985), “every single constituent of any linguistic system is built on an opposition of two logical contradictories: the presence of an attribute (“markedness”) in contraposition to its absence (“unmarkedness”)” (p. 85). Translated into the domain of disciplinary becoming, certain activities undertaken by individuals either do not stand out within the commonly understood context of disciplinary becoming (unmarked), or else do (marked). Prior (2018), discussing the disciplinary development of his daughter Nora, currently a biologist/zoologist, identifies several marked activities Nora undertook that appear to have informed her becoming a scientist. Within the immediate context of Nora’s
science-oriented development, Prior identifies how unmarked activities might include those traditionally disciplinary-based: “interacting with an exhibit in a science museum or participating in a local astronomy club”; while marked activities might include those not traditionally disciplinary-based: “having pets, fishing, watching the sunset, collecting stuffed animals” (n.p). Along with my participants, I investigated similarly marked and unmarked activities they believe significantly informed their becoming creative writers.

At times these marked activities took forms closely related to writing, just as some of Nora’s marked activities hewed closely to the domains of animal studies, science, and field work. Examples of more closely-hewing, marked activities among my participants include technical writing, professional writing, and participation in other art forms or related art scenes. Less closely-hewing, marked activities included non-writing work, progression in the martial arts or in gymnastics, or social participations in communities such as spiritual groups, feminist organizations, and working-class motorcycle clubs. These activities’ significances to participants’ becomings are informed by the immediate and social-historical context(s) in which they took place. Participants did not develop as creative writers by progressing along a predetermined “pathway that begins on the periphery and leads toward some central core.” Rather, their development progressed across “trajectories that trace[d] key developmental pathways for their disciplinary writing, learning, and socialization,” which “stitch[ed] together the tapestry of their richly literate lives” (Roozen & Erickson, 1.01). These “richly literate lives” are strongly informed by myriad extra-literate and extra-disciplinary engagements that occurred not ancillary to, but rather complementary with their more disciplinarily-discernible literate practices and engagements.

Along these lines, the creative writers I interviewed regularly shared thoughts on how their pathways toward disciplinary development ran through myriad marked activities. Lave
& Wegner (1991) have suggested that, despite the dominant metaphor of assimilation that entails disciplinary becoming, it is through the various trajectories of community formations and activities relevant to communities that disciplinarity and professional identity are shaped. Similar to Roozen & Erickson (2017), Lave & Wegner conclude that communities responsible for this shaping have “no single core or center,” but are rather constructed as a “set of relations among persons, activity, and world over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice” (1991, pp. 36, 39). My participants reported that “learning” how to write creatively and assume the identity of “creative writer” went through a number of via points, including among others: personal trauma, seemingly unrelated professions, geographic and temporal distancing, various athletic and physical endeavors, and forays into other art forms—all of which happened within the context, and sometimes under the auspices, of particular communities. Instead of understanding these via points as delays in their processes of becoming, participants associated the marked experiences concomitant with these points as strongly with their disciplinary identities as they did many of their typically unmarked activities (reading in their preferred genre(s), writing in their preferred genre(s), honing tools of the craft, &c). Specifically, it was through acts of both repurposing literate practices and recontextualizing experiences based in those practices that these marked activities played key roles in developing participants’ sense of themselves as writers.

The acts repurposing and recontextualizing I forward square with Beach’s (2003) understanding of how knowledge is recontextualized for different tasks, instead of directly drawn from and applied to analogous new tasks. Beach describes “consequential transitioning” as a process that makes knowledge “generalizable” from one activity to another. This process occurs through an alteration of the relationship between the individual
and the activity, and so the system(s) thereof. These alterations enable individuals to transition from certain tasks to contextually new tasks. This is achieved through processes of negotiation that establish the demands of these new tasks in their associated system of social relations in light of previous actions in other systems of relations. Tuomi-Gröhn, Engeström and Young (2003) offer additional implications of this process, arguing that these transitions enable us to recognize the “developmental process[es] within which learners and social organizations exist in a mutually constitutive relation to one another over time” (p. 6). The community impacts the individual, just as the individual impacts the community.

To make these “consequential transitions,” which entail a process of “struggling” (Beach, 2003, p. 42) to apply prior knowledges across contexts, participants drew from both their richly literate lives and their extra-literate and social lives. Beach suggest that a consequential transition “shifts the individual’s sense of self or social position” and so “link[s] identity with knowledge propagation” (ibid). This process thus challenges the idea that there exist identities readily “available within the well-policed borders of the discipline” (Roozen & Erickson, 2017, 1.01, emphasis mine) and ready to be assumed. In fact, consequential transitioning and theories that inform it upend the latter-described model of identity construction. All identities based in the disciplinary are constructed through processes of idiosyncratic linkage and knowledge propagation. This is because all disciplines are constructed by similar means. Individuals part of communities interact with those outside the community along with those inside. These individuals bring to these communities their extra-communal knowledges. Communities interact with one another over time and to the evolution of all. As an analytic frame, then, this alternate understanding of engagement helps us to see how disciplinary identity is formed across activities, within multiple communities, and throughout histories.
CHAPTER METHODS

For this chapter, I draw primarily on data I have gathered from participants who shared with me their creative works (published and/or unpublished) and/or gave me permission to seek out their published works for the purpose of discussing them in interview and writing about them for potential conferences and publications. In addition, and when relevant, I draw on data from participants who did not necessarily share their works with me but whose data speaks to similar themes of semiotic becoming through a synthesis of literate, extra-literate, disciplinary, and extra-disciplinary engagements.

Below I present initial snapshots of the participants from whom I drew the majority of this chapter’s data. I do this to call attention to their past and present activities informing their identities as creative writers. These brief renderings are meant to assist the reader in contextualizing discussions in this chapter as well as in chapters to come, which will focus on participants’ writerly values and training, practice, and identities as composition instructors. Last, these snapshots should help orient the reader to the stories and discussions of these and other participants in later chapters and further underscore the notion that participants’ multiple activities, experiences, and professional identities exist and influence one another across contexts and throughout participants’ histories. The activities, experiences, and identities should not, or rather cannot, be fully isolated from one another.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, initial interviews were conducted separately from any text-based interviews. While little preparation aside from reviewing the IRB-approved interview questions could be done for the initial interviews, for any follow-up interviews on the subject of participants’ acts of repurposing and recontextualizing I prepared by:

- reviewing my notes from the initial interviews;
• reviewing those interviews’ transcripts, noting sections on participants’ perceived pathways toward becoming creative writers, their goals and values as creative writers (i.e. what they write “about,” or what they look to “do” with their creative writing);
• reading the texts they shared with me, making notes on:
  o sections I believed showcased, accentuated, or otherwise contradicted discussions during the initial interview;
  o sections I believed performed a function outside of what we discussed in the initial interviews, and, in the sole case of creative works;
  o and what I believed the pieces or sections thereof were thematically “about” from my own literary standpoint.

While this chapter does not focus on participants’ creative texts, it is important to note that participants and I occasionally discussed these works during these interviews. At times, they were discussed alongside participants’ other literate, extra-literate, and extra-disciplinary activities and practices as ways either to provide additional context or to draw on as examples of a particular writerly value, habit, or activity.

After completing and transcribing any follow-up interview, I would review all transcripts from any single participant. In line with mediated discourse theory, during these reviews I sought to analyze a number of themes related to participants’ creative writing trajectories through their histories and across multiple engagements / activities. I attempted to identify how participants believed they had contextualized and/or recontextualized literate, extra-literate, and extra-disciplinary activities in the processes of their disciplinary becomings as creative writers. In effect, I attempted to note the ways the wide-ranging discourses of my participants’ social lives were “engaged (or not) in the moment-by-moment social actions of social actors [i.e., my participants] in real time activity” (Scollon, 2001b, p. 140). By
extension, this would also lead to an examination of how such “discourse works its way into people’s actions and identities” (Roozen & Erickson, 2017, 2.03).

SNAPSHOTS

The three participants from whom I draw the majority of this chapter’s data are: Steve Rosenstein, Hasanthika Sirisena, and Ashley Farmer. With principles of data reduction (Smagorinsky, 2008) in mind, I chose these three participants because they represent what I see as a highly varied set of extra-literate practices and extra-disciplinary experiences that inform their identities as creative writers. In the interview data examined below, Steve discusses his background in martial arts and the punk music scene. Hasanthika discusses her background as a non-native speaker of standard English and her professional background as a grant writer. And Ashley discusses her family dynamics and, in particular, how learning the piano factored into her and her brothers’ upbringings. However, despite the variety of activities and experiences represented across the sets of interview data, the processes by which Steve, Hasanthika, and Ashley drew from these experiences in the construction of their writerly identities share a number of striking and important similarities, which I discuss in further detail below.

I present these participants in the order I discuss their data:

Steve Rosenstein identifies as a white, Jewish male in his early 50s, raised by middle-class parents in the suburbs of New Jersey. He attended public high school and, afterwards, pursued and received an undergraduate degree. In his late-30s, Steve began attending City College of New York’s M.F.A. program in Creative Writing. (This is where Steve and I met; we were in the same cohort.) There he worked under the tutelage of several fiction
instructors and, for a time, was the managing editor of the literary journal *Fiction*, based out of City College. While attending City College as a graduate student, Steve enrolled in a composition pedagogy course, which would allow him to teach while attending. He mainly taught Composition and the occasional Creative Writing class during this time. Upon submitting his thesis—a novel-length manuscript on gym-culture that took place in a fictionalized version of the area where Steve grew up—Steve continued to work at City College as an adjunct instructor. A few years later, Steve applied to a small collection of Ph.D. in Creative Writing programs. In 2014 Steve attended SUNY Binghamton’s, from which he graduated in 2017. While at Binghamton, Steve took classes on composition theory and writing pedagogy, continued to teach writing, and completed a creative dissertation—a new novel. At the time of this writing, Steve, both playwright and novelist, continues to teach and is at work putting the final edits on his latest novel. He has published several short stories and two short plays—*Moons of Jupiter* and *Tales from the Schminke Tub* (2014), which were released together.

**Hasanthika Sirisen**a identifies as a Sri-Lankan woman in her 40s, who emigrated to the United States during her childhood. She attended public schools growing up and holds an undergraduate degree and two graduate degrees. Hasanthika received her first graduate degree from New York University, a Master’s in education. After taking a number of years between programs, Hasanthika earned her second graduate degree from The City College of New York, in Creative Writing. (I met Hasanthika at City College; she was in a cohort above mine.) Like Steve, Hasanthika took the composition pedagogy class while at City College (though did so with a different instructor than Steve’s) so that she could teach writing courses while earning her M.F.A. At City College, Hasanthika taught a variety of writing classes including composition, disciplinary-specific courses, and creative writing.
Additionally, she taught creative writing classes for the Gotham Writers Workshop. After submitting her M.F.A. thesis consisting of short stories, Hasanthika stayed on at both City College to teach as an adjunct instructor and Gotham to teach as a creative writing instructor. Hasanthika is currently an editor for *West Branch* literary magazine and a tenure-track professor at Susquehanna University, where she predominantly teaches creative writing. Her short story collection *The Other One: Stories* (2016) won the 2015 Juniper Prize for Fiction and, as such, was published by UMass Press the following year. At the time of this writing, Hasanthika continues to write fiction.

**Ashley Farmer** identifies as a white female in her 30s, raised in a middle-class family in Louisville, KY. She received her bachelor’s degree at the University of Louisville. Following some years working, living in different regions of the United States, and shortly attending a M.F.A program at UC Irvine, Ashley attended and completed her M.F.A in Creative Writing at Syracuse University. Ashley’s funding package at Syracuse required that she teach writing classes to undergraduate students. Ashley would attend teaching orientations prior to starts of the semester, and she was enrolled in a composition pedagogy class the year she started teaching. She predominantly taught composition while earning her M.F.A. After completing her graduate degree, Ashley moved back to Louisville, where, among other professions, she taught writing as a part-time lecturer and worked in a curatorial position for the Speed Art museum. Now in Utah, outside Salt Lake City, Ashley continues to work in the curatorial field for another museum and has applied to college lectureship positions, where she would primarily teach composition. Ashley is the author of a number of poems, short stories, hybrid works, and books, including most recently *The Women* (2017). Her story, “Parting Shot” was the winner of the 2017 Los Angeles Review fiction award and was published in
early 2018. At the time of this writing, Ashley continues to write fiction and hybrid creative works.

**CREATIVE WRITERS’ BECOMINGS**

*Recontextualizing Extra-Literate and Extra-Disciplinary Activity*

Across interviews, participants identified the crucial role both extra-literate and extra-disciplinary activities played in their development as creative writers. Physical and athletic activities (extra-literate) and other professional activities (literate, but extra-disciplinary), be they writing or non-writing related, are just two broad categories of activities participants identified as informing their pathways of becoming.

As a case example, Steve—a novelist and playwright, recent Ph.D. graduate from SUNY Binghamton’s Creative Writing graduate program, and martial arts black belt—offers a fairly straightforward conception of his identity as a creative writer: identity as disciplined (i.e. habitual) doing. For him the “creative writer” identity is most strongly associated with and formed by the actions of writing creatively. Simply put, one is a creative writer if one has developed a consistent practice of writing in genres one would identify as creative. However, it took Steve well into his adulthood to develop what he would identify as a disciplined practice of writing creatively, which in turn appeared to be a road block to assuming a “creative writer” identity in a way suitable for him. He believes one of the root causes for this was, literally, an inability to sit for extended lengths of time to write. Steve states of his time and actions prior to developing a disciplined practice:

> I tried sitting for a while [to write creatively], fidgeting, clawing at my own skin, getting up to clean, doing this, doing that. And I was doing it day after day after day. And I said, “Okay, there’s got to be another approach I can take here.” And what used to happen in martial arts, in the dojo, is that you would sit in what was called a *seiza* position…it’s like a preparatory seated position[,]...if the instructor was addressing instructing you[,]...if you were meditating, you would meditate in *seiza*,...
things like this… So I was struggling to learn how to sit, and I said, “Look man, why don’t you learn to treat this space like the dojo?” Because what happens with the dojo is, there’s a lot of focus on ritual, and there’s a lot of focus on transitions. So, one of things I did think about was maybe there’s a ritual, something very small. Maybe there’s a small transition I could do here that would kinda get me into a place where I could sit down a little bit… I would stand outside this little [writing] nook, and I would bow, and then I’d walk in. And then I’d sit down, and when I got antsy, I would say to myself, “Pretend you’re in seiza, and you’re waiting for your next instruction.” (Interview, April 19, 2017)

Although believing himself incapable of sitting for prolonged periods of time to write, Steve certainly had a history of sitting—often and sometimes for prolonged periods—in the context of his martial arts training. Seiza describes the floor-sitting position used in various practices, including multiple forms of martial arts, for simultaneously acting at rest from other activities and viewing demonstrations or for receiving instruction. Eventually drawing from his education and years of experience in the martial arts, Steve began to reimagine the space of his desk as the space of a dojo. Speaking more bodily, he began to reinterpret the act of sitting to write as a variation on a seiza position. As Steve describes it, this practice continued until he felt his body became physically accustomed to sitting to write for stretches of time. When he arrived at this point, Steve believed he no longer needed to perform the ritual of bowing or likening his seated position to that of seiza and so divested himself of the practice. Further, when discussing the value of creative writing—the physical writing and writerly process Steve would describe as unexciting, or even “boring,” because for him it only entailed the acts of waking up and sitting—he did so by describing creative writing as an act of learning, in many ways similar to the learning or instruction he received in seiza at his dojo. Steve would sit patiently at his deck, meditatively waiting to “receive instruction”—in this case from his own complex of thoughts—about what to write next.

From a perspective of disciplinary becoming, Steve’s experiences in the martial arts would fall under the category of “marked” activities. Which is to say that these actions are not
typically linked, linearly or disciplinarily, to the habit of writing creatively at one’s desk. And yet, the domain of the martial arts, an “affective” domain, is understood by Steve as inextricably linked to his professional/disciplinary “becoming” as a creative writer.

Literacy studies’ emphases on space (see, e.g., Reynolds, 2007; Shipka, 2011; Pahl, 2014; Williams, 2017) inform us of the value of considering rooms and places as important components of the writing process. Hannah Rule (2018), for instance, notes that “seeing writing practices staged in myriad and ever-changing rooms helps dislodge the sense of writing processes as enduring static procedures. Rather this view shows processes as continually made and remade, as writers collide differently with different things” (p. 421).

However, while Rule’s study was based in writers’ physical engagements with spaces and objects in those spaces, Steve’s engagement with the space of his writing nook was conceptual. Rather than speak to how he interacted in the material dimensions and with the material objects in his writing space, he drew from past knowledge intimately related to the physical, to “remake” the space. His so-called “collisions” with “things,” in other words, was not only spatial, but also temporal and activity-based. The “agentive role[s] physical environments play” (Pigg, 2014, p. 255) may be the product of both the more passive affordances of that environment and the active recontextualizing, or even recasting, of that environment to serve a literate goal.

Some writers revealed similar thoughts, albeit with variations, about what we might regard as the physical components (hexis) that inform one’s space-based embodiment of and disposition toward a practice of writing. Ashley, for instance, identified sitting for piano lessons as both a child and adolescent as factoring in to her ability to sit for long stretches of time to write. But whereas Steve enjoyed and found personal value in his martial arts training and continued with it through to becoming a black belt, Ashley disliked her piano lessons
and believes she was not musically inclined (interview October 25, 2017). This contrast suggests a potential, additional implication of Prior’s (2018) discussion that I reference above. Marked actions important to one’s disciplinary development may not at the time of their performance be identified by the performing individual as important in any context. What turns out to be important or even integral to an individual’s trajectory of becoming need not align with practices they feel are enjoyable or valuable at the time of those practices’ execution. Reflections upon the activity after-the-fact may further reinforce the disciplinary significance of that activity, suggesting a recursive dimension in the project of tracking one’s, or a subject’s, laminated trajectories.

While not discussing actual sitting in particular or any other past practice that related to current, physical writing practices, still other writers identified the domain of the physical as important to their development as creative writers. Sandra, for instance, related her background in dance, gymnastics, and choreographic training to her development as a writer of what she calls “innovative” non-fiction. Each background provided her with particular sensibilities about space and physical presence that she has sought to represent in her writing. As a more specific example, Sandra believes she repurposed her ability to choreograph the movements of actors on a stage to a broader understanding of where characters could be “in space in the scene,” both physically and metaphorically, as well as how they both physically and metaphorically “moved around in relation to each other” (interview March 28, 2017). Similarly, Robin related her practices in singing and directing choirs as informing her decisions about sound and voice in her writing. A particular refrain to which she returns and herself (and her students) to consider during any given moment of writing is: “How do I want to sound?” (Interview April 24, 2017). Robin views herself as
both a proponent and student of the rhetorical and quintessentially artistic affordances of sound in one’s writing.

Predictably, other writers cite their professions and experiences within the broader field of writing as informing their identities as creative writers. These professions and experiences cannot only be characterized by early attempts at writing creatively but can also be characterized by forms of writing my participants would not necessarily identify as “creative.” Prior to receiving her M.F.A. in Creative Writing, Hasanthika, an award-winning short story writer and tenure-track professor, worked as a grant writer. She characterized this position by its writing tasks on which she “couldn’t give up” or “couldn’t feel bad about herself” when attempting to accomplish because she was “being paid for this.” Hasanthika often described using words such as “brutal” the criticism she received from her bosses on her initial drafts of grant proposals. She further described receiving the criticism as something she would have to “sit there and take” and, of course, professionally endure if she wanted to keep her job.

However, she also described such criticism as “super honest” and identifies these experiences as both comprising “the moment when I learned how to be a writer” and providing her the “bravery” to face criticism on her fiction. Hasanthika points out that, with regard to the criticism, “you didn’t have to believe everything,” showing that, for her, the process of taking the criticism and believing the criticism represented two separate facets of becoming a creative writer. The latter speaks to one’s training as a writer, and the former speaks to the perceive social realities of the writing industry. Translated, however, into the world of writing and publishing fiction, Hasanthika notes that it was this ability to “take” the criticism that lent her the ability to work with harsh and, at times, unaccommodating editors. These editors she often contrasted with her creative writing teachers, who she characterized
as “uniformly supportive and helpful.” Had a teacher treated her the way her editors did, Hasanthika would have “given that teacher terrible teaching reviews.” Yet, she states that working with the types of criticism provided by both her grant writing supervisors and editors, “helped me as a [fiction] writer” because it helped clue Hasanthika in to writing for publication, which is often contextually different than writing for a program or for one’s self. These insights Hasanthika shared further extend into material concerns tied to her writing that she grew to understood as well.

With deadlines looming and things like Hasanthika’s ability pay her rent and bills at stake, she found that working as a grant writer meant “not being released from the process of writing,” and that, with the context of writing as a professional, it was certainly possible to succeed or fail. As a working grant writer, you either succeed at securing grants or you fail to do so. If you fail to do so often enough, you will be terminated. But learning to write grants was, for Hasanthika, like learning anything else: the more she practiced this particular form of writing, and the better she was able to conceptualize it within the appropriate rhetorical context (i.e., in such a way that she would secure the grants from those who read these proposals and distributed them), the greater number of grants she was able to secure. It was through this job that Hasanthika came to understand the more material dimensions of the writing process, how writing directly impacts a community in material and affectual ways, and that the written is always “for” someone—an audience within particular contexts and with particular sets of expectations. And it proved to her that in a very material and experiential way, “taught me you get better the more you do it.” (Interview August 2, 2016).

Again, from a perspective of linear disciplinary development, such activities within the context of grant writing would find no purchase with one’s development as a creative
However, from a “trajectories of becoming” perspective, we may note that learning happens not in discrete domains of discourse, but rather across what Prior (2018) would call “the trajectories of a life” (n.p.). Hasanthika’s success in workshops, with editors, and with agents find connections with previous models of critique and learning from writing fields outside creative writing.

The examples above reveal myriad ways writers may and have repurposed and recontextualized past literate, extra-literate, and extra-disciplinary engagements to make connections to current ones. Although participants didn’t always report finding at the exact moment they engaged with an activity disciplinary value to their becomings, these activities, when regarded as formative, did appear to resonate with and help shape their writerly and artistic values. In other words, these activities often helped inform the larger “nexus of practice” in which these writers participated, and which has come to contour the connections among activities. Writers’ non-school engagements and the roles they play in the formation of the disciplinary terrain these writers inhabit are significant and cannot be discounted.

In the next section, I continue to challenge the idea that constructing disciplinary identities entails achieving lockstep, disciplinary milestones by focusing on literate difference. Participants often identified that their disciplinary development as creative writers not only included engaging with multiple, heterogenous systems of activity, but also rejecting others. This rejection allowed participants an opportunity to re-identify themselves with regard to

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14 Most notably Dias, Freedman, Medway, and Pare have offered a strong contrasting view of this phenomenon in Worlds Apart: Acting and Writing in Academic Workplace Contexts (1999). In this work, Dias et al. conclude that “the title of this book is not so hyperbolic as it appears…we write where we are. Location, it would appear, is (almost) everything” (222-23). Since numerous scholarly takedowns of this conclusion already exist, I won’t rehash the point here. But if interested, see Roozen & Erickson (2017) and Prior (2018).
their writerly, artistic, and or identity-based goals and seek out communities that could nurture those goals.

Identifying Literate Difference

Participants did not view all literate and extra-literate engagements as functioning in a characteristically accretive way. (I.e., in a way that suggested or informed a beneficial practice or disposition that would be enacted or continued.) While writers often discussed ways that previous engagements could be or were recontextualized and applied to new literate engagements, certain of their more formative engagements were not recontextualized in this way. Instead, these engagements would at times act as important admonishments against a practice or disposition, even though the engagement still held disciplinary value. Values derived from these engagements were difficult to tease out, especially when participants’ prime takeaways from those engagements contradicted their conceptions of how one’s identity as a creative writer is formed.

In the same interview with Steve (Interview, April 19, 2017), he and I discuss his involvement as a young adult in his local community’s punk scene. This involvement was characterized by, among others, an affinity for punk music, frequenting of locations where members of the punk community would gather, writing or making up punk songs, and singing lead in a punk band. While Steve stated that his involvement in the punk scene allowed him to more explicitly enact and cope with his feelings of alienation or of being an “outcast” in his general community, he is resolute to draw a distinct contrast between the value of his martial arts training and that of his experiences with punk. He states, “As positive as the martial arts turned out to be for me as a writer, the punk thing turned out to be a terrible thing for me as a writer.” He goes on, however, to still characterize his
experience with the scene as “something important” because of a “terrible lesson” he
learned through it as a young adult involved in the musical arts, which Steve recounts as:
“fuck technique.” (Given Steve’s current association of disciplined practice with his creative
writerly identity, we can understand why Steve coded this lesson as “terrible.”) So, while not
a pleasurable engagement upon reflection, certainly a formative one.

In identifying his training and practice as a songwriter and vocalist for a punk band,
Steve admits that, for him, the scene was more about its energy, outcast status, and
“transgression” than it was about composing quality music. Steve felt the “fuck technique”
lesson he learned from the scene was tied up to a large extent with the “rebellion against
[musical] virtuosity.” Elaborating on this point, Steve explains that he believed the scene
characterized those who, through practice, developed their musical abilities as “sellouts.” In
other words, to not practice, not prepare, and not grow as a musician was the path toward the
aforementioned rebellion, to the “transgressions” that served as social and political
commentary. Continuing on this line of thought, Steve also likens the frequency with which
punk musicians part of his community “peak[ed] when they were eighteen” and these
musicians’ inability to establish long careers with their “contempt” for art. He aligns this
contempt with a contempt for developing one’s technique or honing one’s craft. Steve links
acts of eschewing to a devaluation of disciplined practice, which practice he strongly
associates with his creative writer identity.

I would argue, however, that it is Steve’s preconceived understanding of how his
identity as a creative writer is formed—again, “identity as disciplined doing”—that accounts
for a contradiction I note. This contradiction occurs to me when he and I share our opinions
about some of the more foundational or universal characteristics of art across disciplines,
genres, or mediums. While Steve claims that his participation in his community’s punk scene
“did not help [him] as a writer...because there was no respect for craft,” he nevertheless finds value in punk’s affinity for “transgression.” He states that he believes the best art is always transgressive. Steve and I opened a discussion on the punk artist Iggy Pop’s performances as a young man as an example whose purpose was to help us home in on Steve’s feelings on the relationship between transgression and becoming.

Steve observes that while Iggy & the Stooges—largely considered Iggy Pop’s first band of recognizable acclaim—lacked musical ability, there arrived a moment when “they finally started to sound like themselves.” When, in other words, “they found who they were as musicians.” He relates this observation to one’s becoming an artist across disciplines, including creative writing: a dismissal of emulation in order to become something “inherently honest,” possessing a unique “voice.” In another derivation of Prior’s “trajectories of becoming” framework, we may note that while there is no “rational story,” as Prior puts it, accompanying the knowledge Steve acquired from his participation in the punk scene, certain values Steve currently admires in artists find purchase with values he identified, developed, and admired in punk and punk artists. The potential to identify these observations would be lost if we failed to consider the importance of the extra-disciplinary. Activities within extra-disciplinary sites can not only precede those within disciplinary sites, they can also help foment the emergence of one’s disciplinary goals, even if those goals cannot be articulated until much later in the developmental process.

The contrast Steve draws between himself as a methodical practitioner and the haphazard practices of others in his punk community led him to abandon that community and pivot to those more disciplined, including creative writing communities. Identifying the work his punk community failed to do threw into relief a mode of work he wanted to do, and which he would ultimately do through creative writing. So, while Steve’s punk
community had “no respect for craft,” the transgressive qualities Steve associated with the scene found purchase in his decision to leave it and, similar to Iggy and Stooges, find his unique “voice” as a writer. Similar to Steve, a number of other participants associated notions of social, cultural, or activity-based difference with their identities as creative writers. Difference in this case occurred within a variety of contexts: the professional, the (extra-)curricular, the cultural/ethnical, the familial, and the psychological, among others. And similar to Steve’s case, these differences often represented for participants opportunities to re-identify themselves and then pivot to creative writing and its communities.

The Difference Difference Can Make

Moje & Luke’s (2009) review of identity scholarship suggests “difference” is the most common metaphor through which identity has been conceptualized. This is in part because the idea of difference acts as a multifunctional metaphor, one through which we may identify the situatedness of both ourselves and others. Though far from being perfectly encapsulating, and certainly not the only major metaphor of identity, it is prevalent enough to warrant some singular attention. Difference, along with the other dominant metaphors of identity, Moje & Luke (2009) argue:

acknowledges identity as something fluid and dynamic that is produced, generates, developed of narrated over time…[It] assumes some level of the social, acknowledges the changing nature of identity, and builds in varying notions of recognition. (pp. 418, 419)

They go on:

Identity as difference focuses on how people are distinguished one from another by virtue of their group membership and on how ways of knowing, doing, or believing held or practiced by a group shape the individual as a member of that group. In other words, identity from the metaphor of difference is always articulated to group membership…Identity-as-difference metaphors situate literate practice as an artifact of the targeted difference, so that literacy itself is seen as differently practiced dependent on the group to which one’s identity is attached. (pp. 419-420)
Tethering this metaphor to perspectives from literacy studies, Moje & Luke note how the metaphor of difference “tend[s] to situate decisions—conscious or not—to participate in particular literacy practices…within the individual’s sense of self as tied to a social group.” Connected with this, they observe how the identity-as-difference metaphor “leave[s] a space for the learner to identify or not with the literate practices” (p. 421). Feelings of social belonging through a shared literate practice would seem to play as much a role in the formation of one’s identity as those of social alienation. An inability or conscious decision to not share in that practice may also constitute difference.

Participants in my study reported on a number of formative experiences with literate difference they intimately tie with their development as creative writers. However, these experiences rarely plugged directly into their senses of self as creative writers. Put another way, participants did not report that their exclusions from, failures to perform, and choices to not perform a particular literate practice reinforced their senses of self as creative writers. Instead, these experiences of literate difference informed their disciplinary identity and progressive literate development through alternate, sometimes circuitous means. Hasanthika, as an example, discussed her initial failing grades on both American-English spelling tests she was administered in early schooling and graded papers that would come later in her education. She traces these failing grades to both her immigrant background and previous education in British-English. On these spelling tests, it was not that Hasanthika was always spelling words incorrectly; at times she was simply spelling them differently. While I did not ask Hasanthika for specific examples of “misspellings,” she referred to such alternate spellings as “colour” for “color,” “realise” for “realize,” &c.

Hasanthika explained what it was like to strongly identify as an immigrant whose scholastic efforts were viewed through a lens of difference-as-incorrectness:
Hasanthika describes here a process of institutional subordination by the dominant practices and cultures represented in her early schooling and, more specifically, its system of grading. Her statement lends support to Girouxian perspectives of grades as the “ultimate discipline instruments by which teachers impose their desired values, behavior patterns, and beliefs upon students” and as patent expressions of “the correlation between power and subordinancy” in the classroom (Giroux 1984: 84). While Giroux is careful to point out that a teacher might unconsciously impose particular values, patterns, and beliefs, these impositions nevertheless reinforce the dominant institutional perspective on what is sanctioned (read: “correct,” “right,” etc.) action on a student’s part. Failure to take up sanctioned forms would be articulated through the assignation of, as Hasanthika says, “really bad grades” to the student and an institutionally-recognized flaw the student possessed. In Hasanthika’s case this character flaw expressed itself through her perceived inability on the part of both her teachers and the school administration to execute on such sanctioned forms. The outcome of this perspective, of course, was that Hasanthika ought to be enrolled in remedial classes, the site designated for those with said “character flaws.”

Such a process of subordination is further compounded by the status Hasanthika held as an immigrant. She ponders later in our interview an additional role her “immigrant background” played in the discourse of incorrectness through which her writing activities were viewed. Of her family’s relation to “hard work,” Hasanthika states: “I feel that I’ve grown up in what is probably a pretty typical immigrant family of you have to work really
hard to make it, it’s not a given that you will.” One expression of this “hard work” was the demand that Hasanthika earn good grades in school, which she did in many of her classes outside of English. As mentioned, earning good grades entails one’s proficiency in performing “correct,” sanctioned actions or modifying one’s actions when they are “incorrect.” Interestingly, Hasanthika links her family’s perspective on the relationship between work and success to her reception of disciplinary and professional criticism. “[M]aybe it’s my immigrant background,” Hasanthika states with regard to feedback she received as both a student and writing professional, but “I just learned to take the criticism.” But if we understand our institutional systems of education as expressing the agendas of its society, then we accept that “developmental progress [is] derived from those who hold dominant and controlling interests in that society, and will silence, coerce, and stigmatize other[s]” (Beach, 2003, p. 53) to prevent needing to share that control. The sites of this potential silencing, coercion, and stigmatization were Hasanthika’s filled-in tests and written pages and the form of spelling present there. Hasanthika describes how this identified difference later lead to her appreciation for creative writing classes once she had the opportunity to enroll in them.

According to her, perceptions of her as “not writing at a certain level” continued into her undergraduate education. This despite the fact that Hasanthika placed out of the composition classes at her university. She reports that in other writing-intensive classes she “was still getting low marks on papers and things like that” for reasons similar to those above. Once she enrolled in creative writing classes at her university, even though she did not major in Creative Writing or, in her words, “pursue it formally,” two important things happened. First, Hasanthika “started doing great” in the classes which, in turn, gave her “some confidence, which was really what I needed all along.” For her, classes in creative
writing provided the latitude to engage in a writing activity that valued certain aural features of writing over those of correctness from both SWE and American-English perspectives. As well, Hasanthika discusses how style became, among other things, a curricular affordance for her; it was, in other words, an avenue toward better grades:

…I now know that one of the reasons I was getting good grades [in creative writing] was that I may not have been that great in craft, my grammar was off, my spelling was off, but they saw something interesting in a voice. And a creative writing teacher could grade me on voice. (Interview August 12, 2016)

From then on, Hasanthika began to more critically consider the communicative force of features in writing not emphasized in either her English classes in high school or in some of her writing-intensive classes in college that she continued to take concurrently with creative writing classes. She identified what an “openness to style and styling” and “being sort of open to syntax” could afford a writer regardless of genre or discipline.

Second, Hasanthika realized something when she discovered for herself a discrepancy among the curricular (i.e. grading) demands of multiple courses that were, by all measures, each based heavily in writing. More specifically, Hasanthika discusses how she did not understand how you could be making a low mark on a paper in one class, and then your teacher is saying “Oh this is fantastic” in another [when utilizing similar styles of writing in each]… I was like, well how do I get good grades, how can someone say, in your creative writing class, “Oh, you’re a writer,” and not say the same thing in your English Hamlet class?

It would be some years past her undergraduate education before Hasanthika would feel comfortable enough identifying herself as “a writer.” Despite this, her articulation of the curricular differences between her literature classes and creative writing classes suggests her identifying the two types of writing done therein to be different literate activities, between different identifiable groups. Or, if not, then possibly similar literate activities with discernable differences that, likewise, account for different social groupings.
Identifying this sort of programmatic difference existing within the same departmental structure, i.e. the English department, further suggests how Hasanthika articulated “group membership” (Moje & Luke, 2009) in the programs. In this case the textualist ideology\(^{15}\) that permeated into the structures of grading endemic to Hasanthika’s high school English and undergraduate literature classes came to describe literate practices that impeded her membership into affiliated literacy groups. The difference in practice offered by creative writing—a difference characterized by alternatives to mandated “style,” “styling,” and “syntax”—articulated a different literacy group Hasanthika could unimpededly join. This literacy group based in creative writing, was one that—as Horner (2018)\(^{16}\) has noted, and according to its practitioners and common disciplinary view—strives for difference in writing, in both Composition and from other creative writers.

Hasanthika’s story is one of participation in a literacy group as a cornerstone to helping her form her identity as a creative writer. The literate activity of creative writing, and the linguistic affordances it provided her, stood in contrast to those offered by her high school and some of her writing-intensive college classes. Creative writing represented an alternate way Hasanthika could form a relationship with language and explore other grammars of communication. Her movement into creative writing communities can simultaneously be seen as a movement away from her previous writing communities where she was not, or believed she was not, perceived as a capable writer. However, the identity-as-

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\(^{15}\) A textualist ideology often assumes there exist universal, style-based characteristics of “good” writing (see Collins 1996).

\(^{16}\) N.b: From a writing-as-labor perspective, Horner (2018) argues that Creative Writing’s commodity, “difference in language, as well as in communicative practice more generally,” should not be viewed as a “deviation from the norm but, rather, is itself the norm, a position that emerges once we recognize writing as always located not only spatially but temporally” (p. 113). I don’t claim one way or the other that this difference exists, only that the perception of it exists and that this perception leads to articulations of different literacy groups and groupings.
difference metaphor, insofar as it is linked to literate activity and literacy groups, extends to actions of non-participation as well. Better put, the metaphor may be used to highlight the value of non-committal participation within a pre-existing location and social community. In Ashley’s case, her experience taking and internally resisting piano lessons as a child and adolescent informs the sense of difference she felt within her own family as an artist who had yet to find her preferred medium.

Ashley identifies playing the piano as a formative experience she had outside writing that played a significant role in shaping her development, or pathway of development, as a creative writer. She identifies her mother as an accomplished piano player, who obligated Ashley and her brothers to learn how to play piano. As Ashley puts it, it was “a discipline I was raised with.” Emphasizing the centrality of its role in her and her brothers’ upbringings, Ashley reports that learning piano was “the only thing I did that I wasn’t allowed to quit.” In contrast to her brothers, however, Ashley did not believe herself to be skilled with the instrument. While her bothers were “incredible” piano players, who came at it “from a place of love and an intuitive connection and kind of a deep knowledge, I never brought myself to it.” In fact, in terms of her literate development as a writer, Ashley recalls that her “very first bits of writing [were] writings in a journal where I write about how much I hate piano.”

Similar to Hasanthika, it was Ashley’s sense that she was not a member of this particular group of music lovers and aficionados that threw into relief the artistic affordances of creative writing. If Ashley’s exploration of creative writing was a movement toward a literate activity, it may also be seen as a movement away from another activity—one that highlighted creative writing’s affordances through a process of contrast. The following are two separate insights Ashley shares about creativity and the affordances of contrast:

I think I found through [my lessons on and practice with piano] that piano wasn’t
creative. So, I think that’s an interesting thing, that not all art forms are necessarily creative to the person doing…

But I think in having something to contrast my love of writing and reading with, that it underscored what I did find exciting art-wise, where I did feel I could be creative and inventive and playful and weird, and all those things. (Interview October 25, 2017.)

Moje & Luke (2009) argue that “sustained group memberships may be less important to a social view of identity than is the idea that identity is constructed, produced, formed, or developed in any and all social interaction” (p. 418). I bring this up to note that while participation within a community of creative writers can be important for one’s development as a creative writer—as all of my study’s participants have indicated in one form or another—it is not the only social participation that constructs one’s identity as a creative writer. (Though not representing points of contrast, Ashley reported associations with a multitude of group—martial artists, spiritual practitioners, feminist activist groups, &c.—all of which Ashley identifies as strongly informing her projects as a creative writer.)

The literate engagement that took the form of piano playing, itself embedded within a familial structure and history that emphasized its importance as both an object and mode of literate activity, represented for Ashley a means to develop as a creative writer through a less-obvious mode. While the piano served as a point of contrast for Ashley, her musical training informs her creative writing projects and relationship with language:

I played piano for a long time and didn’t love it the way that I could go to writing and enjoy that more instead. So, I think by comparison—okay, this is where I want to be versus at the piano bench…[However,] [m]usicality in writing is something I really value. And rhythm and cadence sonics. And I imagine somewhere back there piano has shaped that attention I pay to those things.

Moje & Luke (2009) pose a question that I find pertinent in this discussion of difference. “If a person is recognized as illiterate,” they ask, “then what are the possible identities available to that person?” (p. 419). This question, extrapolated from Nabi, Rogers, and Streets’ Hidden
Literacies (2009), asks that we consider the role literacy plays within the identification of one’s standing within a social stratum.

Nabi et al. (2009) observe that “formal literacy” has an additional functionality which many of [their] respondents did seek—and that is status. Several of the respondents values this functionality and therefore sought after it…It was the search for identity, which led [certain of their respondents] to take such efforts to teach themselves their own kind of formal literacy. (pp. 103-104)

While it’s doubtful that either Hasanthika or Ashley or the literacy groups from which they felt apart saw themselves/them as “illiterate,” the question posed about available identities asks that we consider where and how else literate identity might be sought when it is not or cannot be sought through the proficient practice of an immediate groups’ dominant literate activity. Hasanthika and Ashley’s cases show a pivot might be possible, so long as participation in an alternate literacy group is possible. Both Hasanthika and Ashley, as Moje & Luke (2009) suggest, brought with them into these groups prior notions of their identities shaped through their participations in other literacy groups. In Hasanthika’s case, creative writing and membership in a community of creative writers allowed her to gain the confidence she believed she needed as a writer and agent, a confidence that was shaken by instructors’ grading practices in high school and college. For Ashley, creative writing and associated community membership allowed her a way to explore her artistic desires through the practice of a non-music craft. But she identified these artistic desires through her musical training and association with a group of perceived musical adepts.

CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has explored a number of themes that have factored into participants’ conceptions of their own semiotic becomings as creative writers. These themes included the intricate stitchings of literate, extra-literate, and extra-disciplinary activities that inform the
latticework of participants’ literate lives. I have detailed how various activities helping form this latticework accrued meaning within participants’ becomings. Additionally, I’ve discussed how participants recontextualized activities and experiences to construct their identities in light of activity systems, literacy groups, and social communities of which they were a part or strove to be a part. Through complex processes of consequential transitioning (Beach 2003), participants can be seen not applying their knowledges in certain contexts to analogous tasks in other contexts, but rather by altering the relationships between themselves and systems of activity that may be (and are made to be) informed by these knowledges. These relationships were evolved and maintained through acts of participation highlighting processes of resonance, difference, and both normative and anormative functions of uptake.

Interviews I conducted and from which I have explicitly drawn and quoted here suggest some of the innumerable possible trajectories by which one becomes a creative writer. I do not claim the themes I have mentioned or underscored in the previous paragraph represent all that I could mention or underscore, or all that there are to mention or underscore. Participants across this study discussed relationships with families, institutions, professions, local communities, artistic communities, &c., not as gatekeepers to their becomings, but as via points across long and complex pathways to that becoming. I further have argued in this chapter that in order to understand CWCIs’ professional and disciplinary becomings, we must understand the context of those becomings through an attention paid to extra-literate and extra-disciplinary actions that rivals that of their formally literate and disciplinary actions.

Now that this chapter has provided portraits of creative writers and their processes of becoming, I move on to examine and discuss these writers’ creative works. Through an examination of their creative works, we may better understand participants’ writerly values,
or, better put, how the perception of their writerly values may be further contextualized through discussion of these artifacts. We may also begin to better understand the relationship, if any, that exists between participants’ writerly values and their pedagogical values as instructors of composition. Since the ultimate goal of this study is to trace creative writers’ trajectories from starting points prior to their initial identifications with creative writing and all the way into the composition classroom, an examination of their constructed identities in light of a reading of their creative works represents a necessary next stop.
CHAPTER 4:
THE WRITER & THE WRITERLY: NEGOTIATING VALUES ACROSS CREATIVE WRITING PRACTICES AND COMPOSITION PEDAGOGY

How might a short fiction writer’s project of exploring the complexities of emotion and trauma apprise us of how he frames his courses and class assignments as opportunities for students to investigate the richness of their own internal worlds?

What may a piece of innovative nonfiction framed as a multiple-choice test tell us about a teacher-writer’s belief in the freedom offered by positioning one’s self as a non-expert on a subject?

And to what end does a writer whose hybrid works challenge the idea of fixed genres offer her students a chance to disrupt common conceptions of writing by working in unique forms?

While Chapter 3 was dedicated to an examination of writers’ professional and disciplinary becomings across a number of domains, this fourth chapter uses co-examinations of participants’ creative works to explore their writerly values and how those values inform their work as composition instructors. Viewed within a sociohistorical frame, writing instruction may be understood as an activity informed by various relationships, histories, and influences, as well as by the confluences among these. Framed in this perspective are those participating in the activity itself (the teachers on whom I focus, as well as students, administrators, etc.) and the spatial-material conditions through which the activity occurs. These activities can tell us a great deal about the establishment of the writerly
values held by the formally-trained creative writers part of this study, as well as the relationship between those values and their approaches to teaching composition. To that end, this chapter specifically takes up questions about the work performed by these writers in the composition classroom. It will consider how their training and work as creative writers has informed writerly values they hold across contexts, which, in turn, have influenced their teaching of writing.

Across numerous co-examinations, I’ve observed that participants believe the writerly values they identified in interviews—themselves informed by discussions of the writers’ literate and extra-literate activities—track with the values they see present in their fiction, poetry, creative non-fiction, and hybrid forms. I do not discount the significance or insight of my participants’ beliefs or analyses of their works. Rather, I argue that these perceived values are the product of complex negotiations writers undertake when considering and examining their own works in light of their claimed identities as creative writers. These undertakings involve writers’ notions of themselves as artists, as writers who possess goals within their disciplinary and professional contexts, and as social beings outside these contexts of production. Further, these contexts may only be understood to the extent that we may situate these writers within their laminated trajectories in order to conceptualize their historical becomings.

Through the co-examinations of these writers’ produced artifacts and a discussion of interview data pertinent to these co-examinations, this chapters serves to help carve a path toward discussions of writers’ more holistic writerly values. In doing so, it also helps us consider the writing knowledges participants believe they propagate into their social and professional worlds, including those in which are situated their composition classes. As such, it will offer discussions of participants’ work in the composition classroom, including their
pedagogical goals as instructors. These instructors move toward these goals through their engagements with their students, writing assignments, and responses to student work, as well as their reflections on these engagements.

CHAPTER METHODS

Sites, Participants & Procedures

I draw on data I’ve gathered from select participants who voluntarily shared with me and discussed their creative works, published and/or unpublished. In particular, I predominantly draw on data from three primary participants, who at the time of this writing currently practice creative writing and are either engaged in the teaching of writing or pursuing teaching in some form. In the order they are discussed below, those participants are: Austin Baurichter, Sandra Giles, and Ashley Farmer.

Similar to my rationale for focusing on the particular participants I discussed last chapter, I chose to focus on these three participants, among the eight who provided me roughly equal sets of data across multiple phases of this study, with principles of data reduction (Smagorinsky, 2008) in mind. First, each aforementioned participant epitomizes different, important, and representative professional positions CWCIs hold. Austin is an M.F.A student who has only recently begun teaching composition. Sandra is a Ph.D. and full-time professor who has taught writing for roughly twenty years and continues to do so. And Ashley is an M.F.A. graduate and author of several published book-length works who taught both during her M.F.A as a graduate teaching assistant and after her M.F.A as an adjunct instructor, and who is now seeking to return to teaching writing in a lectureship position. Of course, no participant can be perfectly representative of a group of similar participants. Further, no participant’s histories vis-à-vis writing and teaching will be the
same. This said, Austin, Sandra, and Ashley each represent robust singular cases of typical CWCI stations—graduate teaching assistant, adjunct/lecturer, professor—and their singular data sets can help inform more generalizable understandings of CWCI stations within and across similar stations (see Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Second, Austin, Sandra, and Ashley’s instructional practices are innovative, socio-politically mindful, dialogic, and/or aware of the textualist ideologies that may lead to problematic current-traditional-rhetorical pedagogies. These three CWCI stations represent some of the valuable and generative work creative writers bring into the composition classroom but which has been largely undervalued or overlooked by our field. I could have chosen to write on other participants, such as Dan or Steve, whose pedagogies appear heavily influenced by prescriptivist standards. Going this route, I could have focused this chapter’s discussions on the tensions created when instructors’ intense interest in and focus on language—admirable qualities in creative writers—veer off into a focus on “correctness” in their teaching, as seems to be the case with them. However, I reserve that discussion and others like it for another manuscript. In this one, I continue to argue that our field ought to be mindful of CWCI stations for the value they add to composition pedagogy.

Keeping with the above, in each section I devote to one of these three participants I:

- provide a detailed description of each of the primary participants within the context of this aspect of the study. This description includes a brief overview of the literary themes and writerly value participants and I explored;
- describe my data collection procedures for the primary participant;
- discuss our co-examinations of the participant’s work, often in the context of previous data we generated. For the sake of space, in these sections I
primarily limit my discussion to one or two works participants shared with me;

• offer an interpretation on how the participant’s writerly values were negotiated during both the composing process and the co-examination;

• and, finally, draw on further interview data and teaching materials to identify potential resonances between participants’ writerly and pedagogical values.

Table 3.1: Instructor experience and breakdown of teaching artifacts shared.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Participant</th>
<th>Composition Instructor Experience</th>
<th>Number of syllabi provided</th>
<th>Number of individual composition-oriented assignment descriptions provided</th>
<th>Student work (essays, letters, and short responses) provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bauritcher, Austin</td>
<td>One semester, Fall 2017. Austin has also served as a TA for an “Imaginative Writing” course (Spring 2017) and instructor of an “Introduction to Creative Writing” course (Spring 2018).</td>
<td>Three (3). One “Imaginative Writing” syllabus; one “WRD 101” (FYC) syllabus; one “Introduction to Creative Writing” syllabus.</td>
<td>Eight (8). Three (3), all for WRD 101: “Synthesis Assignments”; “Ongoing Research Archive; “Formal Proposal”; “Formal Website Project.” Plus “Extra Credit” assignments.</td>
<td>Three (3) essays from three (3) separate students. All essays on the “Formal Proposal” assignment, a ~1500-word assignment in which students develop an idea and line of research for their final projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giles, Sandra</td>
<td>The past 25+ years. During this time, Sandra has also taught several other writing-intensive courses as well.</td>
<td>Four (4). One ENGL 1101 (FYC) syllabus; one ENGL 1102 syllabus; one ENGL 1102 Honors syllabus; one Introduction to</td>
<td>Seven (7). For ENGL 1101: “Literacy Narrative;” “Profile”; “Letter to the Reader Assignment for All Multi-Draft Essays.” For ENGL 1102: “Analysis or Imitation of Innovative Form”</td>
<td>Eight (8) works from four (4) students. All students part of Sandra’s ENGL 1102 Honors class. All students submitting two (2) pieces: “Letter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 Procuring full student essays proved to be a difficulty in this study. Attaining them required CWCIs’ to contact a student, have them fill out a “Tertiary Participant” consent form, retrieve that form from the student, and send that form to me (in either digital or hard copy form). As such, the majority of participants were not able to provide me student work, and no instructor was able to provide me work by students with whom they were no longer in regular contact. Those participants who did provide me student work were only able to provide work from a few, select students.
Since each set of notes and associated questions were based off participant’s individual creative works, questions I asked each participant and lines of inquiry I pursued were not uniform. These lines of inquiry were often informed by my initial impressions and subjective interpretations of their creative work, and then renegotiated based on participants’ receptions of and reactions to my impressions and interpretations. At times, these initial impressions were pre-influenced by what writers had already said of their work. Sandra, for instance, in an interview we conducted prior to my reading her nonfiction pieces, used and explained the word “innovative” as a descriptor of her work. Because of her description, I read her work with her idea of the innovative in mind.

At other times, however, my enthusiasm over what I felt was a strong and recurring theme in a writer’s work was not shared by the writer, and so we would discuss different aspects of their work. For example, with Franklin (whom I do not discuss in detail in this chapter) I initially pursued a line of inquiry seeking to personalize his stories within the context of previous interview data related to his rural and working-class upbringing. Through Franklin’s redirection, we spent more time discussing the social themes of his work and the relationship between his invented formal constraints and the “physical material
production of the work” (Interview October 8, 2017). And at still yet other times, I opened a line of inquiry theretofore unconsidered by the writer and subsequently pursued it. Austin, for instance, was excited to listen to my comments about what I saw as fabulist aspects of his work (something he had not considered) and eager to then explore them with me more thoroughly.

The notes and questions I drafted prior to the interview(s) and those I revised or invented in situ were done with three specific goals in mind. First, situating these creative works in the larger latticework of participants’ literate development. Second, eliciting discussion about possible writerly values specific to each writer across their works, creative genres, and genres outside the traditional disciplinary domain of creative writing. And third, making connections from these writerly values to composition pedagogy.

THE WRIGHTING OF WRITERLY VALUES

Each of the following subsections centers around one of the three focal participants identified above. For each focal participant, I: first, overview data collection methods and describe their approach(es) to creative writing; second, discuss one or two pieces of their creative work, as well as the data participants and I co-generated as we discussed this work; and, third, discuss data participants and I co-generated connecting their work as writers to their work as composition instructors, at times using examples from their class materials to help illustrate these connections.

Explorations of the Emotional: Austin Baarichter

Austin is a recent graduate of University of Kentucky’s (UK’s) M.F.A. program in Creative Writing. His creative thesis consisted of both revised stories he originally produced during
his two years at UK and stories produced expressly for inclusion in the thesis. I came to
know Austin through a mutual acquaintance at the University of Louisville (my home
institution) and asked him to participate; he immediately agreed.

On a professional and disciplinary level, Austin primarily characterizes himself as a
writer of short fiction. He workshops short fiction pieces in his program, submits short
fiction for publication, and, as mentioned, is at work on a creative thesis consisting of works
of short fiction. In his fiction, Austin states that he “investigates” themes of “dissonance,”
“violence,” “dysfunction,” “family,” and “the domestic,” which he links to traumatic
experiences endured during his childhood and adolescence. The exploration of these themes
at times manifest in his composing fabulist or otherwise nontraditional scenes, stories,
characters, &c. He links these particular manifestations to “reveries” he experienced as a
child, which he identifies as coping mechanisms to those traumas.

Austin and I started the interviewing / data collection process on March 3, 2017 and
conducted five interviews together. Each of these interviews has lasted anywhere from one
to two hours and were audio recorded and later transcribed. Our first three interviews
primarily focused on Austin’s literate and extra-literate activity, his disciplinary becoming,
theories of creative writing and its purposes, and his training and work as a writing
instructor. At the end of our third interview, I had asked Austin to upload samples of his
writing to our shared Dropbox folder, which he did. For the purpose of this study, Austin
allowed me to review works of both poetry and short fiction. Most of this short fiction
would, in some form, be included in his creative thesis which he would submit as his final
project for his M.F.A. program. He shared with me four short stories, each at the initial time
of their sharing in their “complete” forms in that they told whole stories, and, at the time of
our discussion, Austin had no immediate intention or immediate plans of or for further revising
them (though he eventually would revise them). He also shared with me a short collection of poems titled *Nodes and Edges* that contained 20 separate pieces.

To prepare for these two final interviews, I reviewed all transcripts I had produced and compiled all of my and Austin’s interviews up to that point. I read through all notes I had taken during those first three interviews, and then read each of the creative works Austin shared with me. While reading, I made two sets of notes and questions. My first set of notes described my literary impressions of Austin’s produced artifacts. I noted areas of the text that I appreciated for various stylistic and/or thematic reasons, and I wrote short synopses of my literary interpretations of the texts. These first set of notes can be thought of as those composed by someone interested in the stories “as stories”—what they were about and how they were crafted. The express purpose of these notes was to identify talking points and questions that would stimulate conversation about the texts and help Austin and I probe through his own interpretations of his pieces’ “meanings.”

In my second set of notes, I sought to identify areas of Austin’s works I believed found consonance with aspects of previous interview data. For instance, in an earlier interview Austin described the process of writing poetry as “reactionary” to the onset of abstracted thoughts and feelings he would attempt to shape and better contextualize for himself. As such, I noted particular pieces I thought might serve as example cases of these “reactionary” poems. Austin and I would discuss these poems in light of their “reactionary” qualities and, in turn, open a discussion of the thoughts and/or feelings Austin was attempting at the time to explore or contextualize through crafting these poems. In contrast to his poetry, Austin felt his works of short fiction represented “artificial process[es]” of creation. Viz., they represented acts of artifice and were themselves objects of artifice—
those which were produced via a set of conventional choices, broadly-speaking, in order to produce a particular, albeit interpretable literary effect.

In further contrast to his poetry, Austin’s fiction most intentionally accounts for an audience outside himself. Austin possesses a clear and purposeful sense of this, stating that crafting fiction is, for him, a process of “reaching out.” Our interview data attests to his accounting for what scholars of narratology would identify as those “linguistic codes, ideological norms, and aesthetic ideas” (Schmid 2013) of intended others when he composes short stories. Similar to my motivation for identifying poems for further discussion, I identified portions, facets, or progressions of stories I believed would serve as example cases highlighting the processes of artifice and audience consideration, as well as the view that the audience is “objectified in the text by specific indexical signs” (ibid.). For instance, Austin and I discussed that his general project for writing fiction is to move the audience from a state of confusion to one of understanding. Given this general project, I would often ask Austin about how and to what end he constructed his stories in order to achieve this narrative purpose. In the next section I primarily focus on a short story of Austin’, titled “Greyhounds,” in order to explore how Austin negotiates his writerly values.

A Co-examination of Austin’s Short Fiction

In “Greyhounds,” Austin writes about anger and displacement through the character Efy, a young man returned home from military service after being dishonorably discharged for unwarrantedly assaulting a fellow private. With both his options limited and unresolved feelings of anger festering inside him, Efy joins his father again, as he did in his youth, in the world of woodworking and flea market sales. The young man finds one day a boxed litter of greyhounds left to freeze in the winter cold outside the flea market. We find out soon after
that it was the dogs’ original owner, a fellow flea market purveyor, who left these dogs out in the cold. Following this reveal, the crux of the story becomes framed around the dogs’ original owner’s pursuit to retrieve the baby greyhounds. As the original owner does this, he also becomes a tormentor of Efy’s family, including Efy’s father. This conflict deftly complements the specific work with which Efy and his father are engaged: the design and production of birdhouses—the two being literal architects and engineers of animals’ homes. The conflict over the dogs, set against the backdrop of Efy and his father’s work, find resonance with Efy’s own metaphorical search of a “home” for himself.

Toward the story’s middle, well after Austin has established this world through the detailing of characters, places, and (outward) conflict, Efy imagines a life away from his pa, from built-and-sold birdhouses, and from the entire world he can’t help but feel anger toward. He imagines a life removed from his present location and circumstance, a life in pursuit of the calm, the nurturing, the vast, and the ultimately fantastical. After stopping at an all-night gas station to pick up protein drinks for himself and the greyhounds, Efy narrates:

In the car, I drank one of the protein drinks. If the puppies liked it, I’d go out and get more tomorrow. I’d get breakfast for Renee and me, too. Have a stockpile for all of us. I had this thought of that same thing happening, but with us out west. We’d live out there. The dogs would have places to play and run and dig. And by then, all seven of the puppies would have grown bigger and bigger, until they were the size of a house. And I thought of them growing even bigger, still, eating deer by the dozen and lapping up lakes, until they were so big you’d crane your neck and look as high as you can, and still you couldn’t see their snouts or eyes. You could only pet one or two hairs on their paw at a time. And then I imagined them jumping across the oceans, one to each continent, where they’d sit down on their hind legs, right in the middle, looking out across the world.

I turn my and Austin’s discussion to the fabulist elements of this scene and others across his works, and I open a discussion of these elements’ difference when compared to more realist elements. It is an attempt to pursue a line of inquiry into how these fabulist elements index
Efy’s emotional state at the moment of narration, as well as the emotional states of other characters Austin has written. It is also meant to elicit a discussion of Austin’s compositional dispositions and writing processes:

**JON:** [In these stories] there is the [theme of the] relational, there is the dissonant, there is the violent. And at times, it seems to be mediated by these overtures to the different. Whether we’ll call that a different mind state, imagination, the power of the narrator. So, none of these stories—well, most of these don’t just stay within what we might call a quote-unquote traditional narrative. Or they don’t only show us things that are traditional and realist. So, what do you make of that, what are those instances about?

**AUSTIN:** When I’m writing a story, that to me was just a logical extension of the scene, and I was just writing toward what felt like was an accurate representation of emotion. So, to me it wasn't surreal, because the emotion was real. And that image was the emotion to me that was real. But it is surreal because, as you said, there are dogs jumping across continents. So, that's what I'm always looking for…But to me that's the emotion. Thinking that is real because it's what the narrator is feeling, that's what I was trying to go for (Interview November 11, 2017)

Austin identifies this moment in his story alongside the aforementioned “reveries” he went into in his youth. When I ask him to explain this connection, Austin revealed that he believed these moments of reverie were reactions to traumatic fights between his parents. He would often witness these fights or else become part of their fallout: each of his parents manipulating him afterwards as a form of brinksmanship against the other. These reveries became for Austin respites from the emotional stresses caused by his parents’ fights. And just as these reveries represented temporary resolutions of the emotional in the imaginative, so too does Austin read them as functioning that way for Efy. Further elaborating on the authenticity of the scene in which Efy imagines continent-sized dogs, Austin speaks of creating emotional resonances within his characters that often reference real experience, and then become aspects of what he attempts to communicate to his readers. As mentioned, he stated, “it’s real because it's what the narrator is feeling. That's what I was trying to go for.”

Going on, Austin states, “But thinking back, it's something I definitely did as a kid [, which]
was [undecipherable] about these sorts of reveries at times of duress” (ibid). Austin’s own interpretations of the story-writing process, what counts as “real” in a story, and what he strives to communicate to his readers are often motivated by his characters’ internal worlds. Inside these worlds, the emotional may be resolved within the realm of the imaginative—though never permanently, and, in fact, only for a fleeting moment.

Austin and I continue to probe Efy’s character, as both a narrative element in the form of the homodiegetic narrator and a set of evolving values informed by Austin’s own experiences. Just as Austin realized his own reveries as a child provided only temporary respites from his emotional traumas, so too does he understand their similar function for Efy. And just as Austin acknowledged the limitations of his own reveries—Austin does not believe they were the healthiest ways of “processing anger”—so too do Efy’s reveries fail to provide him a true path toward closure. It’s no surprise that the hopeful and peaceful paragraphs of the reverie give way to the climactic scene of violent outburst wherein we discover that Efy cannot contain his anger, that he has not squared himself with it. He is still desperate for flight toward some imagined place he might come to understand as home. At best, he seemingly can only redirect that anger and those desires.

In the final scene, Efy discovers that the owner from whom he rescued the greyhounds mistreats many other animals in his booth and has abusing animals for a long time. If Efy has saved the greyhounds of the title, there were many others he has not, many others he could not. The story ends in a moment marked first by Efy’s compassion and, next, his anger. Efy narrates his laying waste to the booth of the animal abuser:

First, I stacked the terrariums that had animals in them carefully outside the booth, in the hallway, and tried to set the heat lamp on as many of them as I could. Hold on just a second, I whispered to them, and went back into the booth. The metal of the putter felt cold in my hands. Cold and hard.

As I swung the club in huge, sweeping arcs, and chips of glass, and wood, and plastic flew in a maelstrom around me, I reminded myself to retrieve one of the
birdhouses before I left. I didn’t think they’d make it through whatever was going to come of all this, and I wanted Pa to have one.

For Austin, the ending of “Greyhounds” serves as multiple statements on Efy’s anger specifically, as well as the more general project of contending with anger. He explains, first, that Efy’s anger at the end of the story “takes on a new dimension.” It is a “more mature anger, though an angrier anger.” Efy, according to Austin, has accepted that he is, in fact, an angry man and has learned to re-channel that anger, at least for the moment. Austin reads previous instances of Efy’s anger as being either directed at his family or “because” of them. In contrast, Austin believes Efy’s final show of anger is “for” his family insofar as it is against his family’s antagonist. Austin understands Efy’s interpretation of his own actions at the end of the story as different from the interpretation he, Austin, believes the readers will have. Readers will see a man who has not reconciled with his own anger; they will see a man who has only shifted the focus of that anger. While shifting the focus of Efy’s anger toward the story’s antagonist is perhaps an ethical victory, it is not ultimately redemptive. Efy’s has moved only from one crisis to another.

Austin and I discuss these emotionally difficult and ambiguous choices he made in “Greyhounds,” as well as in other stories that make up his thesis. Austin states:

The fiction that has always spoken the most to me emotionally and aesthetically, stylistically, is fiction that…uses language to get at something cosmic… You have to be a stylistically adept writer to make that happen in a piece…to construct an internal logic that allows that or obtains that.

The means by which Austin pursues his goals of shepherding his readers from a state of confusion to one of understanding, pushes back against traditional conceptions of how forms of expression function to objectively provide or create meaning. These processes of illumination do not attain through a narrative or plot-based clarity—in “Greyhounds” or any number of other stories part of Austin’s thesis collection. Rather they largely attain through
either an emotional resonance (based in reader response) or clarity of idiosyncratic logic (based in interpretation) by which the stories function. The mode by which the stories function bucks against certain traditional understandings of how language and stories operate. The crafting of ambiguity as an integral aspect of them creates meaning despite textualist ideologies of language advancing a belief in the “universality of shared, available meaning” (Collins, 1996, p. 204). And the stories challenge the conduit metaphor of language that sees writers using “linguistic containers to send meaning to audiences; and, at the end of the line, audiences remove the unaltered meaning from its containers” (Eubanks, 2011, p. 142).

Austin’s creative projects are, for him, explorations of complexes of emotions with which he grapples artistically, intellectually, and, personally. Assessing his collection of stories, Austin states:

‘When I was putting it [the thesis] together, it was like, “Oh my God, this is about me”…Even though each story felt like I was truly writing in order to understand other relationships—and it was—but then when I was putting it together as a whole and reading through it and thinking about all that, I was like, “Oh my god, I couldn’t even hide from myself.”’ (Interview March 30, 2018.)

It’s outside the purview of this study and manuscript to speculate in certainty about the causal web that connects the themes Austin explores as a writer to his emotional traumas and the work he sees himself performing in the composition classroom. However, that such connections exist across these threads is apparent. Certainly, Austin’s description above suggests that, for him, writing fiction is a way of both exploring and revealing the self, and, in this way, is autobiographical. Such an insight brings to mind certain expressivist-era compositionists such as Donald Murray (1991) who went even further to suggest that all writing is rooted in the autobiographical, and so all students must be encouraged to explore the autobiographical.
Austin holds similar attitudes toward the relationship between the autobiographical and the pedagogical. His interpersonal work with students and what he helps students explore in their writing find consonance with both what he values as a creative writer and the projects he pursues as one. Namely, he encourages students to explore through writing their own histories and inner emotional lives. Such a project is meant not only to edify students personally and emotionally, but also to help them work against a mode of writing and learning Austin personally views as problematic for its neo-liberal underpinnings and transactionary trappings.

**Austin’s Creative Writerly Values at Work in the Composition Classroom**

While Austin began teaching writing in the first year of his M.F.A program, it was not until the first semester of his second year that he taught his first FYC class, WRD 110: Composition & Communication I. This course assignment is what first put Austin in touch with the differences and divisions between his home department, English, and the Writing, Rhetoric & Digital Studies Department (aka, the “WRD” or “Word” Department). At University of Kentucky (UK), the English Department is home to creative writing and literature studies, whereas composition is under the auspices of the Word Department. This division is important for a number of reasons that need addressing, since they touch upon Austin’s goals as a composition instructor, especially one coming from a different department. According to Austin, UK has taken up what he perceives to be a “neo-liberal...

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18 In his first year, Austin served as a T.A. for “ENG 107: Introduction to Imaginative Writing.” The purpose of this class was to “offer an introduction to the genres and craft of imaginative writing, including fiction, nonfiction, and poetry.” As a T.A., Austin led small-group recitation classes focused on “discussion and crafting.” (https://english.as.uky.edu/fall-2016-courses-english)

19 Austin’s opinions of UK’s WRD program neither represent the views this study takes of that program nor are the product of any formal assessment proceedings. Note, however, that this study is concerned less with the goings-on of particular writing programs and more with CWCIs’ views of...
mission” for many of its courses that focuses on student marketability and job placement. He sees the Word Department participating in this mission, which he feels runs counter to fostering a culture of civic engagement. Austin states that the Word Department often overtly “advertises” to students in such ways that feed into these neo-liberal goals by stating such things as: “this department will help you be a better lawyer, or market yourself better as X.” He continues this line of discussion by bringing up a comparison of the roles he feels the Word and English Departments now play in students’ lives at UK:

This Word department at UK is flourishing a little bit because they have, in my opinion, capitulated to, “Okay, well, if students want this, nothing more than this sort of ticket somewhere else”… Word is saying “we’re gonna give this to you.” Whereas English is saying “Hold on, no, this isn’t really”—English is having trouble fitting that because the study of English is rooted somewhere completely different. It’s not, “I want something marketable.” It’s, “I want to be an engaged and educated citizen.”

As an instructor of both composition and creative writing, Austin believes his goals lean more toward helping students become engaged and educated citizens than they do toward helping them get a “ticket somewhere else.” Such a goal sets up an obvious tension between Austin’s mission and the mission he perceives the Word Department working toward. This tension helps to frame an understanding of Austin’s relationship with composition both these programs and professional positions within these programs, whatever those views are or however they have come to be.

Further, it’s important to keep in mind how UK’s WRD program describes rhetoric and the writing that comes out of a study of rhetoric as follows. From their website:

Rhetoric is the study of written, oral, and digital communication. Rhetoric teaches you how to argue, persuade, inform, and express for a variety of professional and personal reasons. Rhetoric teaches you how to invent, organize, arrange, and produce knowledge. Rhetoric teaches you how to create and share meaning. (“About WRD”)

And here is what the WRD program says of WRD 110, the first composition course of a two-course sequence:

Throughout the course, students are encouraged to explore their place in the broader community and engage in reflective thinking and analysis. WRD 110 asks students to write and speak effectively about local issue not only for their classmates but also for audiences beyond the classroom. (“Composition and Communication”)

Both of these quotations describe a program, associated faculty, and set of programmatic goals that, by my read, are very different from the ones Austin describes in this section.
pedagogy—or, more precisely, the pedagogical values he sees being promoted by the Word Department. We may look to a number of sites and artifacts to see how Austin responds to and reconciles with these tensions. These sites and artifacts include (but are not limited to) his class syllabus, class assignments, and, of course, our interview data wherein he reflects on all of these. These data are indications that many of the same values that inform his work as a creative writer also inform his work as a composition instructor.

As a first-time composition instructor enrolled in a practicum, Austin was paired with a mentor from University of Kentucky’s graduate program in English. As a common practice in the Word Department, much of Austin’s own class syllabus was based on his mentor’s. This common practice is thought to lighten the weight of class design from first-time teachers’ shoulders and provide an established model for their work. While Austin felt much of the syllabus was helpful and in line with his own pedagogical values, he found it necessary to change features of it and add new ones. Certain of these additions worked counter to the “neo-liberal” mentality of education Austin perceived the Word Department supporting. For instance, in the first sentence of his “Instructor Statement” for WRD 110, Austin constructs the image of himself as teacher in opposition to the perceived “neo-liberal” apparatus at work across UK:

My goal as an instructor for this course is to, more than anything else, help show you how to think with care and kindness, be aware of the way in which your thought processes work, articulate yourself clearly and well, and look at the world and the information you take in with a discerning eye, so that you can analyze it by no other rubric than your own; you can make of it what you wish to make of it, based on clearly defined principles and logic.

Similar to stated goals for his creative work that invoke the exploratory, emotionally-inflected, and idiosyncratically generative, Austin’s goals for his own students reference “care and kindness,” a rubric of analysis based in the self, and the making of data “what you wish to make of it.” In asking his students to “be aware” of how their “thought processes” work,
Austin’s instructor statement identifies the metacognitive as a tool available to the writer. When considered within the context of both exploratory writing and Austin’s goals as a writer of fiction, Austin offers his students a mode of inquiry firstly based in the examinations of the self.

As a disciplinary necessity, Austin’s pedagogical approach was informed by a need to “shepherd” his students through an assignment structure for his course. Despite this, and in addition to it, Austin’s goals for his course included fostering an “inward-looking” model of writing and self-investigation. Austin installed this inward-looking model in response to the “outward-looking” model he believed operated across the assemblage of composition classes and due, at least in part, to programmatic influence. He explains what this outward-looking model function:

I’m thinking about Word, and thinking about the way it is saying, “You will be a better, marketable student.” So, the stuff, or the content of the Word course to me, feel like a sort of looking outward for the student. I am teaching the student to look outward to the world, to interpret and analyze it well so that they can operate within the world as well. I guess you can say to be better agents of this market place, the world market place… If you buy into that ideology, if you buy into the “now all I’m looking for is a way to navigate in this world” there’s a lack of looking inward or of reflexivity.

While Austin understands some benefit, and perhaps even necessity, of this outward-looking model, he intimates here the purely transactional mode of education by which it operates. This transactional mode leaves little room for a transformative model of education that tasks students with a more revolutionary goal. As Pender (2011) suggests with regard to modes of writing paralleling the transactional, instead of fostering a view of writing as a type of “bringing-forth that is aimed more at doing something than at knowing something” they foster a view of writing more aimed at knowing something than doing something and are thus ultimately engaged with a project of “textual interpretation” (p. 143). This transactional mode of writing can be seen as a method of navigating the established world instead of as a
method of changing that world or changing one’s self in that world. However, Austin’s reference to “reflexivity” suggests writing instruction’s ability to help students reconsider their structures of belief that form the bases for their actions—to, in other words, help students restructure those structures. In this way, Austin feels the more “outward-looking” model the Word Department championed was fundamentally flawed as a model of instruction.

To push back against this outward looking model, Austin felt a need to implement an “inward-looking” one. This model countered the more transactionary or “currency”-based approaches he believed dominated the composition program and inhibited students’ “desire[s] to be self-expressive.” To that end, he saw himself helping students develop and learn to use what he called the “tools of expression.” While Austin opines that the end goals of the Word Department’s pedagogy are transactional—the production of a particular artifact for a particular, often “professional,” end—he sees the writing pedagogy he offers as having “no end goals.” He identifies this model of composition instruction, insofar as it is linked to the writer’s investigation of the personal, as sharing a similar foundation with the study and production of literature. Directly following what he said about the outward-looking model, Austin had this to say about the details of this inward-looking model at it can be frame in a creative writing class:

Creative writing is a way to foster…the looking inward, navigating your inner self. If literature is maybe the guide to do that, creative writing is the tools to get that out and to examine that on the piece of paper. And so, I think that creative writing can

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Composition programs are often part of larger institutional and/or departmental structures that contribute greatly to determining how composition classes proceed. Further, composition program administrators are often described in WPA literature as occupying middle-management roles in these structures and so in possession of limited power to affect those proceedings (see, e.g., Mountford 2002; Bousquet, Scott, Parascondola 2004; McBeth 2007) The point here, again, being that these views represents Austin’s estimates of how UK’s WRD program approaches the teaching of writing. Those views may mischaracterize the WRD program’s approaches, or how greater institutional powers affect those approaches.
be a very good balance to the Word class or to having those two minds. It’s important to have a good composition class and be a good analyzer of the rhetoric around you but it’s also, I think, equally, if not more useful, to be able to analyze yourself and your own thoughts and your own motivations.

Important to note, Austin had not yet taught Creative Writing at the time of this interview. He speaks here hypothetically and couches this description within the context of an imagined creative writing class, and presumably one that would task students with reading, discussing, and producing literature. However, the rhetorical goals Austin states pertain to this imagined creative writing class find consonance with the goals established for his students and the assignments he gives them.

Early in the Fall 2017 semester, Austin had his students write an essay about an immediate community on the University of Kentucky campus of which they were a part. The goal of this early-semester essay was to help students consider how these immediate communities functioned discursively: as sites that operated through the practice of various rhetorical modes and which came to be characterized by these modes. At this point in the term Austin had recently gone over such concepts as logos, ethos, pathos, etc., and this assignment tasked students with “do[ing] some of the rhetorical appeals that we learned” as a way to analyze their selected communities. This short essay was to be built into a larger, semester-long assignment with the ultimate goal of: “Using the multifaceted perspectives afforded by our statuses within and without this community, we will create a portrait, a story, an interpretation of the UK community” (from Austin’s syllabus; see APPENDIX E). In what Austin calls an “evolution of this assignment,” weeks later he asked that students

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21 Note: the language of this syllabus section is, according to Austin, a blend of Austin’s own language and the language of his peer mentor, Cecil (pseudonym). I did not have Austin take me line by line through the syllabus to indicate the exact words and lines that were his and the words and lines that were Cecil’s. Some parts of the syllabus were fully Cecil’s language, some were fully Austin’s, and some were blends of the two.
“write a story about their community. Or perhaps to write the story about their community, as a fully creative piece.” This story could be rendered in a number of genres of modes—it could be a creative non-fiction account of the community, a fictional account, a rendering in poetry of the community, etc. Austin indicated that he received student work of all these types and more. As part of an assignment sequence, Austin believed this mid-semester assignment would help (and did help) students foster a more nuanced account about their community—not only as a site that functions through discourse, but as a site of personal meaning and, more important, meaning-making. These “fully creative” pieces were not limited to the nonfiction genre, and certainly Austin invited students to write fiction, poetry, and hybrid forms in order to “investigate” (the same word Austin uses when discussing the goals of his own fiction) their personhood vis-à-vis these sites. Austin’s syllabus goes on to talk about stories in particular, connecting the larger goal of this semester-long assignment to the idea that stories function as a mode of “convey[ing] value and meaning” (from syllabus).

None of the above is to imply Austin felt there was no value in his mentor’s syllabus, in his mentor-mentee relationship, or in the pedagogical goals of the Word Department. In fact, he found the model syllabus to be helpful, believed his mentor to be intelligent and abundantly conscientious, thought his relationship with his mentor was ultimately a fruitful and “productive” one, and felt he had the freedom to “innovate” in the composition classroom. Further, none of Austin’s views on the goals of the Word Department represent the department’s views of its own goals or the goals that a formal assessment of the WRD program might identify as existing. They only inform Austin’s disposition toward those goals based in how he constructed the WRD program in his thoughts. Last, that Austin found value in the role creative writing, or lessons informed by creative writing, played in his composition classroom does not mean his views are wholly different from those who teach
composition from inside the Word Department. What is important, however, is that Austin perceived there to be a difference and developed a pedagogical stance based in that belief. That pedagogical stance acknowledged the value of the personal and emotional that privileges no ideological view of writing and writers above others. It allowed students to “bring forth” as an inventive act of “doing something” (Pender, 2011)—challenging their structures of belief, reconceiving/reinventing their relationships with their respective communities, etc.—instead of further packing down well-trodden paths that value transactional modes of discourse based solely in interpretative acts.

Next, I discuss a veteran of both teaching and the formalized rigors of creative writing training. A writer of “innovative” nonfiction, she asks her students with to write innovatively and, paradoxically, embrace the affordances and authority of holding non-expert statuses in their writing.

*Non-expert Expertise: Sandra Giles*

Sandra Giles is currently a Professor of English in the English and Communication Department of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. We met when she responded to a call for study participants that I posted to the Creative Writing Pedagogy Facebook page in the summer of 2016. At the time of my posting, the page registered approximately 4000 members, all of whom had to be approved by the page’s administrators in order to join. Sandra direct messaged (DM’d) me over the social media site after reading my post, expressing interest and wishing to know more details. After I emailed her further details about the study, along with a consent form for primary participants, Sandra was willing to participate in the study at multiple levels. I conducted three interviews with Sandra, during which time she and I discussed: her professional/disciplinary identity, pedagogical values and
practices, her written feedback to writing students, and, of course, her creative work. We
conducted these interviews between August 29th, 2016 and June 29th, 2017. Each interview
lasted anywhere between 60 and 75 minutes and each was audio recorded and later
transcribed. A writer of creative non-fiction broadly-speaking, Sandra describes her
particular form of creative nonfiction as “innovative non-fiction.”

Sandra has shared with me five of her innovative non-fiction pieces. Those she
shared are all shorter-length works and represent a combination of those published and
unpublished. According to Sandra, the innovative elements of these pieces are characterized
by formal experimentation: with narrative, with framing, with modality, &c. In a meditation
on the male gaze and patriarchal conceptions of women in the workplace, titled “Business
Writing for Ladies,” for example, Sandra uses multiple choice questions as a way of
characterizing ways, both “acceptable” and not, that women should/can respond to men in
professional power. “Reflection and Self-Assessment in Writing: Quicker is Better,” a short
unpublished article Sandra drafted for inclusion in a National Writing Project unit’s
newsletter, progresses by means of a question-and-reflection motif. While providing advice
to writing instructors, the innovative article poses questions set off from the bulk of the
article (marked by their italicization) that represents at times questions a writing instructor
might ask to students and at other times questions students might ask themselves or one
another. And in “Diving Deep,” an essay on a man who suffers an aneurysm and dies,
Sandra intersperses the narrative of the man’s illness and death with encyclopedic facts on
aneurysms and the elderly.

I provide these examples as a way of showcasing the range of ideas and approaches
Sandra refers to when she uses the term “innovative.” Additionally, I provide them as a way
of contrasting that which is “innovative” for Sandra to that which is “non-innovative” or
“customary.” Non-fiction of this latter type might take the form of an expertly-informed or fact-based text, while the former, in Sandra’s words, might move beyond the constraints of both denotative language and text-based language all together. Understandably, as Sandra attempts in our interviews to parse such nuanced divisions between the two general categories of forms, she at times has to backtrack and rephrase. While admitting that she is unsure whether her description is a reasonable one or gets at the crux of her meaning, Sandra ultimately states that in contrast to the customary form, the “innovative form allows me to use language without using language. It seems a form of silence.” This idea of “silence” contrasts to what she calls the “talky” nature of many standard forms of nonfiction: reciting facts and information and, in so doing, claiming expertise over a subject. These innovative forms, however, function in part by highlighting their refusal to claim an expertise of this nature: an essay in the form of a multiple-choice question instead of a set of direct answers; a touching story about a man’s death, which, when rendered through the discourse of encyclopedias and medical opinions (expert discourses), becomes cold and distanced; and so on.

To discuss Sandra’s work is thus to discuss it oppositionally. And while I am hesitant to use the word “alternative” to describe Sandra’s writerly choices, I do so for the sake of practicality. Dobrin (2002) argues, seemingly paradoxically, that “no discourse is alternative in that all discourse is both parent or home discourse and that all discourse is alternative and mixed” (p. 46). This is, first, because all discourses, including ones currently deemed “standard,” “accepted,” or any other such phrase find their origins in antecedent discourses no less “standard” or “accepted” during their times, as well as syntheses and evolutions of these discourses. Second, referring to any discourse as “alternative” when compared to another suggests “that there are somehow identifiable, codifiable, [and] recognizable
discourses that we can clearly identify or study” (ibid.). Or, it suggests that discourse itself is static instead of contextual and mutable, when this is clearly not the case. In response to this view, Dobrin argues that “all discourses are hybrids, mixed, alternative, and none are codifiable in any way that allow us to identify any as parent or hybrid” (p. 52). And ultimately:

[†]hat this being the case, all discourse, then, is a perpetual mix of individual prior theories developing passing theories. Passing theories are developed not solely in one kind of discursive scenario—academic discourse, for instance—but in an array of discursive encounters every day. (p. 53)

The works Sandra and I co-examined acknowledge the usefulness of forms often perceived to be outside the norm, and they comment on the confines of these normative and widely-accepted forms.

All this said, I use the word “alternative” and other words suggesting alternativity in a narrowed way, but one that also acknowledges the term’s baggage. Although speaking specifically about forms of academic discourse, Schroeder, Fox & Bizzell (2002), in a piece from the same collection as Dobrin’s piece, use the term “alternative”:

because it gets at what is perhaps the key feature of the discourses we are discussing, namely that they do not follow all the conventions of academic discourse…Alternative invokes a sort of counter-cultural image that bespeaks the political resistance to hegemonic discourses that these new forms express. (p. ix)

So although I’m hesitant to describe the innovative writerly choices Sandra makes as “alternative,” I do so to imply that while narrative elements of these innovative forms function similarly to more traditional narrative elements in certain ways (by framing a story, by selecting a perspective, etc.), they can also function quite differently. They help throw into relief the ubiquity and sedimented nature—and thus unquestioning acceptance—of these customary forms’ conventions. Highlighting its own difference in comparison to the customary, the “innovative” also functions meta-(non)fictionally. It comments upon the
limitations of storytelling ideals and storytelling itself solely understood through a discourse of the traditional or conventional, i.e. the “talky.” According to Sandra, the innovative form “asks the reader to question it.” By extension, it elicits from the reader the task of questioning. And it is this act of questioning a text, instead of being talked at by a text, that is, perhaps, at the foundation of what Sandra values in these forms.

As stated, an important aspect of Sandra’s project as a writer of innovative non-fiction lies in investigating, creating knowledge, and sharing knowledge about or of a subject without having to be an “expert” on that subject. Sandra links the idea of expertise in this context to the domains of the traditionally curricular and professional. She further links the textual manifestation of expertise in this context as more information-based works, such as articles published in a newspaper or textbooks by an educational publishing company. Sandra’s interview data suggests two main reasons for her move away from more traditional non-fiction writing and toward innovative non-fiction. First, she rarely believed herself to be an “expert” on the subject matter of her writing projects in the ways just described. Thus, practicing a form of writing based in this type of expertise was, for her, quite literally impossible. Second, innovative forms serve as a reaction to the idea that expertise in the manifestations described above are the only ones that might be useful or generative when investigating a particular subject and crafting a response to it.

Sandra discusses, for instance, a promising essay she composed some years ago based around the disappearance and murder of a Georgian beauty queen. More specifically, the essay was “on the question [of] why a story like that in a small town in South Georgia would end up as national news.” The piece was strongly considered by Creative Nonfiction but ultimately rejected for its special issue on true crimes. Believing that her rejection was based on her essay’s failure to investigate her aforementioned question in an “expert” way that one
composed by an investigative journalist or circulation specialist might, Sandra talks about how she “became very dissatisfied with standards modes of narration and memoir and things like that because it seemed as if I had to claim an expert ground that I had no right to claim.” In transitioning to innovative forms of nonfiction, Sandra found that the genre afforded her a chance to be “incredibly freeing and playful” with her writing. This is not to say she believes these innovative forms to be inconsequential but rather that they provide her a chance to approach her investigations of subjects in ways she believes are more exploratory. As Sandra explains it: “I’m using the term playful not in the sense of being light and not serious, but in the sense of not having to take the stance like I have everything figured out.”

I prepared for my interview with Sandra in similar fashion to how I prepared for my interview with Austin. I reviewed my notes and transcripts and, when I read through Sandra’s creative nonfiction pieces, I took both readerly and “researcherly” notes. In particular, I attempted to identify in Sandra’s writing instances of the playful, free, and “amateur”—i.e., I attempted to identify instances of “non-expertise” and what they lent to the works. By doing this, I found I was able to elicit more discussion around the affordances of innovative nonfictional forms and how they stand in contrast to staid forms Sandra ascribes to much traditional, “talky” nonfiction.

A Co-examination of Sandra’s Innovative Nonfiction

Similar to my discussion of Austin’s fiction above, my discussion of Sandra’s work won’t wend through all the works she provided me. I will limit my discussion here to one work of Sandra’s that illustrates her “innovative” approach and which I believe showcases the idea of what “non-expertise” affords the writer.
In Sandra’s “Business Writing for Ladies,” the particular innovative form in which Sandra works—multiple choice and long-answer exercise questions—overtly invites the dialogic interplay between writer and reader. By extension, the work also resists the univocal (monologic) mode, which often codes as an oppressive and dominating structure aligned with the “banking model” approach (see Freire 1970). Formally and structurally, “Business Writing for Ladies” is written in the second person (context clues make it, by my interpretation, relatively clear the “you” is a woman), a form which Sandra says is a “way of interrogating myself: What were you thinking? What were you doing?” The piece also utilizes the framing device of manual exercises, which appear conceived to help the eponymously-mentioned “Ladies” practice a form of agency based in their communicative, literate activities. However, this agency is soon revealed to be one that must regularly nod in conciliation to patriarchal expectations of women. As an example, the piece opens with an older man, who “beelines across your ditch, across your grass, for a chat. You hope it won’t take too long because the sun is setting fast.” Directly following this line, the piece launches into its first “exercise” question:

1. He asks if you’re married, the first question men of his generation always ask. Should you…
   a. Say no, with a sigh, you just haven’t met the right one.
   b. Say no, apologetically, you can’t have children anyway.
   c. Say no, like you don’t care. What of it?
   d. Lie and make up a past.

The dispositions referenced in the multiple-choice answers range from the remorseful and contrite to the apathetic and rebellious. The narrative nowhere offers an explanation of the “correct” answer to this question, and so the reader is tasked with considering the assemblage of answers and meditating on its overall effect.

As we progress through the piece, the topic of conversation between the two characters turns to a newer neighbor, a young woman who the man shares is “on her fourth
live-in boyfriend since she moved to the neighborhood...” Eventually the multiple-choice questions and answers that arise out of the narrative situation give way to long-answer questions and tasks. Unsatisfied with the responses he has so-far received to his questions about the young woman, the man “asks you again what you think of that blonde neighbor.” The man becomes insistent, aggressive—“He wants a clear answer.” From this point on, the narrative moves off the multiple-choice questions and onto more discursive questions and instructions. The narrator tasks the “you” of the piece to:

3. Write a response letter using the direct pattern of organization. Review the situation briefly, then explain your position on the topic, as well as your position on his continuing to ask. Remember, as always, to address him, the reader, in a friendly, conciliatory tone.

Months pass and the man has become increasingly sexually aggressive toward the “you” of the piece. He stops by more frequently on his walks, offers to help with the yard work as a pretext for propositioning her. One day the “you” is caught off guard. Her “brain is still at the office” when the man “body-brushes you from the behind whispers hey in your ear, then keeps walking.” The “you” must react but remembers that she must “keep your emotions in check. Your mother taught you how a lady should handle men like this: under no circumstance should you be the one to escalate the situation...You’d be branded a bitch.”

The final task the “you” is charged with is how to handle this situation with maintaining a certain, expected and so-called lady-like persona in the community:

6. Write a thank-you note to his wife, for her husband’s offering to help you with your yard work. Point out what a good thing it is to maintain good relationships with good neighbors. Offer to answer any questions she may have. Close with “sincerely” or “best regards.” And make sure, as always, to sign in black or blue.

The “you’s” chosen route is to make an appeal to the man’s wife in such a way that suggests—without directly stating—how often the man frequents her yard, that the regular interactions occur perhaps without the wife’s knowing, and that there are questions the wife
might want to ask her husband about the (potentially adulterous) intentions of these interactions. As readers, we are never told what actions come of this note, and, as Sandra intends, we are left to wonder.

In this way, innovative forms such as the one “Business Writing” takes offer Sandra a more “playful,” or less rigid, terrain to investigate in her writing when compared to that of the more “talky” forms practiced by experts. These expert forms, as they are described by Sandra, appear transactional in their nature in that they follow something similar to the “banking model” approach toward knowledge criticized by Freire (1970). This model, with its “fundamentally narrative character,” includes a “a narrating subject (the teacher [or, in our case, expert writer]) and patient listening objects (the students [or, in our case, non-expert reader])” (Freire, 1970, p. 57). By this model:

Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the “banking” concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits. (p. 58)

Characteristic of this model, “knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing” (ibid). This banking model approach resists the dialogic back-and-forth between teacher and student, writer and reader. In contrast, Sandra’s innovative forms—which combine the verbal and the visual, borrow from other genres, tell stories that do not proceed by traditional narrative arcs—allows Sandra access to a mode of “speaking in some way other than with words.”

Interestingly enough—if not serendipitously—Sandra’s description of innovative nonfiction as a “form of silence” and as a way of “speaking in some way other than words” opposes Friere’s conjured image of the expert (the narrating teacher) delivering knowledge to the reader (the listening student) through traditionally oratory means. Sandra’s classroom practices, course assignments, and feedback likewise function in a way that challenges this
banking model approach by inviting students to take on their own non-expert statuses as they investigate their own research subjects and develop their own innovative forms to express their findings and arguments.

Sandra’s Creative Writerly Values at Work in the Composition Classroom

Toward the end of our second interview (March 28, 2017), the one in which we discussed these creative works, Sandra and I pivoted to the relationships between her innovative non-fiction, its crafting, and her work as a composition instructor. Specifically, I asked about these relationships in the context of the affordances of holding a non-expert position with regard to a subject or topic. Sandra responds with an example outside the immediate disciplines of Composition and Creative Writing, and then forges the connections to the writing disciplines:

**JON:** How do you view, if at all, this idea of not claiming expertise in traditional ways or not having to claim that stance of the expert? How do you think about that in terms of student writing, or in terms of how you teach writing?

**SANDRA:** This actually relates to my teaching. I actually have this problem when I teach world lit. Standing up there and claiming to be this ultimate expert when I didn’t even study world lit until I had to teach it the first time. That’s very uncomfortable to me. And in the writing classes, I’m not an expert in the subject matter they may be writing about. I can lead through processes; I can talk with them about past experiences. But part of helping them develop their own agency is for me to step back and say, I may have a Ph.D. and know some more things than you do—I’ve read a lot more than you—but I’m not claiming to be an end all expert in anything.

Sandra and I ended our second interview on this point, and in our third interview we picked back up on a discussion of students’ work on specific assignments and Sandra’s feedback on that work.

But first, two points about Sandra’s statement above. One, the non-expert stance Sandra holds in her own writing, itself informing and informed by her choice of utilizing
textually innovative conceits, here describes not what she asks students to do in their own work but how she engages with her students. In this way, the non-expert dispositions Sandra holds offer her a pathway toward a mode of instruction perhaps best described as “post-process” and informed by paralogic rhetorics. They recognize writing as an activity instead of a process than can be mastered, they view exchanges with students as dialogic (instead of monologic), and they acknowledge the larger systems of socio-political discourse through which all discourse is produced (see, e.g., Kent 1989, 1991, 1999; Dobrin 1999, 2002; Kastman-Breuch 2002; Heard 2008).

And two, what Sandra does not mention in the above is that her assignments at times task students with utilizing the “innovative” in their own works. Take, for example, an assignment Sandra shared with me from an Honors ENGL 1102 (a form of composition class) in the Spring 2016 semester. The assignment was titled “Analysis or Imitation of Innovative-Form Nonfiction” and offered students one of two options. First, the “Traditional Analysis Paper” which tasked students with “[u]sing techniques of literary and rhetorical analysis…analyze one of the pieces of Innovative Form Nonfiction we’ll read in this unit.” The second option, however, asked students to compose their own innovative form essays based on what students read or were scheduled to read that semester. Below I detail that option in full:
OPTION 2: CREATIVE OPTION

For the Creative Option, write your own imitation of one of the Innovative Form essays we will read in this unit. We’ll brainstorm ideas and techniques for doing so in class.

Choosing this option automatically gets you bonus points for difficulty.

INNOVATIVE FORM STRATEGIES

For the purposes of this unit, we’ll define “innovative form” as an essay that 1) employs a braided structure and/or footnotes to break up the usual narrative flow, and/or 2) incorporates at least one other kind of text within the main text (diary entry, info from a pamphlet or FAQ, etc.).

SPECIFICATIONS

- The essay must go onto the fourth page but really should be long enough to accomplish what it needs to accomplish.
- The essay must use “Innovative Form” (see definition above) and must be in imitation of one of the Innovative essays we read in this unit.
- When you include other texts, info from research, etc., use “Informal Documentation” as you would if you were going to get this published in a magazine or literary journal. Identify the source in your sentence or in a playful footnote or section heading, or something that fits the “innovative form” techniques you’re using, but don’t do page number in parentheses or a Works Cited, unless, again, it suits the “innovative form” strategies.
- Go beyond surface-level thinking here too. Answer the “so what?” question. Get to meaning, significance, connections, consequences, causes, solutions, or whatever would be appropriate to develop your themes.

While Sandra details here the particular innovations (or constraints) of students’ essays’ forms—“1) employs a braided structure and/or footnotes...or 2) incorporates at least one other kind of text within the main text” and that it “must be an imitation of one of the Innovative essays we read in this unit”—she stresses to her students the innovative form’s ability to be rigorous, thought-provoking, and potentially part of the larger circulatory world. She asks her students to answer the “so what?” question, as well as to locate meaning within their pieces and avenues leading toward those meanings. Sandra also sets the stakes of her students’ work at the level of “publication in a magazine or literary journal.” That Sandra sets such potentially high stakes for her students—even if those high stakes are there to
emphasize form and rigor more so than they there to demand particular outcomes of her
students’ work—emphasizes her view on the exacting nature and potential of this form of
writing, even for “non-experts.” It is worth noting that while other rigors are mentioned in
the first option of assignment Sandra provides her students, such as also answering the “so
what?” question, Sandra includes no reference to publishability in that option.

Turning to examples from her students’ essays22, and the comments Sandra provided
to those students on their essays, we note instances of engagement with personal, social, and
political topics through “playful” or non-“talky” means. Sandra’s emphases on the
affordances of holding a non-expert status come through in her student Jannah’s piece,
“And THAT is the Truth,” which holds to a mode of questioning and challenging more so
than it does answering or telling. This innovative work draws from dictionaries, historical
documents and textbooks, and literature in order to question the reader’s construction of
“the true” and “the real.” In a “Dear Reader” note that prefaces the essay (and which is
intended for Sandra, the unacknowledged “Reader), Jannah writes, “On the surface, my
paper is about definitions and scenarios, but looking deeper it is about truth and differences
and how everything we know could be wrong.”

The essay is divided into multiple subsections—“What is Truth?,” “Foundation of
America,” “Conspiracy Theories,” &c.—with each differently approaching the topic of “how
everything we know could be wrong.” As an example, the “What is Truth?” section riffs off

22 Note: all work of Sandra’s students reproduced here was done so with permission from
that student. Each student who participated in the study in this way was asked to fill out the
“Consent form for Tertiary Participants” document (see Appendix B) to verify giving that
permission. In the cases where students asked that they be referenced by a pseudonym, I
came up with that pseudonym myself. In total, Sandra provided me four manuscripts by
students in her Spring 2017 Honors English 1102 class.
dictionary definitions of the word “truth” in order to question how these definitions construct the idea of “truth”:

**What is Truth?**

Can truth *really* be defined?*

1. The quality or state of being true.
   a. Truth is a noun.
   b. The definition sounds like an adjective.
   c. It uses the root word.
   d. What is true?
2. That which is true or in accordance with fact or reality.
   a. This one sounds like a noun.
   b. It doesn’t explain what reality is.
   c. It also uses the root word.
3. A fact or belief that is accepted as true.
   a. This one also uses the root word.
   b. It is what is *accepted*.

These are three definitions of “truth” given in English Oxford Dictionaries. They all use the word “true” or “reality.” But that doesn’t really answer the question. These simple—or not so simple—definitions lead me to more questions. What is truth? What is true? What is reality?

*Figure 4.2: from Jannah Zinker’s “And THAT is the Truth”*

And from the “Conspiracy Theories” section:

**Conspiracy Theories**

Nobody landed on the moon. That’s true, right? People believe it. And by some definitions of truth, that makes it true.

On the other hand, other people believe that Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon. So that’s true too!

Did Bush know anything about 9/11? Did the government know and just let it happen? People believe it, so it must be the truth.

*Figure 4.3 (ibid)*

Footnotes throughout the piece further complicate the notion of how we construct and accept truth. As an example of the ways we at times unwittingly accept so-called “truth,” in a section titled “Civil War” Jannah discusses, in the main body of the text, the ways secondary schools will often perform an absolutist reframing of the Emancipation Proclamation, which they then teach to students. In the footnotes, however, Jannah is quick to remind us readers
that that the Proclamation did not free all slaves, that it instead “allowed the states that were still in the Union to keep slavery” (emphasis mine). Thus, Jannah’s footnote indicts her (and others’) secondary school education.

Foregoing asking students to be an expert on a subject and deliver that expertise to a reader—which expertise, again, Sandra often relates to the fact-based and informative—Sandra instead states that her main goal as a writing instructor is to get students “to see their writing as something that would create an effect on the reader” (Interview August 29, 2016). In focusing on helping her students develop what we might identify as a text’s rhetoricity, Sandra emphasizes the value of impactful writing more so than she does any particular impact—creating an emotional effect or a cerebral effect, for instances, or achieving a political or transactional goal. Sandra goes on to explain that she is “trying to get the students to have intentions for their work and be able to choose strategies that will fulfill those intentions.” In opening up the option to pursue the innovative in their own writing, Sandra effectively invites students to explore the multitude of “strategies” available to them for fulfilling the goal of intentionality in their writing.

Sandra’s comments on Jannah’s paper can be read through Sandra’s project of helping her students fulfill this goal. The “Dear Reader” letter prefacing Jannah’s innovative piece (as well as those of all her other students that Sandra shared with me) marks the site where Jannah’s initial intentions are made known: to explore the relationship between “truth and differences and how everything we know could be wrong.” As such, Sandra may comment according to that intent, or, in other words, with the project in mind of helping the writer craft the effect on the reader they are attempting. It is through pedagogies of style that Sandra often attempts to help her students:

I spend a lot more time talking about style, but I don’t mean with a capital ess, I mean with a lower case ess. Stylistics, you know, can get real technical, and I certainly
don’t—I don’t want to get that technical either. Style in the sense of paying attention to the rhythm of the sentence, and the effects of the word choices. “Should you put a period here, or a semicolon? What is it going to do to the tone and voice, that sort of thing.”

While manifestations of style choices might take the form of putting a “period here, or a semicolon,” Sandra is clear to identify her overarching definition of style as having to do with one’s “overall approach” to a piece. This approach informs the sentence-level choices writers make in their pieces, which, in turn, “plays into what it [the written work] ends up being about” thematically. As an example, Sandra discusses how her use of the seating chart in “The Now-What Class” was ultimately a stylistic decision; however, that stylistic became the work’s central motif and played a large role in determining the format of the written text, its non-hierarchical ordering, and how individual student sections would reference one another. For Sandra, the overall effect of the written work takes place in the interplay among stylistic choices in order to create a “voice for a piece” through which what she identifies as the work’s “personality” and “intention” may be made clear. When Sandra delivers even simple marginal commentary to her students—e.g., circling a period and writing, “nice—rhetorical use of punctuation ✓”—this act indexes a host of methodological concerns Sandra attempts to make her student’s cognizant of while engaged in the act of writing.

Figure 4.4

23 Note that Sandra’s conception of voice in this context locates the phenomenon as an effect of a piece’s language. Even when talking about her own creative work, Sandra draws a clear dividing line between “my voice” and “a voice for the piece.” Such a view of voice circumvents sticky discussions linking it to what often gets codified as near-essentialist or problematic humanist “matters of selfhood” (Harris 2012), which have been the subject of all sorts of scholarly debate that this dissertation won’t get into.
While I was not privy to any conversations Sandra had with Jannah in conference (which Sandra uses as an opportunity to supplement her marginal comments), I do find it fitting that Sandra’s final comment on Jannah’s essay is: “nice job of playing + then deepening + then seeming to return to playing with the theme.” As mentioned, Sandra’s use of the word “play” is not contrasted with “work.” Rather, it is a form of work, one that acknowledges that a writer might have a stance without yet having, in her words, “everything figured out.” It is a word that she uses in reference to her own innovative non-fiction pieces to help describe a conceptual terrain for the exploring. It is a word she further links to the “incredibly freeing” affordances of a writing based not in knowing but in discovery—a writing, in other words, that brings forth or calls into view.

For this chapter’s final case, we turn to a poet and fiction writer who primarily identifies herself as a writer who works in hybrid forms. She is an instructor who taught during her M.F.A and as an adjunct lecturer/contingent instructor off and on for some years afterward and is looking to return to the classroom in a full-time lectureship capacity. As an instructor, she tasks students with exploring the “gray areas” that exist across the expanse of polarizing subjects and helps students by relying on forms not easily categorizable and which exist in the gray areas themselves.
Navigating the Gray: Ashley Farmer

At the time of data collection, Ashley is employed as a curator in a museum and has not formally taught writing—composition, creative, or otherwise—for a few years. However, she has recently applied for a full-time lectureship position at a community college where, should she be hired, she would primarily teach composition. Ashley is the author of several books, as well as numerous short stories and poems. She shared a great deal of her work with me, and I have independently searched for various of her online publications. However, for the purposes of time and space, I mainly limit my discussion of her creative work in this chapter to two of her more recent books—The Farmacist (2015) and The Women (2017)—and make sparing reference to other works.

Ashley described her interest in the study when in late 2015 she and I informally discussed my research plans. At the time, she expressed interest in my research and identified herself as among the population of CWCIs I planned to study. It was not until mid-2017, however, that I asked her to join the study as a primary participant. Over the course of several months after, Ashley and I conducted three interviews together on the following dates: October 25, 2017; January 24, 2018; and March 21, 2018. These interviews lasted between one to two hours and were audio recorded and transcribed. Although the January 24th interview was primarily devoted a co-examination and discussion of Ashley’s teaching materials—syllabi, course assignments, lesson plans, etc.—produced for classes 5-7 years prior, we found ourselves at times during this interview discussing her creative work. Our March 21, 2018 interview, on the other hand, was expressly devoted to a discussion of her creative work through examinations of The Farmacist and The Women, among others.

In previous interviews, Ashley had described herself as a writer of multiple genres and hybrid genres. Although I personally resist the word “hybrid” in this context for its
allusions to notions of the essential and essentialist (see Schroeder, Fox & Bizzell, 2002), I use the word mainly because it is the word Ashley has employed to describe her work. This act of deferment, I believe, helps me as the researcher to both respect my participants’ understandings of their own work and investigate that work with them. Further, as Schroeder et. al. (2002) points out, the term hybrid and its related forms are helpful for suggesting that in “new forms of discourse…traits blend with traits from discourses now traditionally accepted.” The products of this process of blending are “new forms with their own organic integrity” (ix). When in our first interview together Ashley described herself as a writer of hybrid forms, her description of what hybridity entails gels well with Schroeder et. al.’s understanding of the term. Ashley’s projects in hybridity underwrite what she identifies as “playing with form and looking at forms of overlap.” Since much of her training as a creative writer has been tied to investigations into various genres, she considers the project of hybridity as representing for her (and others) “spaces of blending”:

For me, I feel I learned a lot of writing in terms of—it’s easy to think about genres. So, for me, I like looking at the space where those things [genres] blend together for me. Like, interrupt each other or meld into each other, intersect in those kind of gray areas. Those in-between spots are what I’m really interested in these days...Something that might look like flash fiction but is really non-fiction. Something that might look like a novel but is really, you know, multiple stories that are tethered in kind of interesting way, with strange threads. That kind of stuff. (Interview October 25, 2017)

Regardless of what we call or how we theorize Ashley’s preferred genres, she identifies her larger project as a creative writer working in those genres as exploring what she describes as the “spaces of blending,” “gray areas,” or “forms of overlap” across traditionally understood genres. Such a set of conceptual spaces informs Ashley’s understanding about the linkages between tradition and innovation or experimentation in creative writing.

Early on in our March 21, 2018 interview together, Ashley talked about her goals with her hybrid works. For Ashley these goals are as writerly as they are readerly and
rhetorical. Below Ashley indicated that she composes these hybrid works because they both represent types of writing that she likes to read and allow her a way to further engage audiences and interlocutors in discussions about hybridity’s affordances:

I’m interested in reading work that maybe does something surprising and unfamiliar in terms of the shape that that project takes. So, the first collection I wrote after coming out of grad school was Beside Myself, and those are all kind of like flash fiction slash prose poem-y kind of things. And a lot of them I wrote in grad school when I’m studying with both fiction writers and then poets. And so, again, I feel I was encouraged in that environment. Studying both those forms and also look at how maybe they’re not so different. That was kind of true, I think. “Oh, maybe those things don’t have to be so well defined. And you can take as many craft classes in one thing as you do in another” … A lot of the pieces had been written in poetry classes where I was paying attention to the line and things like that. And then progressed them later on into prose poems, flash stuff. I found it fascinating to have conversations like, is it a poem or is it a story, and what makes it so, and who’s the person who gets to decide? I think because I liked those conversations that maybe I enjoyed creating work that made me raise those same questions. (Interview March 21, 2018)

While Ashley has not written outright on progressing theories of craft and instead explores the subject as something of a byproduct of her writing, she is interested in how certain crafts have evolved over time and how current cultural moments inflect both the creative writer’s project and experience of writing. Beyond these being purely intellectual or theoretical concerns, they are for Ashley also concerns of project and production. Both The Farmacist and The Women, for instances, represent hybrid genres that respond to particular cultural moments of which the writer is a part.

The Farmacist, as an example, is paratextually described as “[A NOVELLA]” (from the cover) and yet is constituted by dozens of short entries that, together, form no narrative arc in the traditional sense—a plotted sequence of events, or an ongoing set of cause-and-effect events. Despite this, The Farmacist still retains what we might as readers identify as a “unity of impression” (Cariou, 2000)—the sense that all individual elements within the work function in concert in order to create thematic or effective cohesion—similar to that of short
stories, novels, and novellas. And *The Women*, a collection of verse poems, prose poems, and one-paragraph shorts, represents a meditation on and response to how the societal ideas surrounding both the roles women and notions of womanhood are taken up across contemporary media, including blogs, forums, and social media platforms. In the Author’s Note to the work, Ashley describes the origins of the project:

I started *The Women* in 2011 when I began Googling various women-related phrases: “happy women,” “sad women,” women say,” and so on. Knowing that my online habits, browser history and geographical location would all shape my results, I wondered what might show up. The searches returned fragments that ran the gamut of media types and texts: advertisements, news headlines, celebrity gossip, feminist websites, beauty tips, and relationship advice all filled my screen. Also, among the results: anti-women screeds, men’s rights activists’ propaganda, misogynistic ramblings, and tired tropes about women’s lives...I found value in not simply copying-and-pasting these findings but in actively chopping up, stitching together, and writing through the texts. (p. 11)

Similar to how I prepared for my interviews with Austin and Sandra, ahead of my interview with Ashley I took two sets of notes for each of her works—what I’ve been calling the readerly and the “researcherly.” I prepared questions pertaining to both my literary impressions of Ashley’s work and areas I felt the work found consonance with or showcased portions of previous interviews in which we discussed recurring themes or writerly fixations: regarding hybridity, forms of overlap, blendedness, and gray-space exploration. In co-examining these areas of overlap and dimensions of hybridity, Ashley and I would often center our discussion around the dual and, at times, paradoxical nature of writing insofar as Ashley understood it. The study of difference across what are often assumed to be distinct genres and modes of writing—a study actualized by a practice in and production of hybrid forms—would help throw into relief certain “commonalities” across forms of writing. Thus, for Ashley, a discourse around hybridity gives way to literate engagement beyond several “boundaries”—not only those imposed by genre, but also those imposed by programs, institutions, socio-material conditions, and so on. Beyond these, there is something of the
habituated against which Ashley’s work and Ashley herself pushes. On the page prior to “Part One” of *The Women*, Ashley displays a quoted back-and-forth from an online conversation she had read:

Q: “Why has society always been hard on women?”
A: “Society hasn’t always been hard on women. Hope I helped.”
–Exchange between strangers, *Yahoo! Answers* (p. 13)

While I don’t want to put too much weight on any one example, what I find interesting here is the relationship Ashley perceives between hybrid works, including her own, and the ability they allow writers to comment on that which is “commonly” assumed. Obviously enough, however, what is “common,” and thus accepted, find its provenance in deeply-rooted ideological claims about life. Understood through a discourse of the patriarchal (as it appears the above answerer has done), and of course society has not been “hard” on women. Understood, however, through important critical frameworks, and this back-and-forth seems absurd at best, violent at worst.

Insights such as these, implicit in Ashley’s writing and explicit in what Ashley says about her writing and its affordances, inform not only her drive as a writer, but also her goals as a teacher of writing. Ashley identifies herself as an instructor who apprises her students of how explorations of these “gray areas” might be useful for them, their communities, and the overall project of citizenry. To come to a cogent understanding of these teacherly goals, it befits us to further investigate Ashley’s writing, thoughts on writing, and the data she and I generated in the craft-based interviews wherein we co-examined her creative writing as a way into a discussion of her pedagogical values.
A Co-examination of Ashley’s Hybrid Works

Since I found that Ashley’s project of synthesizing genres is a bit more difficult to describe than either Austin or Sandra’s project, I want to open this section differently than I did the others. As a quick example to provide some additional context for my more in-depth discussion of Ashley’s work, the particular craft-based choices Ashley makes in her work, and the perceived effectual ends of those choices and how they inform us of Ashley’s writerly values, I turn to an example from Ashley’s book *The Farmacist*. Ashley describes *The Farmacist* as attempting, by virtue of its own form, to question whether traditional forms of poetry and prose must be thought of as separate and unblendable. Addressing an unnamed “you,” *Farmacist*’s utilized forms oscillate between the more technically traditional, such as in the absurdist but linearly-progressive entry “Sigmund Freud Comes to Farm Town,” which starts—

But he’s naked and instead of Farm Town, he’s in second grade. Then he’s late again, his plane abandoning him, and they let him out onto the runway to chase it, but he misses. When he demands a refund at the counter, the women shimmer at their edges, glitter, then fade to silhouettes of lady ghosts that never hear him. (p. 74)—

and the experimental poetic, such as in the entry “Carl Jung,” the whole of which is:

I hide my trees and Jung walks by.
I hide my trees and Jung walks by.
I hide my trees and Jung walks by.
I hide my trees and Jung walks by.
I hide my trees and Jung walks by.
I hide my trees and Jung walks by.
I hide my trees and Jung walks by.
I hide my trees and Jung walks by.
Jung hides my trees and I walk by. (p. 78)

Ashley describes the specifics of her goals with the book that give rise to insights into her stance on genre’s perceptions by others in the field of creative writing, publishing, sales, etc. and, more important, her views on static genre ideologies.
ASHLEY: I don’t know if that book has been publicized on Amazon or by a publisher as poetry or fiction, and I kind of don’t even care because it is its own little complete project to me. It was created with the project in mind, like, how can I sustain this one sort-of sustained investigation with this one voice and in these little bursts, and, you know, if they’re stories it’s cool, if it’s a novella—I think eventually, actually, maybe it says “novella”?

JON: It does.

ASHLEY: Okay. So, see, yeah, I don’t really actually—I didn’t really care what it was because it was something.

That Ashley considers *Farmacist* in terms of his status as a “project” (not a novel, collection, books of poetry, etc.) and even forgets for a moment a portion of the work’s printed title (“[A Novella]”) invites further questions. What does it mean to identify *Farmacist* more by its signature craft characteristic—“voice”—than by a discrete genre that can be assigned to it? How might a discourse of production centered around the idea of literary “projects” be different from a discourse of production centered around more static and well-policed literary genres? And to what end do we read the labelling “[Novella]” in the work’s title if we understand Ashley’s work as challenging these genre labelings?

These questions are perhaps more important than any answer to them based in a literary analysis of *Farmacist*. They all further throw into relief those “gray spaces” or those “in-between spaces” in which Ashley sees her work existing. These spaces are, for Ashley, inventive ones in that they do not seek only to act as means of textually interpreting or critiquing the antecedent genres in which they are based. They are instead part of that process of “bringing-forth that is aimed more at doing something than at knowing something” (Pender, 2011, p. 143)—in this case, challenging the perceived boundaries of discrete genres. Ashley does not view her hybrid works as attempting to confuse or mystify literary analysis or processes of production. Rather, for Ashley these hybrid works exist on their own terms just as traditional genres, with their well-policed boundaries, are often
thought to exist. Ashley often uses phrases with the word “open” in them to describe what hybrid genres afford her that, perhaps, a “pure” genre does not. In regard to the potential for confusion her work may cause readers, Ashley states the following:

Some readers or workshop mates in the past don’t necessarily appreciate that ambiguity [of genre], and I think it can frustrate people sometimes. I think sometimes people like to know exactly—students too, in the classroom. They like to know with some certainty how to read something. And I never tried to blur things or mix things up with any kind of intention to be either frustrating, or to obfuscate anything, but because I think it can be an interesting exercise that can lead to more open-minded or curious engagement… But not blending genres, like: “Is this a poem or is this a genre? You have to figure it out. Hahaha [mock-maniacal laugh].” It’s not in that spirit of frustrating anybody, but about seeing what it can open up.

The conceptual spaces “opened up” by craft-based approaches in service to the production of hybrid works are implied here to be ones that cannot be explored (or, haven’t yet been explored) by Ashley in “pure” generic forms. The frustration with which some of her past work has been met is likened to the frustration composition students feel when faced with readings or assignments that appear to them as confusing. But the implied safety and reliability of known forms is an illusion.

Dobrin (2002) argues that what we understand as discourse communities are simply based in the practice and acceptance of certain discoursal conventions over periods of time long enough for those conventions to become codified. But “paralogic rhetoric,” Dobrin reminds us, “identifies that these codifications are false, mere matters of convenience and not actually identifiable” (p. 53). Although Dobrin speaks here about academic discourse, it holds that any forms of discourse based in generic convention, including literature-based discourses, can become and have become codifiable in this same false sense. It follows that to challenge the primacy of accepted genres—in the spheres of literature’s production and circulation, the creative writing workshop, the composition classroom, etc.—is to challenge the primacy of the discourses they inspire and their most accepted sites (topoi) of invention.
These are those “safe” sites—the easily-classifiable creative work, the assignments informed by current-traditional rhetorics, the rubrics underwritten by textualist ideologies, etc. They less seldom confuse or frustrate, at least when compared to their more “dangerous” counterparts—experimental poetry, innovative non-fiction assignments, and similar foils. And they adhere to the more commonplace modes of knowledge production, which, in turn, reinforce the difficult-to-question nature of their prevalence and good. Hybrid works and the writerly values they inform, then, offer gambits into disruption. They challenge logics of the conventional and what those logics attain. I move to *The Women* and my and Ashley’s co-examination of a “poem” or “meditation” (terms Ashley and I used and agreed on calling it) that resists simple classification.

Titled: “Wild Women,” this entry is reproduced here in full:

Can I act like an angel if I live like a jerk? Can I keep disguising my sensitivities with parties and verve? I’m bursting with rich delight while you’re under control, enjoying your well-rounded personal life, your arm-chair book. Funny: we participate in a web. You: an accounting presentation. I: dance a full moon ode on the beach. You grow your business. I try to appease the dragon by writing around on the sand in skimpy outfits. Consider this an invitation. I consider this an invitation. (p. 103)

Ashley and I discuss the choices she made in composing “Wild Women,” where they came from or what incited or inspired them, and what she believed they attained:

**JON:** If you wouldn’t mind taking me through the choices here: the form of this particular poem, why you think this particular poem took this form. Starting with the interrogative and then unfolding into, what I’m reading, as a—prose poem? A meditation? I don’t know. It’s my favorite one, but I can’t quite say.

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24 All titles of individual entries in *The Women* follow one of two formats: “Women ___” and “____ Women.” Examples of the former include “Happy Women” (p. 16), “Littler Women” (p. 56), and “Bad Women (Are Killing Me)” (p. 90). Examples of the latter include “Women Can’t” (pp. 39-40), “Women Fail” (p. 64), and “Women Sense” (p. 110). These recurring formats play off the book’s title, which can be interpreted to signal *ex post facto* that it refers not to a specific group of women but to variations on how women are seen, represented, believed to be, and are.
ASHLEY: [Some] were culled from more intimate source material. So, like, people’s blogs that show up or op-eds, or personal essays that are online. Those kinds of things that would come up. So, to google “Wild Women” and then get all of this stuff, and some of it is very derogatory and misogynistic and would sometimes straight up lead me to, like, dark corners of MRA [Men’s Rights Activists/ism] forums and stuff. But I didn’t work with that stuff, I just worked with what washes over you when you do that Google search. And you’re kind of culpable too, right? Because Google is responding to what you’ve read and what you’ve done. So, there’s a part of my own responsibility for what is showing up. So, in a case like this, I think probably, I would’ve made the choice to not work with some of the source materials that was more like “Wild women are terrible” or whatever it might be coming up in terms of someone’s opinion coming up on a website. And instead probably worked most likely with more intimate lines written by women. So, when you say “like a meditation,” I think that that’s right. I think that’s how some of those kind of functioned.

In ways similar to Sandra above, the overtly dialogic and the interplay of various voices informs Ashley’s writing process. However, while Sandra’s works invites her readers to, quite literally at times, fill in the blanks, and thus instills in her readers a sense of authoriality, Ashley works from other women’s’ writing in order to compose her entries in this collection. In this sense, the “hybrid” status of Ashley’s work in *The Women* may be thought of in terms of both genre and process.

From here, Ashley and I discuss her craft-based choices and their intended effects:

JON: So, I’m just wondering about some of these choices that you made. Form-wise, technique-wise, technical choices?

ASHLEY: I felt like there’s all of these, you know, possibilities for what a woman can be. But there’s a sense of failure for all the things a woman is not. And I see some of those two things in dialogue here. Almost two parts of the same self, or two different women and how they’re oriented to the world very differently. Both of which are a little bit silly and kind of a failure of being a full woman. So that’s how I see it. Using this paragraph form to keep it tight and personal, like that conversation would be instead of working with line breaks that kind of change the way we move through a poem, or the rhythm of it, or use it not as a focus on those things at all, but just thinking about a kind of intimate, compressed, tight, kind of like how this conversation would be in a person’s head or between two women. It’s just a little blip. And I think that kind of blip mirrors the quickness with which a dialogue like this might happen.
The overall hybrid nature of the project allows Ashley a way to reflect on online writing about and by women, and to reckon with the turbulence attendant to those writings. In Ashley’s words, the “disjointed” nature of the entries in *The Women*—both collectively and individually, in the way Ashley sees each resisting genre classifications—are “doing my best to reconcile and shape what I found.” The choice to compose this collection in a multitude of forms and generically unclassifiable entries mirrors the fragmentation and unpredictability of the writings on and by women that Ashley found in her Google searches. Ashley believes a more traditional rendering of her entries would not reflect this particular form of turbulence she saw, since a consistent form throughout would not mirror this turbulence. “What I was trying to do,” Ashley says, “only fit that way.” Ashley’s stance on literary hybridity can be read methodologically as much as it can be read in terms of production. Her projects offer her a vantage from which to critically interrogate the world around her while also being mindful of the modes her interrogations take.

A similar stance on hybridity’s affordances can be seen at play in Ashley’s classroom, where she believes her views on hybridity inform her pedagogical goals as an instructor of composition. Her students, through classroom discussion and processes of invention, are encouraged to consider how non-traditional forms might afford them pioneering ways to consider their subjects.

**Ashley’s Creative Writerly Values at Work in the Composition Classroom**

The idea of “ambiguity” or the “ambiguous” appear across a number of documents Ashley shared with me and in the interview data we produced together. As mentioned above and in reference to workshopping her creative materials, Ashley identified ambiguity as among one of the elements of her work she hoped her peers would appreciate (though, as mentioned,
not everyone did). For Ashley, this gambit into the ambiguous does not represent a way to confuse readers or unnecessarily task them with figuring out what’s “going on” in a work. Rather, it is a way to challenge the primacy of traditional genres and with them the types of expressing and knowing they attain. “Ambiguity” is also a word that appears across these sets of data with regard to her work as an instructor and what she asks her students to embrace, in a similar way that she has learned to embrace it.

As an example, Ashley’s “Statement of Teaching,” drafted recently (with regard to this writing) as part of a job application for a lectureship position, evokes the importance of instructing students on “what it means to tolerate ambiguity and how revisiting complicated texts can reward us.” One of these “complicated texts,” referenced in her statement by way of citing contemporary scholarship on it (viz. Vredenburg (2013)), is Hunter S. Thompson’s *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (1972). Although technically a work of fiction, this text is often cited as the provenance of gonzo journalism. This “hybrid” genre combines the factual with the fictitious, and the objective with the subjective, all to deliver a narrative aimed at offering a social critique. Further, Ashley includes excerpts of *Fear and Loathing* in a number of her classes, along with such other works as Brautigan’s *Trout Fishing in America* and Ginsberg’s “Howl,” which at the time of their release and circulation challenged their genre classifications. Ashley’s syllabus is clear to point out that students’ responsibilities when considering these types of literary works include the analysis of what their hybrid features achieve. Students are often tasked with considering the “strange” or “gray area” that these texts explore (from Ashley’s Fall 2010 syllabus), or with considering why readers and critics have been long concerned with how these authors “utilize ambiguity in their work” (from Ashley’s Fall 2013).
Coming off our discussion of her creative work, I ask Ashley how, if at all, she explores form/hybridity/ambiguity along with her students and how, if at all, she believes her teaching of these subjects is informed by her own writerly values:

**JON:** Where [do] some of these things you value and see at work in your work—not only generalizable values but things you actually see in the lines of your work—find consonance or purchase or have a foothold in what you are attempting to help your composition students with?

**ASHLEY:** So, one thing I can say about my own process and what I value is taking that time to explore what something needs to become and what shape it needs to take. And that can be an uncomfortable and sometimes even frustrating process, but I think there’s a lot of value in thinking about that and asking those questions and not making assumptions about what you might think. And I try to build that into my students’ writing experience in the classroom too. So, creating time [in the schedule to explore these ideas of form]. Really, I guess it’s all of the invention stuff.

Ashley describes her work as a composition instructor as helping students “feel comfortable with that discomfort” of choosing a genre and even form for a project, of not having those details laid out for them. Ashley voices an imagined student as she elaborates on the process she believes students go through when working on the presentation assignment she gives her classes (this assignment tasks students to present on the research they have been conducting on a topic of their choice but one related to the class themes):

**ASHLEY:** Okay, I am addressing this topic, but does it need to be a presentation, does it need to be like a short video, does it need to be a piece of traditional writing? So, I think that respect for those times where everything’s ambiguous, that’s also built into, at least, my favorite assignments and the things that work well for me.

But while Ashley opens up this space for exploration, she does not require that her students compose in a non-traditional form. Some students in Ashley’s classes composed more traditional works of writing, and others more “creative responses.” And although students were able to compose is whatever form they deemed best to meet their rhetorical goals, they each “wrote about why they chose what they chose to make and why. So, having to think critically and reflect on that process of finding the right for or melding certain forms.”
Only one graded assignment Ashley shared with me is an exception to her permitting students to compose in the form they deem best. By its design, this assignment, “The Composition Cut-up,” attempts to help students explore the affordances of non-traditional composing and invention practices. Its purpose, as per Ashley’s written guidelines, are twofold. First:

It allows you to move your ideas around on a page and find the spaces that are worth deeper exploration. These might be the spaces where you feel a little heat (where you’re interested), places where you’re confused, where something is strange, or where something is different from something else (maybe one piece of evidence slightly contradicts another). By moving things around, you find these rich places to mine.

And second:

you make space for Gladwell’s [an author the students have read and are now responding to] voice. By cutting the text up and rearranging, you may sense where it is that he might pipe up and say something, where he might introduce or contradict you, where he has a perfect piece of evidence. From there, you might offer up something else of your own, generating a bit of friction in your essay. (A good thing).

Again, we notice the language of discovery in Ashley’s words—exploration, space, place—just as we do in her discussions of the hybrid genres she composes. We further notice that, in a similar process to the one she employed to compose *The Women*, her students are instructed to work *from* Gladwell’s language, after performing a re-mixing of it, and *to* their own.

Following her discussion of the assignment’s purposes, Ashley lists step-by-step instructions on how to perform this “cut up,” reproduced in full here:
Instructions:
1. Identify possible claims by underlining them: These are places where a claim isn’t fully thought-out (though it may be). Often these are places where an idea might lend itself to further exploration.

2. Cut it up: Cut the text apart after each underlined sentence (i.e. the last sentence of each chunk should be an underlined sentence).

3. Rearrange it: Play with it. See how it looks to move the beginning toward the top. How does it feel to open with one section, rather than another? What does it do to bring in one of those underlined sentences in earlier? What tension is generated when you put one paragraph against another? Don’t worry about the missing “connective tissue”—this can be added later.

4. Tape it down in its new experimental order, but leave plenty of space for writing between each chunk. (That might mean your two pages are now five).

5. Ask yourself “So What About It? Address the part that you underlined in the blank space by answering the question. (i.e. “...So maybe there are exceptions to this. -Also, this isn’t true for a person who hasn’t had a chance to live in another place…” etc.—it can be a list).

6. Let Gladwell Say Something For each blank space find a passage, a quote or a page number that connects to the underlined section. (Make sure you’re clear about what it is so that you can find it again).

7. Check In Again Think about your overall topic. Have you created any places where your point is now more specific? Complicated? Followed up with a “but”, or “except in cases when”, or “although Gladwell would argue otherwise?” etc. If so, you may have a new central claim.

In performing this rearrangement of Gladwell’s language (i.e., “possible claims”) and adding in their own language that “address[es] the part that you underlined in the blank space” and answers the “So What About It?” question, students are effectively creating new texts. These texts are quite literally hybrid in the sense of which Schroeder et. al. (2002) make us aware. In them, “traits blend with traits from discourses now traditionally accepted” in order to produce new forms with their own sort of “integrity” (p. ix), which, in these cases, manifests as something of a choreographed annotation.
Again, however, as with Austin above, Ashley neither believes what she is doing flies in the face of composition pedagogy as it is represented and taught in a variety of Composition programs, nor thinks that her pedagogical strategies are wholly new and unique to her. Similar to Austin, Ashley took a composition pedagogy class during her M.F.A program and found it rewarding. Additionally, in the summer prior to teaching composition for the first time, she went through a two-week program/orientation at Syracuse in order to prepare her for the realities of the work. Professors and instructors from Syracuse’s composition program ran the orientation and pedagogy class, which Ashley felt was all together a “really exciting experience” and instilled in her the idea that the work and its associated pedagogies were “something important” that, in turn, “helped make the project of teaching feel important.” As for whether her training as a writer of hybrid genres has helped her developed into an inimitable instructor, Ashley is clear to acknowledge that with regard to her particular emphases and assignments in the classroom:

A lot of people do this [i.e., give similar assignments or stress similar compositional modes], so I know that. But I think, I do think for me it comes, pretty organically, from the fact that I go home and do the same stuff, like it or not, on my own. Or at six in the morning after I’ve walked the dog, I’m doing the stuff that they’re [the students are] doing. And I’m trying to help them see that too, that it can be a practice beyond what is asked of you during the semester.

And as for whether Ashley believes that, as a study participant who has pursued along with me a particular line of inquiry, the framing of the case study has potentially influenced her thoughts on the connections between her life as a creative writer and that of a composition instructor:

I really do feel like my writing self is not really separate from my teaching self. You know, I don’t feel like I put one thing aside and go in and preach or teach something different. You know, I think I’m really an idealist in a lot of ways and an optimist… [Students and I] really talked about how [their] pieces could make their way into the world, and even about submitting things or sharing what they’ve written with other people and actually affecting other human beings. And that for me is part
of why writers write, period. So, I think it’s pretty idealistic and rooted in my experience as a writer to hold that for students, you know?

For Ashley, Austin, and Sandra’s writing selves, while distinguishable from their professional selves in terms of labor and context, are nevertheless intimately linked. More important than informing the specific work they perform as composition instructors (specific assignment, specific schedules, grading rubrics, etc.), their writerly values inform their pedagogical goals/teaching philosophies.

CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I’ve discussed participants’ creative works insofar as they function as sites wherein writerly values, and by extension creative writers’ identities, might be investigated. Specifically, participants and I conducted these co-examinations with their craft-based choices in mind, and we discussed how those choices indexed values beyond the technical or skill-based to speak of the generative, inventive, and identity-based. In Sandra’s case, for example, the technical and style-based choices she implemented—including multimodal choices—in the construction of her non-fiction upended what she felt were the dominant modes of non-fictional discourse (the “expert” and “talky”) and created a more accessible but no-less insightful space for “non-expert” discourse.

Further, I have explored how and to what end certain of those writerly values have been taken up in participants’ work as composition instructors. Austin, Sandra, and Ashley, whose writerly concerns are concentrated, respectively, on the emotional, innovative, and hybrid, each take up these concerns in their work as teachers. I do not claim that every CWCIs’ teacherly work is as explicitly informed by their writerly work (and, in fact, identified cases that suggested as much) as Austin’s, Sandra’s and Ashley’s. However, the three main cases explored in this chapter suggest that writerly values and pedagogical values exist in
concert and resonate across one’s latticework of professional and disciplinary activities. This connection is shown to exist not only explicitly as part of one’s teaching practices, but also as implicitly, as in the case of Ashley who has claimed “my writing self is not really separate from my teaching self.” If, as Woodard (2015) has suggested, “we write who we are” (p. 55), I would argue that we also teach who we are—professional and disciplinary selves wrighted across the host of activities that have played roles in our semiotic becomings.

The next and final data chapter will deepen this exploration of CWCIs’ identities, vis-à-vis a discussion of their dispositions toward Composition as an (often thought-of monolithic) institution. Issues I will take up include how participants conceptually construct this institution, how it functions as an interpellating entity, and how participants understand their agency within it. While this chapter forwards the idea that “teachers teach who they are,” the following chapter will show how this “who” is constructed and understood through pedagogical training, scholarly (non-) expertise, and disciplinary acceptance and resistance.
In our final interview together, I asked the recent-M.F.A. graduate Austin Baurichter about the differences he believed existed between his work as a composition instructor and his work as a creative writing instructor. He carefully considered the question, and then spoke of an enigmatic “middle man” he felt as a presence particular to the composition course he was teaching, which was his second at the time. This metaphorical middle man, as Austin described it, represented what he believed were the core “skills” and “content” of the composition class. These skills and content, Austin elaborated, came predominantly from a source outside himself and which he broadly ascribed to the Composition program for which he taught (the WRD program at University of Kentucky, as mentioned in Chapter 4). Because of this, Austin’s middle man made him feel less directly connected with his composition students in comparison to the connection he felt with his creative writing students. Austin described his relationship with his creative writing students by stating that all members of the class, including himself, were “sitting on the same side of the table.” He further indicated that, through his various decisions of what readings to cover, writing work to assign, discussions to hold, and in-class exercises to lead, he believed that he was the primary source of or reason for the classes’ content.

Austin sensed that this “middle man,” who spectered his composition class, acted as a buffer between him and his students. In effect, this presence made him feel as if he and his
composition students were sitting on “different side[s] of the table.” While this buffer was not necessarily a detrimental component to class proceedings—Austin, for instance, described the mandated parts of the program’s FYC syllabus as stabilizing elements, i.e. foundational content that both he and his students could “hang their hats on”—he noted how this middle man would at times represent a particular “block” he felt and which he believed his students also felt. Expanding on this sentiment, Austin offered an example of a rhetorical analysis assignment he had tasked his students with completing. This assignment charged a student with identifying a text of their choice that they believed was making an argument, analyzing the rhetoricity of its composer’s argument, and then, based on their analyses, discussing the argument’s effectiveness. (See APPENDIX E for this assignment in full.) Austin believed that in early drafts, students did not initially meet the stated expectations of this assignment:

> When [students] were doing their rhetorical analyses, I was teaching the content and I had them do a lot of mini writing exercises because I had the feeling they weren’t getting certain things, for whatever reason… Seeing patterns that existed in the arguments of a specific stakeholder, because that was the assignment. So that was one where I really felt the presence of that middle entity, which was the content, which was the skills and the ability to look at arguments in these ways. And I felt that was not letting me connect with the students as much as I would like, this sort of block that they were having and internalizing about that ability. (Interview March 30, 2018).

Even though Austin took extra time out of his schedule to work with each of his students individually, he continued to describe his connection with his students in regard to a mastery of this content. This description found its obverse in Austin’s descriptions of his creative writing class as a space, not where he was judging mastery, but where he and students learned from one another and worked toward a common goal. It was not until all final drafts of his composition students’ rhetorical analyses were submitted and Austin was able to see that his students did indeed end up meeting those mandated expectations—i.e., displaying
through their writing that they grasped the “content” of the unit and developed the “skills” associated with the unit—that he was able to feel again that he “was more connected to them.”

Austin sums up this “middle man” entity by reiterating and synthesizing observations he had made about it up until this point in our conversation:

In that [composition] class, there is the third party of the skills and content of the course that I feel like I need to access my students through. And again, sometimes that works really well, better than it can work in a fiction course, because they [the students] can internalize that better if it’s a neutral skill—right, that you can then apply to yourself. And then other times it can act as a block because I either wasn’t teaching it in a way that was effective or it’s just a tough thing.

In even this short utterance, several times Austin’s language either 1) distances himself from his students, or 2) identifies a pedagogical source outside himself: “the third party…I need to access my students through”; “neutral skill,” which we take to mean a non-generic specific skill; “block”; “wasn’t effective”; “a tough thing.” Such an utterance, again, contrasts with how he talked about his teacherly labors and class interactions as an instructor of creative writing. Austin described how he based his creative writing syllabus “around craft elements,” noting how these elements acted as sites “where I felt that I could connect to the students, and the only place that I felt I had a right to teach…the place where I had the only authority to talk about these stories.” He discussed the facility of developing “a common language for the course by probably week three,” and nowhere does he identify analogs to the “third party,” “neutral skills,” “blocks,” “tough things,” or any other description informed by a sense of distancing. In sum, Austin described himself more intimately connected to or responsible for the content of the creative writing class and that class’s discourse.

Austin is far from the only participant who either implicitly or explicitly identified feeling a disconnect between his teacherly/writerly knowledges and the composition program that mediated their teacherly labors and their understandings of the greater
Composition discipline. This obstruction would be described in various ways and take a multitude of forms, including: the methods my participants were taught to employ when teaching composition; a particular rubric or mandated syllabus; the precarious professional statuses my participants held as either graduate students or adjunct/contingent faculty; the domain of knowledge representative of Composition as a discipline, from which they felt apart; and, a conception of their Composition program as a site of knowledge and know-how in comparison to which they were either outsiders or else made to feel like outsiders. A common refrain among many participants—including those who are or have been formally and/or professionally embedded in the Rhetoric & Composition or Writing Studies disciplines—was that Composition, as either a programmatic or institutional entity, was a difficult one with which to negotiate or engage in meaningful, productive dialogues or interactions. As such, CWCIs often revealed the difficulties they had in being acknowledged or acknowledging themselves as contributors to and participants squarely situated in the field of Composition.

One source of these difficulties may be the formal training and professional development CWCIs receive, first as graduate students and later as CWCIs. Instructors who teach composition typically receive pedagogical training in the forms of teaching orientations and a composition pedagogy class/practicum. Often, a first-time teacher attends an initial teaching orientation, then this orientation segues into a program’s graduate practicum class the first-time teacher must take, and then, from that point on, the teacher attends these teaching (re-)orientations on a yearly basis, wherever they end up teaching as CWCIs. At times, these classes and orientations are supplemented with additional training modules (often optional; also, often unpaid) that the Composition program offers throughout the year. Since these classes, orientations, training modules, etc. are frequently run by agents
(such as tenured or tenure-track faculty) of an institution’s Composition program (or practical equivalent), or are at least conducted under that program’s auspices, they can reflexively cast creative writers as disciplinary outsiders who come in from disciplines other than Rhetoric & Composition, Writing Studies, or other fields the local program associates with its own pedagogical goals and dispositions. In doing this, these agents often reinforce the preeminence of Composition’s disciplinary status as the gatekeepers to college writing pedagogies writ large.

Dobrin (2005) goes so far as to point out that the pedagogy/practicum course functions to not only enculturate new instructor-students “into the cultural ideologies of composition” (p. 21), but also to “polic[e]” (p. 25) the uptake of those ideologies. As a result, they often offer a solidifying view of what it actually means “to write” (p. 26). Through these mechanisms of solidification, the pedagogy course can be viewed as a: powerful tool not only for guiding the ways new teachers learn to think about their teaching, but also for controlling how and in what ways the very discipline of composition studies is perpetuated. The cultural capital of composition studies is maintained and immortalized by way of the practicum. (p. 4)

Dobrin further points out the pedagogical imperative by which much scholarship in composition studies operates. He argues that it is through the teaching of composition, the running of the practicum, and the theorizing of both that the discipline often identifies itself. These particular visions of composition can at times leave little room for acknowledging the role other domains of writing knowledge play in the complex gearworks running the engine of Composition. Creative writers and knowledges informed by training in creative writing are often among these “other domains.”

Questions come to mind. How do CWCIs believe they are identified as professionals by the Composition programs in which they work and/or by which they are formally trained? What is the significance of being identified as a disciplinary outsider by an
employing institution representative of that discipline? Relatedly, how do such processes of identification represent harmful paradoxes when we consider how one’s professional status _should_ also confer insider status? Does Composition take into consideration CWCIs’ particular forms of writing training and writing knowledge when readying them to teach? _Can_ it currently? In what ways, if any, does CWCIs’ knowledge of how writing may be produced and communicated find consonance with that of the compositionists from whom they learned to teach? And to what end are the negotiations of CWCIs’ identities as instructors and writing professionals, both inside and outside the classroom, informed by how they are disciplinarily and professionally recognized by a discipline not their own?

In this chapter, I consider how CWCIs’ pedagogical training and related activities have helped carve the paths of their teacherly becomings and professional identities. As mentioned, forms of training included formal pedagogical and professional instruction (as in the cases of practicum classes and teacher orientations, respectively). Additionally, since acts of becoming are always ongoing, this chapter also includes data pertaining to: 1) participants’ in situ or on-the-job development, and 2) their reflections on their professional work in light of their conceptions of the programs that employ them and their positions within (or without) those programmatic structures. While much scholarship in the field of Composition has sought to identify the trajectorial complexities of instructors’ teacherly becomings, it has often done so with little regard toward the role instructors’ specific disciplinary-professional becomings have played in that process.

Restaino (2012), for instance, identifies the emotional, disciplinary, and professional complexities involved in graduate students’ negotiation of the “middle ground” (p. 16)—where the broader contexts of theory and professional identity find purchase with the local actions of learning and teaching—wherein they exist simultaneously as students and novice
instructors. Restaino accomplishes this, however, with only passing references to these grad students’ disciplinary backgrounds, which include rhetoric and composition, literature, and creative writing. Consequently, she does not consider the depth to which these students’ disciplinary identities, and the formations thereof, have inflected these processes of negotiating that middle ground.

Along similar lines, Dryer (2012) accurately identifies a commonality among many graduate students’ teaching dispositions: namely, how “graduate teaching assistants consistently projected their own anxieties about academic writing onto the authors of [their students’] papers” (p. 420). But again, we read him doing so with little discussion of the importance and influence of these GTA’s specific disciplinary backgrounds: in other words, what their previous training as writers tells us about both their responses to student papers and dispositions of response. In fact, the only qualitative observation Dryer makes about the creative writers in his study (who number five of his 10 participants) appears in one of the article’s appendices. This observation maintains that many of the creative writers possess a “hypertrophied sense of themselves as writers… (at the exclusion of nearly any other kind of writing),” which he contrasts with the literature students who “seem reluctant to characterize themselves as readers and writers of anything but literature or research about literature” (p. 445). But since such considerations ultimately lie outside the scope of his study—again, not a fault of the study; only its particular framing—he provides no investigation or included analysis of how, why, or to what end the creative writers possess this “sense of themselves as writers.”

It is likewise important to consider that while a great deal of research in Composition has been devoted to understanding theories of teaching and the training of teachers, much less has been devoted to studies on how instructors actually learn to teach (Estrem & Reid,
This is to say that we know a great deal about what is said about teaching and about how we and others run various instantiations of teacher trainings, but we know far less about how instructors of various disciplines ultimately “take up” teaching (see Pytlik & Liggett, 2002). More specifically: how do developing composition instructors interpret what they are taught? In other words, how do they negotiate the concepts, theories, and practices forwarded in their pedagogical training? How do they integrate them into their composition courses? And in what ways do these instructors’ hosts of other literate practices affect their teaching dispositions and related habits? While much of the literature I’ve cited here and in the paragraph above focuses specifically on the training of graduate students, subjects related to the negotiation of status, teaching anxieties, and the uptake of teaching find common ground with rookie and veteran instructors alike, especially when we understand that the act of becoming occurs in perpetuity.

Given the above, this chapter seeks to fill in at least a small portion of this formidable gap by offering two related lines of discussion. One, I identify how teacherly identities are negotiated and performed by members of the CWCI demographic. This line of discussion is evidenced by CWCIs’ pedagogical training (in its myriad and often hidden forms), in situ negotiations, and reflections on their own pedagogical practices. Formal, professional training experiences include such instances as the practicum, teacher orientations, and formal observations/reviews. Extra-professional or tangential training experiences include such instances as interactions with members of faculty, involvement in informal language practices, informal observations, &c. And two, I consider the various ways and degrees to which CWCIs’ conceive of Composition or their composition programs as a “middle man” entity: how such conceptions are formed through professional and extra-
professional activities; and how such conceptions influence or inform CWCIs’ teacherly activities and, ultimately, their professional identities.

CHAPTER METHODOLOGY

Sites & Participants

I draw on data from multiple CWCI participants. While I choose to discuss data from certain participants over others and use certain participants as the focal points of examples, no whole sections of this chapter are organized around single participants the way they were in Chapters 3 and 4. Instead, I organize this chapter by a theme (the details of which I outline below) and use data from multiple participants to illustrate variations of that theme. In addition to Austin Baurichter, whom I discussed at the start of this chapter, the participants from whom I mostly draw in this chapter are: Robert Balun, a poet and adjunct instructor working mostly in the City University of New York (CUNY) system of schools; Ashley Farmer, a writer of hybrid work who had taught composition for a number of years; Robin Mozer, a lecturer and creative non-fiction writer who predominantly teaches classes in composition and creative writing; and Franklin Winslow, a fiction writer currently serving as a writing center director, who has an extensive history teaching composition as both an adjunct and full-time lecturer. With regard to data reduction (Smagorinsky, 2008), I chose these participants because they hold different attitudes from one another toward the construction of their teacherly identities in light of the programmatic and disciplinary complexities surrounding them, including the role that their respective Composition programs played in that construction. Further, they are also representative of attitudes held by my other participants in this study, whom I do not specifically focus on here. In identifying multiple robust examples on which to base this chapter’s discussion, I hope to
form more a generalizable understanding of how CWCIs construct their teacherly identities across numerous institutional domains, including the Composition programs from which they received their training.

**Data Collection, Procedures & Analyses**

Procedures I used to collect data for this chapter’s discussion are extensions of data collection procedures I detailed in previous chapters. I did not, for instance, conduct separate interviews with each of my participants that focused *only* on their pedagogical trainings and the construction and effecting of their teacherly identities and ethos. Nor did I employ wholly different methods or interviewing procedures when discussing with my participants these trainings and identity-based constructions. Instead, participants and I co-constructed these data sets mostly through discussions of certain interview questions (see APPENDIX C) that I had asked in our initial interviews. Beyond this, additional data was co-constructed along with participants in follow-up interviews, wherein participants and I would co-examine class materials they shared with me.

For example, even though I asked Austin about his pedagogical training in our initial interview, it was not until a later interview when he identified what he believed to be neo-liberal goals of the composition program for which he worked, which was run by the WRD (Writing, Rhetoric and Digital Studies) Department (see Chapter 4), and how his pedagogical beliefs stood in contrast to these neo-liberal goals. And it was not until our final interview together that he discussed the metaphorical “middle man” with which I opened this chapter. By both study design and virtue of the dialogic interview model, I accumulated data for this chapter’s discussion *across* interviews that cultivated unexpected, though unsurprising lines of discussion.
Instead of devoting discrete sections to single participants, in this chapter I devote sections to tensions, both disciplinary and professional, surrounding feelings of outsidership. I illustrate these themes through discussions of case study examples. I consider the processes by which participants constructed and continue to construct their teacherly identities, which, in turn, informs how they construct their professional identities. Further, I provide a discussion of the role that participants’ conceptions of or dispositions toward their Composition programs (or Composition writ large, as discipline), past and current, have played in their professional becomings as composition instructors.

For this portion of the study, the sites of discussion, questions I asked, and materials individual participants and I reviewed were not uniform. Typically, previous interview data and participants’ professional histories ended up dictating those sites, experiences, and reflections we would further explore. For instance, my discussions with participants’ were at times limited to their pedagogical trainings and labors that only took place over the course of their M.F.A programs (as was the case with Austin). At other times, pedagogical training in the form of the typical practicum class was discussed in combination with contingent teaching positions and additional training modules (such as the cases with Hasanthika and Ashley). And in the cases where participants had a great deal of full-time teaching experience, they and I would mostly discuss their reflections on their work as composition instructors much more so than we would discuss their pedagogical training as graduate students (as with Robin and Sandra). By allowing participants’ professional histories to set the course for our discussions, I had hoped to generate data that spoke to participants’ myriad experiences across professional trajectories.

Analyzing these sets of data first entailed locating them across any single participant’s interviews and data produced via co-examinations of materials. As alluded to above, while
certain questions from the initial interviews did ask about participants’ professional histories (including their training), a great deal of data pertinent to both the constructions of teacherly identity and the participants’ labors as composition instructors was dispersed across interviews that often included data pertinent to other aspects of this study. I did not need to transcribe any new or additional interviews, since all interviews had already been transcribed at this point for various other uses. Instead, I isolated areas of the transcript that provided insight into these aspects of participants’ professional histories and noted places that described aspects of professional becoming and tensions that existed in relation to Composition—as a particular program, a larger discipline, &c.

All focal participants, for instance, referenced their own knowledge of writing, arrived at by their training as creative writers, in contrast to the type of writing knowledge they believe to be valued by Composition or composition pedagogues/pedagogies. Similarly, participants often referenced Composition (as a program at an institution or as a discipline writ large) or compositionists (usually as professors or graduate students of the field) in strikingly enigmatic terms. As mentioned above, Austin described to me a metaphorical “middle man,” as composition incarnate, that created a distance between him and his students. Multiple participants—including Robin, Hasanthika, and Steve R—would often refer to an unidentified “they,” which represented the particular composition programs in which they worked.

In order to analyze the degree to which these focal participants saw themselves, their writerly values, and their pedagogical beliefs as existing in opposition to or in tension with the perceived values and goals of their composition programs, as well as with Composition writ large, I was compelled to look to a number of sites of data accrual. I examined each participant’s transcript sections related to one of more of these topics and identified points
of tension across what they identified as value in their own teaching practices, their composition programs’ practices, their own writing practices (i.e. in how they practiced), and in the materials they produced as instructors working inside these systems “not of their own design” (Restaino, 2012, p. 104).

Through this process, it became apparent that the vast majority of participants spoke, either overtly or covertly, of their status as outsiders to the Composition discipline. When I realized this, I went back to code transcripts and my interview notes with this theme of outsidership in mind. In particular, I coded for participants’ statements on, reactions to, and pronounced feelings participants held about these themes. This resulted in my identifying multiple interrelated ways that CWCIs constructed and framed their outsider status. Disciplinary outsidership references CWCIs’ beliefs that the writing knowledges they possess, and which are informed by their training and practice as creative writers, are incongruent with the writing knowledges valued by Composition and/or composition programs for the teaching of composition. Professional outsidership references the ways CWCIs believe others (administrators and those such as fulltime professors, who may wield administrative power) have constructed their, the CWCIs’, teacherly identities as marginal within the context of the composition programs for which they work. Since we are always engaged in processes of becoming, these beliefs, in turn, inform the continued construction of CWCIs’ teacherly and professional identities. The theme of professional outsidership took two forms: first, tensions surrounding participants’ constructions of their professional, teacherly identities; and, second, tensions surrounding teacherly practice—the day-to-day feelings of outsidership CWCIs’ believe are associated with their physical and intellectual labors. More specifically, these feelings often pertain to how CWCIs see their labors being
viewed from within the context of Composition scholarship or the programmatic goals of the composition programs for which these CWCIs work.

The subtext of CWCIs’ descriptions of their work as composition instructors often appear to be their grievances over the low regard they believed the programs employing them had for their writing knowledges. Restaino (2012) further suggests that WPAs and others wielding similar administrative power ought to, because they often don’t, “consider the extent to which how we practice has something to do with how we learn to think about writing instruction” (p. 25). But past proposing a need for individual reflection with regard to one’s teacherly becoming, there also lies a programmatic concern here. If we ought to consider the relationship between how we practice and how we learn writing, then we must also consider the relationship between how particular demographics of instructors practice, and how those practices are recognized (or perceived to be recognized) by the bodies that govern these instructors’ labors. This is especially true given, as Restaino points out, a form of work that bears on “the early experiences of graduate students as writing teachers and its potential shaping of graduate students’ understanding of composition as a discipline” (p. 2), which no doubt carries forward into their post-graduate lives.

Restaino continues in her discussion by acknowledging the conflicted views of graduate students’ own professional identities when they consider their multiple roles in their programs. Of her case study participants, which includes two students pursuing master’s degrees in creative writing, she writes, “they were simultaneously capable, interested, and insightful, but also bound up and contained by the pressures of a system not of their own design” (p. 104). Working within a system not of one’s “own design,” however, represents a difficulty not only limited to graduate students’ processes of becoming. The data in this chapter suggests that such a difficulty affects the construction of many CWCIs’ teacherly
identities as both graduate students and beyond. These “pressures” often seem to foment essentializing views of what composition teachers are or ought to be.

How one’s identity as a creative writer specifically becomes pressured by a system outside that writer’s design is understated in Restaino’s study. Her focus remains on offering broader claims of graduate students’ pedagogical training and teacherly becomings on the “shaky foundation on which writing programs…rest” (p. 2). This is not a criticism of Restaino’s work, but only an observation; this particular concern is not central to her study. But when we consider the paucity of scholarship surrounding how a demographic of writing instructor as large as CWCIs take up and negotiate the project of teaching, as well as contribute to writing pedagogy, we identify a gap in need of filling. Restaino’s work, it’s worth mentioning, concludes with a call for offering these newer teachers a “chance of real connection and real change agency” (p. 116). This call entails WPAs championing of these instructors’ often unseen contributions to the field, a sentiment that lies at the heart of this manuscript. While this call is certainly not a new one, it is one that still needs to be taken up by our discipline.

**DISCIPLINARY OUTSIDERSHIP**

While only two participants, Dan and Sandra, didn’t report feeling like disciplinary outsiders to Composition, the rest in some way did. All other CWCIs identified themselves in relation to those more closely associated with Composition, or to the goings-on of their home composition programs, through a discourse either of unacknowledgment or of intellectual lack or self-doubt. I was able to recognize this propensity in multiple tracks of professional becoming. First, in CWCIs’ stories of receiving their formal training in Creative Writing alongside Composition programs that administrated their teacherly labors. And second,
those stories they told of holding vulnerable positions as composition instructors—adjuncts, non-tenure track lecturers, etc.—after completing their graduate work. This unacknowledgment often spoke to perceptions that WPAs did not recognize CWCIs’ contributions, and, specifically, those contributions informed by their training and identities as creative writers. Nor did CWCIs generally believe their WPAs fully identified the affordances of creative writing in composition classes.

Speaking to this idea of unacknowledgement, Robert Balun, for instance, stated that he would like to assign creative writing or creative writing-inspired work in his composition classes. An instructor who at the time of the interview had taught dozens of composition courses and received formal training in the form of his single composition practicum, Robert felt that these assignments offered students “a lot of immediacy” and generativity in their acts of writing and would be a “great way to practice composition.” However, he does not assign creative writing because he believes “the department doesn’t really want us using creative writing in a composition context.” Of this perceived standard, Robert admits “I don’t really understand” Composition’s disciplinary stance that entails not assigning “creative writing in a composition context.” He further admits to not understanding why composition

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25 Data I’ve accrued during this study has suggested to me, at least for the time being, that CWCIs’ exposure (or lack thereof) to Composition as both a discipline and administrative entity, has a profound effect on one’s identity and sense of agency as a composition instructor. One case study participant, Dan Rosenberg, a full-time professor who teaches composition and creative writing never reported to have felt this outsider status. Dan’s formal training in creative writing at the master’s level did not require him to teach composition under the direction or management of a Composition program, and so there was no opportunity for him to be made to feel like an outsider. Further, in the college where he now works full-time there is no Composition program or clearly defined (and empowered) force that administers the teaching of composition. Since Dan’s teaching work and training effectively never fell under the administration of a formal (or informal, but organized) Composition program, his data suggests that he does not recognize himself as a professional or disciplinary outsider to composition pedagogy as do certain other participants.
and creative writing are treated, on a disciplinary level, as “mutually exclusive,” or are at least thought of that way in the department for which he works.

Whether it is because he views the writing program administration at his college as a body that represents the disciplinary knowledge of Composition and thus one with which he, as an outsider to this discipline, cannot negotiate, or whether he is hesitant to assign students creative writing-inspired work because of his vulnerable adjunct status, it’s difficult for me to say. It certainly could be both. However, that Robert states he should “really find out if we’re allowed or not allowed to do that [i.e., assign creative work]” speaks to the pedagogical authority he believes his home composition program holds and which excludes both his potential pedagogical contributions and pedagogical agency as a composition instructor, who situates his knowledge of writing firmly in the Creative Writing discipline. Extending Robert’s claim, to assign creative writing in his composition classroom would be to work outside the perceived sanctions of the Composition discipline. This entails a further belief that composition pedagogy represents an intellectual enterprise with pronounced borders, instead of one with fluid borders capable of considering the affordances of cross-disciplinary writing practices and dispositions.

As for the aforementioned perceived intellectual lack, it seemed often informed by CWCIs’ beliefs that their writing knowledges were somehow separate from or, at best, auxiliary to those that helped perpetuate the teaching and learning of composition as it was administrated by their home programs. Even those who did not feel a sense of outright unacknowledgment by their home Composition programs—such as Robert, who never talked about it in these exact terms—identified beliefs that they lacked the necessary education and/or qualifications to teach composition to college students. This theme of unacknowledgement, is perhaps more explicitly evidenced by Ashley, who, ironically,
described her first teacher orientation experience at Syracuse as “amazing” and feels she had an overall positive experience training to teach composition for the first time. She recalled feeling an immediate affinity for the teaching job and felt privileged that Syracuse “entrusted” it to her. In addition, Ashley recalls her excitement over the texts she read during the orientation’s two-week period prior to the beginning of the semester. In effect, Ashley believes she learned a great deal from that orientation that still influences her teaching today.

Despite all this, Ashley reports to have felt “intellectually intimidated” and “not qualified to do what I was being asked to do,” in part because she felt that Syracuse’s compositionists were “super smart in a way that I am not” (October 25, 2017 interview). Within the context of our discussion, Ashley was comparing herself to a WPA or full-time professor in rhetoric and composition, who had years of experience on her and was predominantly situated in a different field from her own. (And so, an unfair comparison). In this instance, Ashley, accomplished writer and experienced teacher of writing, did not view the “way” she was “smart” about writing as intimately pertaining to the teaching of writing within the strict context of Composition. Instead, she conceived of the teaching of composition, as a subject and/or approach to the project of writing, as primarily existing within the domain of Composition as a discipline. In comparison, Ashley did not describe the professors with whom she worked while completing her M.F.A. at Syracuse in similar terms—“smart in a way that I am not”—and instead described them with regard to how they helped evolve her knowledge of a field in which she felt herself already firmly situated.

26 The phenomenon of imposter-teacher syndrome and feelings in the same ballpark of intellectual intimidation and underqualification are not unique to CWClTs, of course. The phenomenon has been well discussed elsewhere. For examples, see: Bonnah (2011), Zenkov (2014), and Reid (2017) among numerous others.
Thaiss & Zawacki (2006) point out that disciplines in general possess at least two major, salient features. The first is a shared understanding of what counts as evidence and knowledge, and the second is the collection of the shared methods and methodologies by which knowledge is created. Both these features are non-essential, however, and are the result of social actions and social systems. They, in other words, entail the activities of a group or several groups of people who, in the seminal words of Toulmin (1972), share a “commitment to a sufficiently agreed set of ideals [that] leads to the development of an isolable and self-defining repertory of procedures” (p. 359). It follows that if one does not agree with, share in, or abide by those ideals, one would have a tendency to become distanced from the larger social systems and systems of institutional power and activity that perpetuate these “repertory of procedures”—and thus the knowledge produced as an outcome of those procedures, which, in turn, reinforces the primacy of the repertory. Such a distancing does not objectively invalidate this outsider repertory, but rather professionally casts that repertory as invisible, insufficient, or unsatisfactory.

The examples of Robert and Ashley differ from one another in multiple key ways, primarily concerning each CWCI’s dispositions toward their home composition programs. Robert spoke of his home program more as an authority over what is and isn’t sanctioned (despite his disagreement), and Ashley spoke of her home program is more reverential ways, acknowledging important domains of knowledge of which she was unaware during her initial teacher training. Notwithstanding, in both cases we note these CWCI s identifying the power they believe Composition possessed in determining what it means to write and teach writing within the context of the composition course—what it is, how it functions, and what it is supposed to or intended to achieve for its students. In the examples both Robert and Ashley shared, that power functioned to exclude their own knowledges of writing acquired over
their complex courses of disciplinary becoming. Certainly Bailey & Bizzaro (2017) have noted a tendency in the Composition discipline to deny, for reasons of what they cite as “epistemological and ontological differences,” the Creative Writing discipline’s “basis for making knowledge” (p. 80). While such a denial could very well play a factor in this practice of exclusion, it is probably not the sole explanation of that practice.

How such a dismissal actually plays out, socially and materially, in Composition’s administrating of their programs and CWCIs’ places within those programs would be an interesting avenue to further pursue, albeit one outside the scope of this manuscript. At times, it appears to have been CWCIs’ conceptions of what Composition does and does not value, and not necessarily what Composition actually does or does not value, regardless of that actuality, that has led to Bailey & Bizzaro’s (2017) described impasse. Robert and Ashley’s understandings of themselves, their domains of knowledge, and their pedagogical instincts within the context of their home composition programs suggest as much. But even the addition of issues surrounding cross-disciplinarity still do not account for all thoughts on outsidership that my participants suggested or intimated. Additional professional dispositions CWCIs’ hold toward their home composition programs, or, more specifically, the dispositions they believe those composition programs hold with regard to them, have also contributed to feelings of outsidership.

PROFESSIONAL OUTSIDERSHIP

Tensions Surrounding Identity Formation

The relationship between one’s disciplinary identity and professional identity are often intimately linked. With regard to academic institutions involved with the production of writing especially, the goings on of that profession or what work is deemed emblematic by
that profession heavily bear on the professional writing produced, and vice versa (see Bazerman, 1993). Since the professional writing associated with a discipline often provides a path for a discipline’s continuation, both the profession and the writing that is a product of that profession continually reinforce the primacy of the other. As Hyland (2004) has observed about the relationship between disciplinary discourse and the professional writing produced thereof, a field’s “texts embody the social negotiations of disciplinary inquiry, revealing how knowledge is constructed, negotiated, and made persuasive” (p. 3). The professional writing produced within and for a discipline discloses, whether purposely or not, the methodological proceedings and construction of that discipline. Feelings of disciplinary outsidership, as my examples of Ashley’s and Robert’s training and teaching experiences suggest, can be manifest in CWCIs’ views of how their particular sets of writing knowledge either go undervalued by Composition writ large or are viewed as irrelevant by the locally-contextualized standards of their home composition programs. In addition, however, this disciplinary outsidership also bears on CWCIs’ views of themselves as professionals working within the composition discipline. This may even be the case when CWCIs do not feel compelled to cede agency to their home program’s authority, or do not believe their domains of writing knowledge are insufficient for teaching writing.

Franklin views himself as an accomplished instructor of composition—he has formal training through a practicum class and professional development workshops, and, at the time of data collection, he had taught multiple composition courses every year for roughly a decade. As an instructor of composition, Franklin believes he excels at helping students both consider the rhetorical affordances of the aesthetic and develop “creative and critical logics” by which they may produce engaging writing. His ultimate goal as a composition instructor is to help students “construct deeper understandings of themselves as compositionists.” He
works toward this goal in a number of thoughtful ways, which include: preparing progressive 
assignment sequences that allow students to build on their previous work; exploring along 
with his students the rhetorical affordances of digital and other multimodal elements; and 
helping students develop a set of strong mechanics, which he views as the development of 
“operating principals” by which students may make “a story work, or an idea work” 
(Interview August 11, 2017). While everyone who teaches composition may not agree with 
Franklin’s pedagogical goals, they have nevertheless been deeply considered and refined by 
him. Further, they are in line with scholarship informing pedagogies and pedagogical goals 
that seek not to make students “better” writers in the ideological and problematic sense, but 
rather to engage them in dialogues about writing and their own writing processes, about how 
they might consider audiences (including online ones) as situated and contextual, and about 
the formation of their own identities as writers (see McComiskey 2000; Reif 2002; Ketter & 
Hunter 2003; Walls & Vie 2017; etc.).

This said, Franklin often felt that the programs for which he worked viewed him as 
“something other than a scholar” (Interview June 13, 2018). When I ask him if he could 
elaborate on how he was using the term “scholar,” Franklin clarified that he used it loosely 
to refer to anyone who is producing and publishing intellectual work that is recognized as 
such by any institution’s professoriate—i.e., anyone producing “professional” work. In the 
case of a literature scholar, this would, for example, mean the production of criticism; for a 
creative writer, the production of a novel; for a mathematician, the production of a number 
theorem. Suffice to say, however, that Franklin often believed the programs for which he 

27 Again, mostly as an adjunct. This is a crucial dimension of this discussion that, going forward, 
needs to be further explored. The vast majority of CWCIs have worked as contingent laborers. That 
they worked as contingent laborers early in their careers, or even while they were training to become 
composition instructors, has no doubt influenced their conceptions of the composition discipline, as 
well as their place and expertise within it.
worked saw him as “something other” than a professional of the same band as a professor whose contractual obligations included the production of intellectual work, a form of work often valued higher than teaching. Despite holding a terminal degree from Columbia University, which houses one of the most prominent Creative Writing M.F.A programs in the country, Franklin often felt he was regarded as “a graduate student-like person who was not on a scholarly track.” If we take disciplinary recognition in the form of degree status as any indicator of an individual’s qualifications over a particular subject matter—and job postings that require applicants for professorships hold doctorates suggest we collectively do—the view Franklin expresses here is both deriding and inane. It suggests that Franklin’s qualifications as an individual who holds a terminal degree in a writing-related discipline is no more qualified than one who possesses no such degree.

Franklin believed this disparaging view of his work and contributions to English Studies fields were in various ways reinforced in problematic language practices common across the composition programs for which he worked. While Franklin prefers to neither identify any specific professors, administrators, etc. who participated in these language practices, nor provide specific dates and departments where these acts took place, he reports that such practices were always “floating around” his English Departments. And if no single, particular language practice was repeated from one program to another, then certainly the sentiment of those practices was. Across our interviews together, Franklin provided me numerous examples of such language practices from which I could possibly draw. To illustrate his point, however, I’ll offer only two—neither of which is particularly more or less damning than any others.

One such language practice, Franklin recounts, was the repeated refrain in one composition program that as “something other than a scholar” his primary goal was to
occupy the “front line.” This military-inspired metaphor likens Franklin, and those professionals with similar professional backgrounds as him, to vanguard infantry less strategically “expendable” than the officers—the WPA and other professors who either weigh in on matters pertaining to the administration of composition program or else are valued for their particular form of professional work—who occupy the metaphorical back lines. Another recurring language practice involved the tacit belittlement of one’s disciplinary background in Creative Writing as a professional affordance to the composition program. Franklin recounts an anecdote about a CWCI colleague who, as part of his semesterly observation and evaluation, was asked to submit copies of his student feedback to his assigned observing professor. This professor, a tenured individual, reviewed this CWCI’s feedback and wrote a performance report about the CWCI’s effectiveness as a composition instructor. The professor’s lone comment about the CWCI’s feedback to his composition students: “too M.F.A.-y.”

Opinions such as the ones Franklin has shared are reminiscent of several problematic conversations in composition scholarship about instructors who are neither full-time faculty nor tenured or tenure-tracked. Cary Nelson (2000), for instance, refers to such instructors as “comp droids,” who, instead of sharing the intellectual prowess and appetites of the professoriate, only “beep and whir and grade, that’s all.” While Joseph Harris (2000), in an article that represents a scathing criticism of Nelson’s views, concedes that although Nelson may be “trying to be wittily empathetic in describing colleagues reduced to the status of droids” (pp. 43-44), he remains resolute in pointing out the degree of Nelson’s blunder:

I want to give his misstep some emphasis, to note his use of droids as a reminder not only of the routine contempt that English still holds for intellectual work in

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28 And let’s not even talk about who this would metaphorically cast the composition students as…
composition, but also of the willingness of the English professoriate to participate in the ongoing economic exploitation of composition teachers. (p. 44)

Harris further points out that the “droids”—graduate students, adjunct lecturers, contingent laborers, etc.—provide the economic foundation for both the continued survival of many English departments and the professoriate’s intellectual work in the form of opportunities to develop higher-level courses and being afforded opportunities to teach them. That these droids, many of whom are not graduate students, are collectively viewed, or are made to feel that they are collectively viewed as “graduate student-like person[s]” not engaged in scholarly acts, points to a deep-rooted unwillingness on the part of many composition programs to acknowledge the professional capabilities of these instructors.

A comment such as “too M.F.A.-y” is not, in fact, a referendum on the abilities of the CWCI to which it was directed. It suggests, instead, the complex ways that an instructor’s professional (often understood through contractual declarations) station bears on others’ misinformed views of that instructor’s disciplinary knowledge, which, instead of detracting from, often enhances the professional labors they perform. And when those misinformed views are held by faculty members of more secure professional stations (tenured or tenure-tracked faculty, for instance) and about those of lesser-secure stations, they perpetuate a culture of disciplinary narrow-mindedness characterized by inequity—material (contractual), social-professional, intellectual, etc.

Franklin intimates that, as a professional, he believed the qualifications with which he arrived at various composition programs (mostly as a part-time lecturer, but also during the two years he served as a full-time, non-tenure-track lecturer) went largely unacknowledged.

29 As Winterowd (1977) long ago noted about such matters (and for the same reasons): “The graduate faculty…need freshman English—much more…than freshman English needs the graduate faculty.” (pp. 28-31)
They were either ignored or dismissed by the those who administrated the programs and/or by those participating in the work cultures inspired by these acts of administration. He stated that he always felt that he was “learning to do a thing I was already trained to do but had to learn to do it differently. Had to learn a new set, not of ‘standards,’ but a new vernacular or something.” Franklin here talks not about continued professional development, but rather arbitrary hoops through which to jump in order to align with a vision of composition with which he did not necessarily agree. These “language-based” standards, as Franklin called them, existed in direct conflict with what he identified as his own “mother tongue”: creative writing-based languaging practices.

And while views of CWCIs’ professional status accounts for a large dimension of the difficulties that arise when trying to claim an identity as a professional instructor of writing, there is still one more professional-themed dimension I would like to explore—that of the practical. For it is here, in one’s day to day work, that the local clashes over intellectual and pedagogical acceptance find purchase with one’s everyday teacherly activities.

_Tensions Surrounding Practice_

As alluded to above, scholars in Composition have long noted that English departments are often buoyed by their Composition programs, and, more specifically, their first-year writing courses. These courses, or, more appropriately, their sheer number, often provide much of the economic foundation for English departments to pursue those projects that lie outside the realm of composition: the sustentation of the professoriate’s higher-level classes and academic projects. Along these lines, several arguments have been made about the hierarchical structure of English departments often mirroring that of highly capitalist institutions in that they often rely on the exploitation of their low-waged laborers to sustain
their activities. In our case, these lower-waged laborers are the contingent or graduate-student composition instructors who often provide the bedrock upon which English departments are built (see, as reference Schell 1998; Harris 2000; Horner 2000; Bousquet 2004, 2008; Strickland 2010; Fulwiler & Marlow 2014). Since a significant portion of the instructor population is constituted by CWClTs, it is safe to say that this demographic of instructor has and continues to significantly contribute to this project of buoying.

Yet despite the wealth of professional experience certain of these instructors hold, in terms of both the number of years and classes they have taught, the data discussed in the previous two subsections point toward CWClTs, who have received their training through various practices and professional development sessions, as commonly holding an outsider status. The aforementioned hierarchical structure of many English departments, coupled with the observation of CWClTs’ training and experience in teaching composition, leads to an interesting, albeit troubling question. In what ways have the forms of disciplinary and professional outsidership, discussed above, extended to CWClTs’ day-to-day conceptions of their labors in the capitalistically-structured systems in which they operate?

So far in this chapter, I have discussed two sites where this outsider status has been identified or perceived. The first was a disciplinary outsidership, characterized by a felt or known sense that one’s domains of writing knowledge as a CWClT are either not applicable to or contradictory of the types of writing knowledge valued, or believed to be valued, by Composition and composition programs. And the second was the difficulties forming a professional identity when viewed as an outsider. I foreground these difficulties by highlighting the ways CWClTs’ domains of knowledge are framed, or are believed by CWClTs to be framed, by those who administrate composition programs who influence these programs’ proceedings and often (though not always) come from non-Creative Writing
disciplines. To these, I would like to add a third site, the practiced, where these notions of one’s disciplinary-professional identity find purchase with the daily labors one performs as an instructor inside “the competitive, market-based, high-performance habitus designed for them by management” (Bousquet, 2008, p. 13).

Robin Mozer has worked as an instructor for the University of Louisville (U of L) for roughly a decade as a full-time, non-tenure tracked lecturer. During her time at U of L, Robin has taught a number of creative writing courses, including introductory courses and higher-level creative non-fiction classes. She has also taught composition courses, including both parts of U of L’s two-course freshman-level sequence (English 101 and 102) and 200-level, discipline-specific composition courses, such as business writing. In total, Robin has taught multiple dozens of courses at U of L, for both the creative writing and composition programs. A creative writer herself, Robin earned her M.F.A. from Penn State, specializing in creative non-fiction, and she continues to predominantly write creative non-fiction. Her most recent works have appeared in the online literary humor journal *McSweeney’s* and are, interestingly enough, comical meditations on a narrator’s work as a composition instructor. They are titled “I Would Rather Do Anything Else Than Write The Syllabus For Your Class” (2016a) and “I Would Rather Do Anything Else Than Grade Your Final Papers” (2016b), with the former being named as one of *McSweeney’s* “Our Sixteen Most-Read Articles of 2016.” In addition, Robin also comes from a professional background in editing for a number of years following the completion of her M.F.A.

All of this is to say that Robin has a wealth of practical pedagogical knowledge from within two distinct writing-centric disciplines, is credentialed with a terminal degree in one of those two disciplines, possesses experience as a writing professional in multiple non-academic fields, and uses the occasion of her own creative non-fiction writing to marry a
dimension of her teacherly work with a dimension of her writerly work. Yet, despite this wealth and experience, Robin describes herself as existing at a remove from the composition program to which a major portion of her full-time teaching load is devoted.

For context, know that U of L circulates model syllabuses for their 101 and 102 courses. No instructor is required to adopt any of these syllabuses in full; rather, the model syllabuses represent strong recommendations of course structures that the composition program believes to be successful. Additionally, it is a common practice for instructors teaching a course to access the English Department’s digital archive containing past syllabi, which, since all syllabi are seen by administrators, have been tacitly “approved” for teaching. However, Robin’s syllabus veers from these model syllabi quite a bit, especially with regard to her Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs). I ask Robin a question about these differences, and, in particular, how she believes these differences, if at all, act as a way to engage the composition program in a dialogue about pedagogy and pedagogical practices:

**JON:** Your course goals then—geared toward the student [instead of the administration], thinking about the students as the audience for these—but also a professional response to the CLOs as they have been developed by the composition program. So, they are functioning in that way as well—Robin’s response to the idea of the demanded or prescribed CLOs?

However, instead of responding to this question directly, Robin’s response instead addressed an issue of much larger scope:

**ROBIN:** No, I’ve given up on [engaging the composition program in a dialogue]. [Laughter] I sat on the comp committee for a couple years when I first started here. But I had asked to be moved off comp committee [reason redacted here] …No, I don’t feel there is much space for dialogue with the composition program as it were. They have a lot of masters they’re trying to please. They’re trying to staff a billion courses that need to be staffed. They have a particular bureaucracy and hierarchy in which they like to work. And I don’t have a degree in Rhetoric & Composition. So, my voice is never going to be what the voice of those pursuing that or what those who have that is. It doesn’t matter whether or not I think I’m a good teacher of composition. I’m not—got the background in the reading and the research and so on and so forth. I’ve presented at 4Cs [Conference on College Composition and
Communication], I am in and among conversations, but that doesn't necessarily mean that my opinion is held as particularly useful. (Interview October 12, 2017.)

In addition to the practical knowledge Robin has in the field of composition, at Penn State she also received training from a number of scholars prominent in Rhetoric & Composition. Although Robin describes this happening as a “convenient accident,” in that it was only by coincidence that she attended an M.F.A program in an English department that also employed several prominent Rhetoric & Composition scholars, the fact remains that Robin does possess graduate-level training in the field. This training came in the forms of writing center experience, composition theory and pedagogy courses, and extra-disciplinary conversations about the subject of composition pedagogy:

I came from a really good program, Penn State in general, because of that, and because of the training that I had there in theory and in rhet/comp while I was getting my M.F.A, I have a little bit more of a leg to stand on because I am aware of the conversations that are ongoing. I worked in the writing center there, so I've read those conversations of tutoring, or working one on one with the students, and what are the pedagogical aims here, etcetera. And I've studied under really good names in the field. Just as a convenient accident. Because that's where I went for my M.F.A. But I didn’t get a degree in that… So, I'm in this weird nether world, and that's okay.

While Robin identified that she has “a little bit more of a leg to stand on”—a reference to her disciplinary knowledge of Composition—she still believes she occupies this “weird nether world.” This “nether world” Robin occupies can best be understood within the context of disciplinarity’s relationship to professionality and, further, how that relationship informs her teacherly activities. Robin is a formally-trained creative writer with some knowledge of Composition. And yet, either because she feels she did not take enough courses in Composition or because she does not have her degree in the subject, she believes she is “not really an authority” in Composition. This lack of “authority” contributes to Robin’s belief that she cannot negotiate in a dialogue with administrators of her Composition program, professors in U of L’s Rhetoric & Composition program, or with the
oft-seeming monolithic discipline of Composition writ large. This lack of authority in these
domains contributes to her belief that no one “formally” of the field (i.e., by way of graduate
training) thinks her “opinion is particularly useful.” However, despite Robin’s claims to the
contrary, her work as a pedagogue in the field is certainly informed by the field’s literature
and concomitant pedagogical theories. She just happens to disagree with them. (As do some
Composition scholars—but more on that in a moment.)

Here I offer a lengthy back and forth between Robin and me, which first
acknowledges the intellectual work she performs, and then moves into a substantive
criticism of the current state of composition pedagogy insofar as Robin see it. This back and
forth takes place directly after Robin’s comment about inhabiting a professional “nether
world” for reason of lacking authority in the Composition field:

**JON:** …My view on it doesn’t have to be your view on it, but it’s to say that if
you’re teaching, you’re working in the field, your production is part of the field. You
have as much to say about the field from a standpoint of authority as anybody else.

**ROBIN:** Well, I can feel that way, and you can feel that way, but then there’s the
reality.

**JON:** Sure, sure.

**ROBIN:** And it’s, “Well this is the current research in the field.” Ha, Okay. Does
this current research say that maybe your poor student needs to learn how to use a
freakin’ comma, because they do. So, can we—I’m a little too practical at times, I
think too. I’m not willing to engage in long discussions about this theoretical
whatever. I’m like, “But can they write a paper so that when they have to take
History 101, they’re not gonna fail because their sentences are bad?” I’m pretty
practical in that way…In Rhetoric & Composition, and particularly in Composition,
there is a really—I’m about to make a bold sweeping statement about a field that is
not my own—

**JON:** Go for it.

**ROBIN:** …There is an active dislike to thinking of their field and their discipline as
a service discipline. “We’re not here to serve other departments and other degrees.
We are a field all our own goshdamnit, and we have our own research.” And at the
end of the day, comp 101 and comp 102 are service gen ed classes. It’s a service
class, and to say that you don’t—and what’s so bad about being a service discipline?
People need what you do in order to become functioning people in other areas. I actually think that's really important. What's wrong with service? Why do we have to object against it, why do we have to say [in a funny voice]: “Well in my class we're going to have a theme, and we're going to argue about—I don't know.”…What's wrong with just saying, “We're gonna study argument because that's what you need to study”… I think a service discipline is actually—I embrace that idea of composition. I think it's important, I think it's one of the best things we can do for the student body is to give them solid background and help them feel more confident in their writing so when they go on to their other pursuits, they’re confident in that aspect and they don’t have to fret about it. They can just move on to think higher things.

While I don’t want to harp too much on Robin’s specific word choices, it’s important to point out the instances of distancing Robin enacts in her language use. While Robin concedes the point that her professional contributions to the field entail her being part of the field (at least as far as she and I are concerned), she identifies this view as outside a “reality” determined by Composition’s disciplinary and departmental insiders. Further, while she sees herself as part of the field, she practices a language that distances her from that field when describing it: it is “their,” the insiders’, field; the students are “your,” the insiders’, students. And while she acknowledges she has a particular, intellectually-driven view of the pedagogical mission of a composition class, she frames that view as not a part of “the current research of the field.” Such language is strikingly similar to the language of disciplinary outsidership used both figuratively and literally by Austin, Robert, and Ashley above. But as stated, outsiders these CWCI’s are not.

Robin’s views on composition as a service discipline find consonance with discussions in a good deal of the literature that acknowledges the labor dimension of the field. While these discussions are not without their flaws and are no longer considered cutting edge, they continue to represent important debates within the field. James Sledd

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30 This, ironically, despite being part of the research that forms the backbone of this manuscript.
Sledd (2000), for instance, argues for a return to what he views as “the serious teaching of the general-purpose prose that our students need and our colleagues want” (p. 11). Not stressing “general-purpose prose” as a byproduct of some single idealized English (such as that opined by what we call “current-traditional rhetoric”), Sledd instead argues for pedagogical goals that holistically emphasize “the teaching of general literacy” and “learn[ing] and teach[ing] the art of general public communication” (p. 29). He frames this argument, much how Robin does, in a disbelief in what he feels are the haughtier goals of the professoriate: the limitation or abandonment or service—described in a strikingly similar way Robin describes it—so that theory and the production of theory, and professional status as an intellectual working in an academic discipline, may prosper (p. 18). Sledd ultimately criticizes that goals such as these support the creation of the two-tier systems to which Robin alludes when she describes herself as not part of the “reality” of composition. For Sledd, this two-tier system, as all do, consist of haves and have-nots. The first tier is represented by your “boss compositionists” (p. 20, and elsewhere) and tenured or tenure-tracked professors, i.e. “the whole stupid professorial hierarchy” (p. 26). And your second tier is represented by your laborers in the form, among others, of part-time or non-tenure track instructors who are often stalled in positions that do not offer opportunities for upward professional mobility.

While Robin might not identify the problem in the same terms Sledd does—he outright blames academe’s adoption of the “trans-national corporation” (p. 25) mindset for

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31 I go to Sledd (2000) here for its (his?) particular emotional bent; in this article James Sledd is, if nothing else, angry at what he identifies as the corporatizing of the university that, among other things, impinges on academic freedom for all. But see also Harris (2000); Bousquet (2004); Sledd (2004); Parascondola, Bousquet, and Scott (2004); Strickland (2011); and Kahn, Lalicker, and Lynch-Biniek (2017), who also take up compelling arguments about the discourses around composition, labor, and service.
the instantiation of this strict hierarchical rule—she does implicitly attribute a central cause of her outsider status to the professoriate’s “dislike to thinking” of Composition as the “service discipline” (Mozer) she sees it as. In doing so, Robin portrays herself as intuiting all that that dislike entails—the erosion of any possibility for a “democratic university” (p. 28) that Sledd dares to imagine:

Freed from the divisive hierarchies of rank and tenure, academic workers could organize in militant, inclusive unions—unions of both faculty and staff, all workers together, not underlings and upperlings. Unionized, the workers might hopefully battle the swollen regiments of corporatizing administrators for genuine academic freedom, deep change…The boss compositionists should have recognized that they could build their discipline (post-discipline, or whatever)—build it as high as Babel’s tower and still have small effect on the freshman course as long as its teachers were treated like dirt. (ibid.)

While Sledd’s description of “academic freedom” is loose throughout this essay and does not address the potentially useful mobility of disciplinary knowledge, we might take it to mean a number of things within the context of our discussion here. First, the freedom of instructors to teach composition in ways that might go against the grain of the newest scholarship. And second, the freedom to recognize the multiple domains of writing knowledge that can benefit the teaching of composition and composition students. To forego considering the professional dynamics involved in casting some members of the faculty as the haves and others as the have-nots is also to forego considering the complex, albeit narrow ways the production of knowledge within a discipline often proceeds by an undemocratic process. Certainly, as Toulmin (1972) reminds us, the “commitment to a sufficiently agreed set of ideals leads to the development of an isolable and self-defining repertory of procedures.” This commitment, in turn, informs both the basis of knowledge production and the knowledge produced. But whose commitments are accepted and whose are not remain among many controversial questions.
Of course, Sledd (2000) and others who opine in some way for a “return to service” are not without their critics and rebukes. But my discussion here has not been meant to argue for either this return to service or for Composition’s rightful (or wrongful) status as a service discipline. My first point is only that Robin’s grievances over the role she plays in the Composition hierarchy of her home institution—grievances that have forced her to disengage from an open discourse around pedagogical approaches—find congruence with arguments that have long been and are still important parts of the field. Whether we agree with these arguments is beside the point; they in themselves reference a discourse around pedagogical approaches in the field, which make them part of the field. More than that, they represent a discourse around the material and professional realities that make these pedagogies manifest. Elements of this discourse include how the enactment of pedagogy in the form of the composition class is still considered “mere teaching…beneath the dignity of brahminical theorists” (Sledd, 2000, p. 28) by many of those with whom we have entrusted the disciplinary trajectory of our professions.

My second point is more disheartening. Robin’s theory of service finds congruence with Sledd’s and others’. Further, Robin’s theory of service is indeed a product of her intellectual work as a composition instructor and training in composition instruction. Despite these, Robin believes her position within her institution, which is informed by her disciplinary background, inhibits her ability to engage in a dialogue with her fellow compositionists that may result in change at the programmatic level. Something is rotten here.
CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I have shown that CWCIs often identify themselves as outsiders to the composition programs for which they have and continue to work. This chapter has also acknowledged a number of frames—the disciplinary, professional, and practical—by which these outsider statuses are constructed. These three frames do not represent the only ones through which CWCIs construct their outsider status, nor are they mutually exclusive. The connections among disciplinary and professional systems of activities are innumerable, with all affecting the others.

For example, while I discussed Franklin’s data within the primary context of professional outsidership and, more specifically with regard to his professional identity, that outsider status was founded on both his and others’ (in English departments and composition programs) conceptions of the value of his disciplinary expertise. These conceptions affected his day-to-day actions in the form of believing that, on an institutional level, he had to “keep working to find a place where I fit in” instead of being offered a figurative place. Additionally, a pressure he perceived as stemming from an institutionally-derived force induced him to participate in a mode of pedagogical discourse that he felt alienated him. “Creative writing,” Franklin told me, “feels like a mother tongue. Talking [in the composition classroom] about ‘composition,’ argumentation, mechanics of writing feels a bit foreign” (Interview June 1, 2018). Such findings as these complicate our understanding of not only what writing knowledge is accepted and lauded in composition programs, but also: who gets to determine (or who we believe get to determine) the forms of knowledge and the practices they make manifest; and, how such determinations structure or appear to structure sentiments and happenings within those composition programs.
Limiting determinations to a specific group of individuals or a specific set of structures established by those individuals is problematic for a number of reasons. First, gatekeeping such as this restricts our field’s understanding of writing’s rhetorical means. “[R]hetoric takes many forms in constituting belief and action,” Hesse (2010) writes.

“Composition’s current interest in multimodality emphasizes the ancient ‘available means in a given case’ to focus on ALL the available means, in whatever media or, I’ll add, in any genre…” (p. 48). While any composition instructor might proceed pedagogically from domains of knowledge informed by creative writing—just as an instructor may work with their students on video projects without themselves being a formally-trained filmmaker—it seems, almost axiomatically, that creative writers represent an opportunity to move toward an integration of “ALL the available means.”

Dobrin (2005), among others, argues that it is the knowledge of Composition and related pedagogies that allow for the appropriate framing of these means within a rhetorical context, which I argue excludes more disciplinary-specific writers—poets, playwrights, fictionists, etc.—from entering the fold. However, this brings me to my second point: the data discussed in this chapter suggests that many non-Composition, disciplinary paths exist that lead the formation of pedagogical values, practices, and dispositions that Composition has historically upheld. There is more than one path through the mountains. Robert wanted to assign creative writing to his students, not primarily to upend rhetorical practices he believed his home composition program held, but because creative writing offers students a particular mode of “observing the world, and your place in it, and the way that you are interacting with the world, and the way that you influence the world” (Interview August 26, 2017). Franklin’s classroom discussions of the “operating principals” by which any piece of writing functions draws as much on his knowledge of creative writing as it does with forms
of writing more traditionally associated with composition classes, and to richer understandings of both. Further, Franklin’s views of his own pedagogical approaches, as mentioned above, appear to be informed by scholarship in the realms of post-process theory, audience theory, and the relationship between writing and identity, even if in actuality they were established through alternate means or influences. And, also detailed just above, Robin’s approach to composition instruction as a service discipline find consonance with some well-known Composition scholarship, despite what she sees as her own limited training in the field.

Important to note, however, is that in drawing from a rather limited pool to make my arguments in this chapter, my purpose here has not been to definitively state how series of activities proceed at the site of all (or even any) composition programs. Working with case study participants, they and I generated data suggestive, but not definitive, of proceedings within these sites. Whether these perceptions align with the actual goings-on in these programs is not for this dissertation to speculate. Without question, however, the data offers insight into my co-researchers’ conceptions of these proceedings and how these proceedings contribute to the construction of their teacherly identities—disciplinarily, professionally, and practically—at these sites. If CWCIs felt that writing knowledges from multiple disciplines were valued by their composition programs for their ability to inform the teaching of composition, the sentiments expressed by my case study participants about their outsider statuses would perhaps not be so pronounced. The findings in this case study suggest instead that, whether in social-material practices or as an erected Williamsian structure of feeling, composition programs can emphasize, to the professional-disciplinary exclusion of many, certain forms of writing knowledge or certain professional statuses as definitively authoritative in comparison to others.
For researchers seeking to further investigate not just the role of creative writing in Composition, but creative writers32, a number of questions remain. The data on which this chapter reports represents only the dispositions of CWCIs who feel or believe their disciplinary expertise and pedagogical savvy exists at odds with the expertise and savvy most valued by their home composition programs and their conceptions of the Composition discipline. How does the composition practicum frame, contextualize, and represent the writing knowledges of graduate students from formal creative writing backgrounds? What are the attitudes or views of WPAs and others who wield power within a department or composition program toward CWCIs’ disciplinary training, pedagogical know-how, and professional identities? And how are creative writers’ contributions to a department’s composition program received and responded to, especially when compared with contributions from other cross-disciplinary writers (English Literature or even non-English Studies disciplines, etc.) from which pools composition instructors are commonly drawn? These questions are among only a few of many that this chapter does not and cannot address. However, they assuredly gesture toward the need to continue investigating the professional lifeworlds of CWCIs and how those lifeworlds weigh on composition programs’ practices toward and dispositions concerning them.

32 The full title of Doug Hesse’s (2010) article is “The Place of Creative Writing in Composition Studies” (emphasis mine), which, just in itself, opens a fairly large gap in need of filling.
CHAPTER 6:

THE UNENDING ARC: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURES

I started this dissertation by highlighting the ways traditional notions of disciplinarity and disciplinary becoming suggest that writers, and thus teachers of writing, become their professional selves through straightforward paths primarily characterized by curricular advancement within institutional contexts. I then argued that research into writing and writers should instead regard this becoming as a heterogenous and multi-contextual process that takes place across sites—many of which are ostensibly unrelated to institutional domains of knowledge and knowledge accrual—and over individuals’ histories of literate and extra-literate activity. To understand how this process takes place, particularly for formally-trained creative writers, who often teach composition or related courses from “outside” the discipline of Rhetoric/Composition and/or Writing Studies, I asked the following questions:

1. What activities outside the curricular or disciplinary domains have contributed to formally-trained creative writers’ identities as such?

2. How do these identities bear upon the writerly values held by these individuals, and, in turn, how do these writerly values inform their pedagogical values and practices in the composition classroom?

3. How do these individuals negotiate their professional identities as writers and teachers in the departments and programs for which they work?
In Chapter 3, I presented data from interviews with my participants/co-researchers that highlighted the various domains of knowledge that contributed to the formation of these creative writers’ identities as such. I looked primarily to sites of extra-literate and extra-disciplinary activity in order to show that these writers’ pathways of becoming often lay outside those described by more romanticized notions of artists’ becomeings or curricular-based notions of professional becoming through formalized and institutional training. I described instead how my co-researchers came to regard themselves as creative writers and practitioners of creative writing through recontextualizing past, non-curricular experiences that informed their creative writing identities and practices. Steve, for instance, cited his experiences in the punk scene as helping develop his views of art as a transgressive mode of communication, which then carried over to his fiction. Further, I described how my co-researchers, acknowledging their own “literate difference” from communities whose literate practices either did not resonate with their own or denigrated their own, came to form their creative writerly identities through this metaphor of difference.

In Chapter 4, I investigated, along with my co-researchers, their writerly values through co-examinations of these writers’ creative works: short fiction, longform fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction, and hybrid works. Together, we then sought to identify how these writerly values are expressed or find consonance, if at all, with their teacherly activities inside the composition classroom. I showed that Austin’s project of exploring in his fiction and poetry the complexities of emotion insofar as they have been influenced by his own emotional history informed his goal to assist students in their own projects of self-exploration. I showed how Sandra’s assumed stance as a “non-expert” functioned in her process of writing innovative creative non-fiction, and how, in turn, her invitation to her composition students to also assume the role of a non-expert opened up pathways for her
students to explore difficult topics through “play.” And last, I showed how Ashley’s project of writing hybrid manuscripts works to, in part, challenge the idea of stable genres informed her goals as a composition instructor who stressed the affordances of disruption and experimentation in student writing.

In Chapter 5, then, I discussed my co-researchers’ views of themselves as laborers in composition programs in light of their feelings of disciplinary, professional, and practical difference or outsidership. Despite successful work in the classroom, which was often accompanied by positive responses by students and observation reports, my fellow teachers and/or administrators, co-researchers tended to view themselves as outsiders. They held these feelings of outsidership with regard to both the programs for which they worked and to the field of rhetoric and composition, which they often believed set the tone for the work they were asked to do in the composition classroom. As such, participants such as Franklin often felt that he was regarded as a professional “like” person by the composition program for which he worked. Interestingly, this recurring motif was strikingly similar to the theme of “literate difference” that I introduced in Chapter 3 and pervaded interview data in unexpected ways. Even the data generated with my co-researcher Jessie, an ABD graduate student in a graduate rhetoric and composition program, suggested her difficulty in reconciling her identity as a creative writer with that of a rhetorician and compositionist.

Taken together, the data and discussions throughout my chapters has showcased the varieties of practices and communities of participation—both those in- and outside the domains of the purely disciplinary—that contribute to the formation of my co-researchers’ teacherly identities. This study builds upon a tradition of research based in sociocultural and sociohistoric perspectives on literacy and literate development that recognizes the multitude of practices and social affiliations outside the domain of the school as contributors to
individuals becoming (Lankshear & Knobel, 2006; Woodard, 2015; Roozen & Erickson, 2017). More specifically, I examined the relationships among writing, disciplinary training (in writing and teaching), and both literate and extra-literate engagements. Ultimately, I have argued that writers and teachers of writing become professionals through acts of literate and disciplinary uptake characterized as much by curricular-based advancement in a field as they are by complex negotiations with communities and institutions that have informed these writers’ developmental histories.

Additionally, I developed a methodology for studying writers whose professional endeavors and professional identities extend beyond singular disciplines and singular domains of practice. Facets of this methodology have included: conversations with these writers that focused not only on their disciplinary training as creative writers, but also their extra-disciplinary training; craft-based interviews as a method of identifying and framing co-researchers’ values as writers; and the use of course materials, including written feedback to students, as a site on which to map these writerly values. I see this methodology as adding to other, current discussions in scholarships about disciplinarily-informed practices for qualitatively investigating what we might consider to be an arts-based mode of writing (see Bailey & Bizzaro, 2017; Wulff, 2017).

The numerous cases discussed throughout this dissertation showcase the variety of reasons we cannot discount the multitude of everyday literate and extra-literate practices that inform writers’ writing, writing instruction, and professional identities as instructors of writing. Attempting to understand writers’ and teachers’ trajectories of professional development by framing that development only around practices within and related to disciplinary learning discounts the larger social world from which writers’ draw and the complex histories that inform their present conceptions of themselves. This study, on the
other hand, has afforded those of us in the fields of rhetoric and composition, writing studies, and/or creative writing studies an opportunity to challenge both the romantic notions of how creative writers “become” and the more specific roles that such institutions as graduate programs in Creative Writing play in creative writers’ formations of their professional-writer identities. Additionally, this study has allowed co-researchers and me to explore how creative writers negotiate these identities within the contexts of the composition classroom and the departments and/or programs that oversee freshman composition courses and thus these creative writers’ teacherly labors. Current scholarship in the fields of composition studies, creative writing studies, and writing program administration have not yet, to my knowledge, explored such areas in the ways I have done here.

In what remains of this chapter, I move on to discuss implications of this work for research in literate development, disciplinarity, and writing pedagogy. I close by identifying areas for future research and offer a brief rationale for why these areas might be of interest to scholars in rhetoric and composition or writing studies writ large.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR...**

*Mapping pathways of disciplinary development and self-identification as writers*

This study extends upon the rich body of literature that challenges those perspectives of disciplinary development that privilege the “vertical” dimensions of development more so than those horizontal ones (Carroll, 2002; Beach, 2003; Roozen, 2010; Prior, 2016, 2018; &c.). According to Roozen and Erickson (2017):

Dominant conceptions of disciplinary writing expertise emphasize the vertical dimension of development, both in terms of the kinds of knowledge that writers need to acquire and how writers arrive at that knowledge. From the dominant perspective, disciplinary writing expertise is understood as consisting of knowing the discourse community, the subject matter, the genres, the rhetorical strategies, and the writing practices and processes of a particular disciplinary domain. Disciplinary
writers are understood as acquiring those types of knowledge through increasingly deeper, fuller, richer participation within that disciplinary world. (8.03)

However, they go on:

Dominant conceptions of development overlook…the interplay of both dimensions, how writers draw knowledge and abilities from the horizontal dimension into the vertical (from other literate engagements into disciplinary ones) and pull knowledge and abilities from the vertical dimension into the horizontal (from disciplinary engagements into others). (8.03)

In particular, this study adds to this literature by emphasizing those horizontal dimensions of development that are based less in textual engagements and more in those non-textual and even extra-literate engagements. Of course, this study does not do this by discounting the role that myriad textual engagements, both vertical and horizontal, may play in a writer’s disciplinary development. Rather, this study contributes to more fully dialogic perspectives on learning and professionalizing by highlighting the ways that identity and practice across contexts and throughout time are always under negotiation. Such an emphasis is consonant with sociocultural views that see identity as dependent upon a confluence of seemingly unrelated activities over individuals’ histories (Bourdieu, 1977; Bakhtin, 1981; Prior, 1998; Scollon, 2001; Latour, 2005). Of course, there are no objectively unrelated activities, but rather only activities that are not perceived to be vertically integrated, i.e. integrated in accordance with common expectations of literate and disciplinary development. Writers’ and teachers’ experiences can and often times do integrate their various activities.

In fact, attending to these extra-literate or non-textual engagements, this study has argued, is vital to the project of continuing to map the theoretical landscape of disciplinary becoming. Perhaps more pertinent, however, this study has emphasized the importance of these types of non-textual engagements on writers’ conceptions of themselves as those who have disciplinarily “become.” Steve reimagining the space of his writing nook as a dojo, and thus a space for meditation and instruction-taking, contributed directly to his particular
rendering of himself as a “disciplined doer.” The ways that Austin links up the traumatic experiences of his childhood to his writerly project of teasing out the complex webs of emotion that come to define his characters are a way of “navigating [the] inner self.”

This doesn't imply, however, that Steve would not have found another way past his writer’s block or that Austin would not have come to this project of “navigating” had it not been for their experiences with martial arts and trauma, respectively. But only that, if we as researchers are invested in how writers’ construct their writerly identities, then these non-textual engagements play a crucial role in individuals’ conceptions of these constructions. And these conceptions of identity influence how these writers engage with other socio-professional situations related to writing practice and teaching across a multitude of contexts.

New ways of supporting writerly becoming

However, it is no longer enough to simply learn how to better explore or identify the chronotopic laminations (Bakhtin, 1981; Prior, 1998; Prior & Shipka, 2003)—“the dispersed fluid chain of places, times, people, and artifacts that come to be tied together in trajectories of literate action along with the ways multiple activity footings are held in place” (Prior & Shipka, 2002, p. 180)—of writers’ activities that amalgamate into their semiotic becomings.

Previous research and scholarship from which this dissertation has drawn have already strongly and successfully made this case. Now, as researchers and scholars of writing, we must learn how these views of disciplinary becoming may aid us in supporting writers’ developments across domains of knowledge and activity, of which their schooling represents only one part or a finite number of parts.

Kathleen Blake Yancey, in her 2004 CCCC chair’s address, noted such a need when she identified that our “model of teaching composition, as generous, varied, and flexible as it
is in terms of aims and as innovative as it is in terms of pedagogy—and it is all of these—(still) embodies the narrow and the singular in its emphasis on a primary and single human relationship: the writer in relation to the teacher” (p. 309). Even if we were to extend our understanding of “teacher” within this context to refer to the discipline the teacher represents and the institution of which the teacher is a part, we have still reduced the number of potentially “literate landscapes…to only classrooms, college libraries, and writing centers” (Roozen & Erickson, 2017, p. 8.04). In a word, this model, no matter how generous we might believe it to be, reasserts a devaluation of the oft-invisible extra-disciplinary and extra-literate participations that come to define a writer’s sense of their own identity. The question, then, is this: How do we, as teachers and scholars of writing, support and integrate a process of what we might call “semiotic discovery”—an exploration of our own and others’ semiotic becomings—in not only our teaching practices, but also our pedagogical attitudes more broadly speaking? How might we support students of writing as they seek to identify their participations across time and contexts as each part of the larger nexus of practice that informs their identities as literate agents in their worlds and communities?

One answer might be to invite into the classroom and other disciplinary settings writers’ broad range of literate and discoursal knowledges that extend beyond the classroom and so beyond the institutional domain. The purpose of doing this would be to challenge conventional notions of disciplines and disciplinary knowledge: what they are, how they become, and who gets to participate in their construction and evolution. As I have argued elsewhere, the divides between what counts as disciplinary knowledge in certain domains and what does not have “more to do with what traditional notions of disciplinarity would have us believe about the fixedness of disciplinary boundaries than…about anything essential to the acts of writing creatively, composing more broadly, and studying each” (Udelson, in
press). By inviting writers to challenge these traditional notions of how we disciplinarily “become,” we also invite them to consider how their “richly literate lifeworlds” (Roozen & Erickson, 2017, 8.04) beyond institutional domains impact the disciplines in which they participate within those domains.

As an example, not only did Hasanthika’s experience with grant writing, for instance, inform her mentality of success within the context of fiction writing, it also asks Creative Writing, as a discipline, to consider broader connections across workplace and creative writing activities. Not only did Franklin’s working-class upbringing apprise him of themes to pursue in his fiction at and beyond Columbia University, but it also tasks Creative Writing, as a discipline, with considering how various genres of creative writing may be used to investigate and represent socioeconomic realities. Both of these examples challenge long-held, dominant institutional-paradigmatic views of craft as “a transparent set of values—fixed and universally agreed upon in how it defines a particular genre.” Such a view of craft has historically and problematically emphasized what the Creative Writing Studies Organization most recent conference website has identified as a particular “Western literary tradition” that reflects the values and literary concerns of predominantly “white middle-class writers” (“Critiques and Revisions: Examining the Ideologies of Craft in Creative Writing,” 2018).

Reconceiving of the relationship between composition pedagogy and creative writerly practice

The existence of a body of literature within a field of disciplinary study implies that there exists a gap in either knowledge about subjects in that field and on which said literature is focused, or else a gap in what is actually published about that subject. This dissertation, for example, exists as a way of, among other things, noting a lack of scholarship on how creative
writers teach composition and how creative writers conceive of their identities as professionals and laborers within composition programs, and it attempts to at least partially fill that gap. I mention this because this study found that one of the difficulties about working with a group of individuals who are trained in one discipline yet often work in another is the dearth of literature from either discipline doing the work of rigorously critiquing the other from the perspective of an insider.

To put this less nebulously, and with the goal of furthering our understanding of writing pedagogy in mind: despite their scant presence in much literature in composition, creative writing, or creative writing studies, these creative writer-composition instructors’ beliefs and practices did often show that their pedagogical strategies for teaching composition, themselves greatly informed by their creative writerly values, find consonance with pedagogical theory in composition studies. Robin’s stated goals as a composition instructor map quite nicely on to discussions about “service learning,” Ashley’s hybrid work with her students challenges genre ideologies, and Sandra’s assignments invite students to explore topics through the production of multimodal works that de-privilege the production of traditional alphanumeric texts. Prior to this study, this consonance may have been difficult to recognize for a number of reasons, including: the belief that creative writing and composition are not disciplinarily reconcilable (Bailey & Bizzaro, 2017); the efforts of composition to consider the place of creative writing under its umbrella more so than creative writers (Hesse 2010); and the ways that determining what counts as knowledge within a particular writing discipline can socio-professionally isolate that discipline and knowledge produced within it from other writing disciplines (see Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006).

In this, I see CWCIs’ teaching practices, philosophies, insights, and experiences as offering a dialogic perspective of their labors as instructors. This labor has required continual
negotiations of values, knowledges, and identities across an array of sites (Britzman, 1991), including those sites organized around the focal disciplinary contexts of creative writing or composition. Britzman (1991) writes that

teaching can be reconceptualized as a struggle for voice and discursive practices among a cacophony of past and present voices, lived experiences, and available practices. The tensions among what has what has preceded, what is confronted, and what one desires shape the contradictory realities of learning to teach. (p. 31)

“Learning to teach,” he goes on, is “a social process of negotiation rather than an individual problem of behavior” (ibid). Or, rather than “problem of behavior”—a phrase of which I’m not particularly fond—instead a project that extends beyond considering the teacher’s actions as acontextual phenomena. CWCIs’ networked collection of identities and their practices across myriad sites of participation suggest that, over time and via trajectories that are neither isolable nor fully distinct from one discipline and set of discourse practices to the next, we may identify connections across professional writing and instructional contexts.

*New ways of supporting teacherly becoming*

As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, literature on teacher training often assumes the teacher-in-training’s knowledge and/or explicit participation in the field of rhetoric and composition or else posits the teacher-in-training as a universal subject largely decontextualized from their particular histories of literate activity and engagement. Further, when formally-trained creative writers are mentioned within this context, it is often done so in a way highlighting a categorical, curricular-based difference, and not a values-based difference. In other words, these creative writers are less discussed with regard to their knowledge of writing and more simply identified with regard to their programmatic affiliation (see, e.g., Pytlik & Liggett, 2002; Dryer, 2012; Estrem & Reid, 2012; Restaino, 2012). I have also mentioned elsewhere in this dissertation that this omission does not
represent a fault in the previously-cited studies and discussions revolving around teacher training, but rather an opportunity to add to our knowledge of teacher training. This project of adding to our knowledge of teacher training, especially as it regards the training of creative writers to teach composition, is particularly important because of the large number of them who come from creative writing and work in the composition classroom and for composition programs.

For WPAs, I suggest that acquiring a layered understanding of their composition teachers’ (and teachers-in-training) histories of literate activity can beneficially inform curricular decisions regarding the practicum and professional development sessions, including how to consider the particular domains of knowledge CWCIs already bring into them. WPAs can consider, or invite CWCIs to consider, their various experiences with writing, learning, and participating in communities of literate and extra-literate activity and how these activities can be beneficially repurposed or recontextualized for the composition classroom. Examining how individuals synthesize experiences that cross a number of activities – including writing, reading, and engaging with tools across contexts – can provide insight into how this particular demographic of instructors recontextualizes activities in order to afford themselves certain actions, such as pedagogical approaches and practices, within the context of teaching writing (see Prior, 1998; Bazerman, 2004; Woodard, 2015; Roozen & Erickson, 2017).

Such an examination would not ignore the disciplinary engagements that take place within the domain of the practicum classroom. Instead, it would invite both the WPA and CWCI to situate the activities that CWCIs already perform within the context of developing a writing pedagogy geared toward the teaching of composition. Sandra Tarabochia (2017), for instance, offers a “pedagogical ethic” for those WPAs who both recognize what writing
specialists outside their own field may offer Composition and want to value the potential contributions of those specialists. By taking a reflexive and open stance toward learning more about CWCIs particular writing and teaching practices, WPAs might be able to draw from additional writing expertise (just as CWCIs may draw on WPAs writing expertise) to the benefit of their students, programs, and institutions.

Going this route would create a space for further challenging the efficacy of those “best-practice” models of teaching that can “deflect inquiry and prevent thoughtful implementation of ideas,” as well as “establish institutional structures that…undermin[e] agency and autonomy” (Thompson, 2018, p. 38). These models are often framed in such a way that decontextualize the knowledges of the particular instructor who enacts them or the students they claim to benefit. In addition, further challenging these best-practice models may create a space for helping establish new methods for recontextualizing and repurposing cross-disciplinary writing practices for pedagogical use in composition classrooms. A sociocultural and activities-based approach to the training of writers and teachers, such as the one I propose, adds additional structure to the conversations surrounding writing pedagogy and teacher training. It asks us to consider how the nexuses of practice and networks of tools utilized by creative writers to form their arts-based disciplinary identities come to be negotiated and coordinated for particular teacherly tasks within specific environments and contexts, as well as for specific pedagogical and student-based goals. Such an approach can assist CWCIs in more fully establishing and situating their professional status within the context of the programs for which they work. Claiming this status may lead to more actions by CWCIs and invitations to CWCIs to actively alter the programmatic landscape. As for administrators, such an approach may also help them recognize CWCIs’
particular histories and literate practices as resources for instruction and instructional development.

**FUTURE RESEARCH & CONCLUSIONS**

Beyond the questions with which I began this chapter, and beyond a more granular investigation of each of the implications I discussed, this study points to three new areas for research. While this research was centered around a particular demographic of composition instructors’ trajectories toward professional becomings as both creative writers and teachers of composition, I believe this study has opened the door to research into further discussions about creative writers’ disciplinary development across the creative writing-composition divide; issues related to contingent faculty and WPA-related concerns regarding the support and management of these instructors; and, finally, more theoretical discussions about how to rescue *craft* from the institutional-dominant paradigm through which it continues to be regarded.

First, regarding the curricular advancement of creative writers through programs of graduate study in particular, one of the issues I noted throughout this study was the relative scant training in composition pedagogy and rhetoric and composition-related coursework these writers and teachers were offered. CWCIs are often not formally trained through programs of study that incorporate discourses from rhetoric and composition (with perhaps the exception of the teaching practicum). I would guess that this limited composition pedagogy training and, oftentimes, even more limited coursework in rhetoric and composition leads to CWCIs’ perceptions of their own outsider status, as well as administrative perceptions of their outsider status. I contend, however, that the onus of responsibility here does not lie here with the CWCIs but rather the English Departments
that train them. Thus, it might be worthwhile to enlarge this study to include WPAs, chairs, and program directors who can speak to departments’ philosophies or rationales for how creative writers are situated within the domains of composition and writing instruction.

Second, additional future research could continue to explore the stories, practices, and “becomings” of teachers of writing. I am intensely interested in the narratives of labor that have come out of my study of creative writer-composition instructors. The majority of my participants teach or have taught as contingent faculty, usually adjunct instructors, and have done so for multiple institutions. Through interviews, observations, and examinations of artifacts (such as program guidelines) that come to define part-time instructors’ roles in their respective departments, I would explore the various barriers that may stand in the way of these instructors understanding themselves as agentive, established, and professional members of English departments or writing programs. For instance, what does it mean to position one’s self as an instructor in a composition program when one was trained outside the field? Or as one who was trained outside the field and now working as an adjunct? Or as one who was trained outside the field and now working as an adjunct at multiple institutions who must negotiate their professional status in each? Further, what does the situation of these instructors inform us of how Composition has taken up views on “austerity” (Welch & Scott, 2016) from both administrative and theoretical perspectives?

And third, a study centered around the field’s articulation and uptake of “craft” would be valuable. A concept that is discussed both in creative writing and composition, “craft” is often tied to culturally dominant paradigmatic views—what Mayers (2005) describes as “institutional-conventional wisdom”—that align “quality” writing with styles that historically code as white and male. As such, and as alluded to in this chapter’s introduction, “craft” has become a fraught term in much writing studies scholarship. Given
this, I wonder what would it take to “rescue” craft, re-orient our conceptions of it, and make it a generative tool in the inclusive composition classroom? Such a project might entail tracing conceptions of craft, as it relates to techne and telos, through classical rhetoric, to such enlightenment-era rhetoricians as Blair and problematic notions of “taste,” to more recent discussions by rhetorical scholars such as Hawke (2007) and Pender (2011). I anticipate that this historical framing would provide an in-road to discussions of craft that disrupt its cultural-dominant-paradigmatic situatedness and seek to replace it with one overtly political. Such a renewal of the concept of craft may then be used by teachers and students of writing to foster a political-rhetorical awareness of the role that writing technique plays across modes and contexts of discourse. Additionally, this renewal may help make these same teachers and students more aware of the relationship between writing practices and the production of institutional knowledge, the production of socio-political knowledge, and the construction of identity.

The main theme of this dissertation has no doubt been the processes by which creative writers become professionals in the contexts of both writing practice and teaching. Sociocultural and dialogic perspectives on these acts of “semiotic becoming” (Prior, 2018) foreground the importance of activities that across times and contexts speak to the complex and messy ways individuals become agents in their social and professional worlds. Rather than neatly divide curricular-based and disciplinary practices from those practices outside these institutional contexts, this dissertation has instead argued how so many of our practices interweave and interanimate one another across sites. In particular, this dissertation has paid special attention to those engagements undertaken by co-researchers in this study that are

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33 A friend and colleague of mine, Dr. Benjamin Ristow, currently of Hobart and Smith Colleges, has elsewhere asked similar questions and considered similar topics as these. I owe to him much of my thinking along these lines.
not themselves semiotic activities, but which offer framing and perspective on these co-
researchers’ semiotic activities.

Since our range of semiotic activities broaden over time, so do the stories of our
becomings—as creative writers, as teachers of writing, as both. Our histories continue to
grow. With them grow our understandings of both the networks of activities and
communities that have shaped our values and our own expertise. If we can be attentive to
these complex, ongoing processes of becoming, we can assist students and teachers in their
own processes of writerly becoming, and we can better recognize the contributions creative
writers have made and may continue to make to composition pedagogy.
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## Appendix A:

### Data Collected from Primary Participants

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Data Collected</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balun, Robert</strong></td>
<td>Initial interview, Skype, 1:09. August 26, 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Baurichter, Austin</strong></td>
<td>Initial interview, Skype, 2:00. March 13, 2017</td>
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<td>Follow-up interview 1, Skype, :50. August 24, 2017</td>
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<td>Interview data</td>
<td>Follow-up interview 2, Phone, 1:18. September 26, 2017</td>
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<td>University of Kentucky, ENG 107. April 18, 2017. (Classroom observation data not discussed in this manuscript)</td>
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<td>Teaching / Course materials</td>
<td>ENG 107 – Rubric for final portfolio</td>
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<td>WRD 110: Composition &amp; Communication I</td>
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<td>Teaching / Course materials</td>
<td>• Formal Proposal – Assignment</td>
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<td>ENG 207: Beginning Workshop: Fiction – Syllabus</td>
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<td>Creative writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creative writing</td>
<td>“Reverse Yoga” – short story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative writing</td>
<td>“Synechdoche” – short story</td>
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<td>Creative writing</td>
<td>“Thanksgiving” – short story</td>
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<td>Creative writing</td>
<td><em>Nodes and Edges</em> – poetry collection</td>
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<td>Creative writing</td>
<td><em>All Your Belongings and Other Stories</em> – M.F.A. Thesis</td>
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<td>Additional materials</td>
<td>Personal teaching materials:</td>
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<td>Additional materials</td>
<td>• Literary manifesto</td>
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<td>• Personal statement</td>
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<td>• Statement of Grant</td>
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<td>• Teaching statement</td>
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<td>Additional materials</td>
<td>• UK statement of purpose</td>
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<td>• Pedagogy review</td>
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<td>Practicum class (WRD 609), Fall 207:</td>
<td>• Philosophy of teaching with technology</td>
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<td>• Synthesis Assignments 1, 2, and 3</td>
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<td>Practicum class (WRD 609), Fall 207:</td>
<td>• Teaching philosophy (final)</td>
</tr>
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### Farmer, Ashley

| Interview data, 3:24 total | Initial interview, Skype, 1:30. October 25, 2017  
Follow-up interview 1, Skype, 1:06. January 24, 2018  
Follow-up interview 2, Skype, 1:08. March 21, 2018 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Creative writing           | *The Farmacist* – hybrid collection  
*The Women* – hybrid collection  
“Parting shot” – short story |
| Teaching / Course materials| Intro Composition:  
- ENG 100 – syllabus (Fall 2012)  
- ENG 112 – unit one schedule (Fall 2012)  
- Guiding your research – handout  
- Making claims – handout  
- ENG 100: The Composition Cut-up – assignment  
| Composition II: |  
- ENGL 101 – unit two schedule (Fall 2010)  
- ENGL 101 – unit one calendar (Fall 2013)  
- 10-on-1 – handout  
- English 101: Claim making – handout  
- WRT 205: Fairy Tales – assignment (Spring 2009) |

### Giles, Sandra

| Interview data, 3:31 total | Initial interview, Skype, 1:10. August 29, 2016  
Follow-up interview 1, Skype, 1:17. March 28, 2017  
Follow-up interview 2, Skype, 1:04. June 29, 2017 |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Creative writing           | “13 in 1980” – short creative/innovative nonfiction  
“Business Writing for Ladies” – short creative/innovative nonfiction  
“Diving Deep” – short creative/innovative nonfiction  
“Now What Class” – short creative/innovative nonfiction  
“Reflection and Self Assessment in Writing” – article |
| Teaching / Course materials| ENGL 1101 (Fall 2015):  
- Syllabus  
- Literacy Narrative – assignment  
- Writing profiles with firsthand research – assignment  
- Narrative Techniques – handout  
- Letter to the reader assignment for all multi-draft essays --- handout  
- Assignment sequence for ENGL 1101  
ENGL 1102 and 1102 Honors (Spring 2016, Spring 2017):  
- Syllabi and Course policies  
- “Firefox” Essay – assignment  
- Reflection for Firefox essay – handout  
- Revising “Firefox” prompts – list/notes |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional materials</th>
<th>Curriculum vitae</th>
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</thead>
</table>

**Mozer, Robin**

**Interview data, 3:35 total**
- Initial interview, in-person. :48. April 7, 2018
- Follow-up interview 1, in-person 1:03. April 24, 2018
- Follow-up interview 2, in-person, 1:17. October 12, 2017
- Follow-up interview 1, in-person, :27. February 27, 2018

**Classroom observations**
- University of Louisville, ENG 101. Spring 2017. (Classroom observation data not discussed in this manuscript)

**Creative writing**
- “I would rather do anything else than write the syllabus for your class” – short creative non-fiction piece, humor
- “I would rather do anything else than grade your final papers” – short creative non-fiction piece humor

**Teaching / Course materials**
- ENGL 101 (Spring 2017):
  - Schedule on Blackboard LMS (Spring 2017)
  - Syllabus
  - Analysis – assignment
  - Evaluation – assignment
  - Recommendation – assignment
## Exam – assignment

Emailed responses to follow-up questions (also sent by email).
February 26, 2018

| Interview data, 2:29 total | Initial interview, in-person, 1:23. March 11, 2017
|                          | Follow-up interview, in person, 1:06. October 8, 2017

| Creative writing | Various, through workshop group of which we were both a part. Manuscripts unnamed here. |

### Teaching / Course materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newman, Jessica</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman Inquiry Writing Seminar (Fall 2012):</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Lesson Plans</td>
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<td>- Selected handouts</td>
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<td>- Major Assignments</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Reflective essay assignment</td>
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<td>- Compare and contrast assignment</td>
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<td>- Argumentative essay assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Research paper assignment</td>
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</table>

| Freshman Inquiry Writing Seminar (Fall 2013): |
| - Syllabus |
| - Lesson Plans |
| - Major Assignments |
|  - Reflective essay assignment |
|  - Compare and contrast assignment |
|  - Argumentative essay assignment |
|  - Research paper assignment |

| Fiction Writing (Fall 2014): |
| - Syllabus |
| - Lesson Plans |
| - Major Assignments |
|  - Ongoing assignment guidelines |
|  - Mid-term portfolio |
|  - Final portfolio |

| Fiction Writing (Fall 2015): |
| - Syllabus |
| - Lesson Plans |
| - Major Assignments: |
|  - Ongoing assignment guidelines |
|  - Mid-term portfolio |
|  - Final portfolio |

| Business Writing (Fall 2017): |
| - Syllabus |
| - Lesson Plans |
| - Major Assignments |
|  - Email Package |
|  - Job Application Materials |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Rosenberg, Dan**   | Initial interview, Skype, 1:58. August 12, 2016  
Follow-up interview, Skype, :50. March 4, 2017 |
| Creative writing     | *Thigh’s Hollow* – poetry collection  
*cadabra* – poetry collection |
| **Teaching / Course materials** | ENGL 1102 (Spring 2014):  
• Paper assignments 1-4  
• Peer review guidelines, for papers 1-4  
• Reverse Outline Guidelines – handout  
• ePortfolio checklist – handout  
• Research Guide – handout  
• Thesis Statements – handout  
• Mid semester check-in – handout  
• UGA First-year comp program grading rubric  
SC 101 (Fall 2014):  
• Paper 1 – assignment  
• Paper 2 – assignment  
• Paper 2 peer review guidelines, for drafts 1-4  
• Paper guidelines – checklist  
• Presentation – assignment  
• Presentation sign-up sheet |
| **Rosenstein, Steve** | Initial interview, Skype, 1:15. August 16, 2016  
Follow-up interview 1, Skype, :37. August 25, 2016  
Follow-up interview 2, Skype, :42 (broken up into two recording sessions due to technical issues). April 19, 2017 |
| **Sirisena, Hasanthika** | Initial interview, Skype, 1:19. August 12, 2016 |
| **Smith, Steve**     | Initial interview, in-person, 1:19. August 31, 2016  
Follow-up interview, in-person, :37. September 6, 2016  
(Steve’s interview data was not used in this dissertation.) |
| **Winslow, Franklin**| Initial interview, Skype, 1:12. April 29, 2017  
Initial interview continued, Skype, :54. April 30, 2017  
Follow-up interview 1, Skype, 1:02. August 11, 2017  
Follow-up interview 2, Skype, :57. October 1, 2017  
Follow-up interview 3, Skype, 1:02. October 8, 2017  
Follow-up interview 4, Skype, :42. June 13, 2018 |
| Creative writing     | *Enough of Them* – hybrid collection in-progress  
“No Way but Down” – short story |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching / Course materials</th>
<th>ENGL 2150: The Long Con Spring (2012)</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Syllabus</td>
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<td>Lesson Plans</td>
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<td>Exercise handouts</td>
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<td>Analyzing imagery</td>
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<td>Performing research</td>
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<td>Using tone</td>
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<td>Essay assignment #2</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENGL 2150: Academic Essay Writing (Fall 2012):</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Syllabus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lesson Plans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Essay #1 – assignment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Written feedback to students for assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading guides for various short stories and other texts in both courses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Appendix B:

IRB-Approved Consent Forms for Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Participants

Subject Informed Consent Document – Primary Participants

Creative Writing Styles and Transfer:
Case Studies of Creative Writers Teaching in the Composition Classroom

Dr. Andrea Olinger, Ph.D
Assistant Professor of English

Jonathan A. Udelson
Ph.D Fellow: Rhetoric & Composition

Department of English
2211 S. Brook St.
Louisville, KY 40292
p: 502.852.6801

Site(s) where study is to be conducted: University of Louisville & other sites
Phone number for subjects to call for questions: 917.428.0489 (cell phone), or: 502.852.3051

Introduction and Background Information

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Andrea Olinger, Ph.D (principal investigator) and Jonathan Udelson, Ph.D Fellow (co-investigator), both of University of Louisville’s English Department. The study will take place in offices at the University of Louisville, other agreed-upon sites, over the telephone, and/or over Skype (or equivalent). Approximately 50 subjects will be invited to participate.

Purpose

This study investigates the theories of writing brought into the composition classroom by composition instructors with backgrounds in Creative Writing.

Procedures

In this study, you will be asked to participate in at least two interviews (typically 30-60 minutes) about your creative writing practices and theories and how these practices and theories are integrated in your composition classroom(s). You and I (Jonathan Udelson) will
negotiate the means by which interviews are recorded (e.g., audio, video) and how many interviews will be conducted.

I may also ask you to consider participating in additional research activities, specifically:

- I may ask you if it’s possible to observe you in, and/or possibly photograph or audio- or video-record, selected other activities (e.g., in your classroom, in workshops, while writing, etc.). We would decide together on the specific activities to study.
- I may ask you if you’d like to share copies of some texts you have written or read that inform your approach to style, craft, and language issues you believe are associated with creative writing theories and practices. Further, I may ask you if you’d like to share copies of teaching materials you have made or use in the composition classroom, as well as comments you have produced in response to student work.
- I may ask you if I can contact other people you interact with in your activities involving creative writing. My contacting anyone would depend on your consent.
- I may invite you to participate in the project after the interviews and study have been completed. In this event, I would invite you to provide feedback on my analysis of the data.

You may decline to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable, and you can withdraw from the research at any time. You may also request that data collected on you will be removed from the study, and I will comply.

Potential Risks

You may request that a pseudonym be used in place of your real name in any discussion of the study (whether written, spoken, etc.). You may request that any images of your face or identifiable marks may be removed or blurred from the visual media collected as part of the study. You will have as much control over your level of exposure as can possibly be provided. Despite this, there is always the possibility that you could be identified in published materials associated with this study. Please also keep in mind that if I quote from any of your published work (for which I would seek your consent before doing so), I will have to use the name associated with the publication (whether that is your legal name, nickname, pseudonym, etc.), which could entail your exposure.

As an author, you have the right to take credit for your ideas and words as they appear in the study. However, you also have the right to not be linked to them. We can at any time discuss the best ways to achieve either objective.

Benefits

You might enjoy reflecting on your thoughts as a creative writer/composition instructor, and you also might enjoy seeing some of these reflections in a published study. However, the primary benefit might be the knowledge that your involvement in the study could potentially help us better understand the relationship between creative writing practices and composition practices.
Compensation

You will not be compensated for your time, inconvenience, or expenses while you are in this study.

Confidentiality

Total privacy cannot be guaranteed. Your privacy will be protected to the extent permitted by law. If the results from this study are published, your name will not be made public. While unlikely, the following may look at the study records:

1) The University of Louisville Institutional Review Board and Human Subjects Protection Program Office
2) Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP)

Security

Your information will be kept private by Jonathan Udelson. He will keep any identifying data (such as: audio/visual recordings, copies of your writing, interview transcripts, etc.) locked and in his private residence.

Voluntary Participation

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to be in this study you may stop taking part at any time. If you decide not to be in this study or if you stop taking part at any time, you will not lose any benefits for which you may qualify. You will be told about any changes that may affect your decision to continue in the study. You may ask questions about your level of participation at any time, and those questions will be answered straightforwardly.

Research Subject’s Rights, Questions, Concerns, and Complaints

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

1. You may contact Jonathan Udelson at 917.428.0489 (cell), or via email at jonathan.udelson@louisville.edu. You may also contact Dr. Andrea Olinger, Ph.D at 502.852.3051, or via email at andrea.oling@louisville.edu.

2. If you have any questions about your rights as a study subject, questions, concerns or complaints, you may call the Human Subjects Protection Program Office (HSPPO) at (502) 852-5188. You may discuss any questions about your rights as a subject, in secret, with a member of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or the HSPPO staff. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, staff of the institutions, as well as lay members of the community not connected with these institutions. The IRB has reviewed this study.
3. If you want to speak to a person outside the University, 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 hotline answered by people who do not work at the University of Louisville.

The following will describe what participation in the study will involve. 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.

Please review and check off the options below to ensure that I know how your data may be used.

**Use of my name:**
As an author, you have the right to claim authorship or request a pseudonym be used. (If some of the texts you provide have been published, however, copyright would require me to use your legal name or the name under which the text was published in order to be able to quote from them.)

I would like to be identified by my real name in relation to any of the data collected.

Yes___ Signature: _______________ Date: _____________

No, use a pseudonym___ Signature: _______________ Date: _____________

**Written texts I may provide the researcher:**
I agree that unless I specify otherwise, any texts that I have written and have provided for this research may be quoted, paraphrased, or represented as images in publications or presentations.

Yes___ Signature: _______________ Date: _____________

No___ Signature: _______________ Date: _____________

**Feedback I have produced in response to student work I may provide the researcher:**
I agree that unless I specify otherwise, any feedback that I have produced in response to student work and have provided for this research may be quoted, paraphrased, or represented as images in publications or presentations.

Yes___ Signature: _______________ Date: _____________

No___ Signature: _______________ Date: _____________

**Audio-recordings, video-recordings, or photographs:**
I agree to allow the following types of recordings. I understand that I am welcome to review or request copies of any of these recordings. Additionally, I understand that I may stop the any recording of me at any time I choose, that I have the right to cease my participation in the recordings without penalty, and that I may rescind my offer to allow the recordings to be used as part of the data for the study.
• audio-recording (Yes____ No____).
  Signature: ____________________      Date: _____________

• video-recording (Yes____ Yes, but only if my image is unrecognizable____ No____).
  Signature: ____________________      Date: _____________

• photographing (Yes____ Yes, but only if my image is unrecognizable____ No____).
  Signature: ____________________      Date: _____________

_________________________________________   ______________________
Signature of Subject                  Date Signed

_________________________________________
Printed name of Subject

_________________________________________   ______________________
Signature of Investigator                  Date Signed

List of investigators:

1. Dr. Andrea Olinger, Ph.D
   e: andrea.ongler@louisville.edu
   p: 502.852.3051

2. Jonathan Udelson, Ph.D Fellow
   e: jonathan.udelson@louisville.edu
   p: 917.428.0489 (cell)
Creative Writing Styles and Transfer:
Case Studies of "Creative Writers" Teaching in the Composition Classroom

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Site(s) where study is to be conducted: University of Louisville & other sites
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Introduction and Background Information

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Purpose

This study investigates what theories of writing composition instructors with background in Creative Writing bring to the composition classroom.

Procedures

In this study, you will be asked to participate in at least one interview (typically 30-45 minutes) about your relationship with and knowledge of one of this study’s primary participant’s theories and practices of creative writing and/or teaching. You and I (Jonathan Udelson) will negotiate how interviews are recorded (e.g., audio, video) and how many interviews will be involved.

I may also ask you to consider participating in additional research activities, specifically:
- I may ask you if I can observe you working with the primary participant (e.g., at a workshop).

34 As of the completion of this dissertation, secondary participants have not been recruited for this study.
• I may invite you to participate in the project after the interviews have been completed by giving me feedback on my analysis of the interview data.

• I may invite you to participate in the study as a primary participant if you meet the criteria

You may decline to answer any questions that make you uncomfortable, and you can withdraw from the research at any time.

Potential Risks

You may request that a pseudonym be used in place of your real name in any discussion of the study (whether written, spoken, etc.). You may request that any images of your face or identifiable marks may be removed or blurred from the visual media collected as part of the study. You will have as much control over your level of exposure as can possibly be provided. Despite this, there is always the possibility that you could be identified in published materials associated with this study. Please also keep in mind that if I quote from any of your published work (for which I would seek your consent before doing so), I will have to use the name associated with the publication (whether that is your legal name, nickname, pseudonym, etc.), which could entail your exposure.

As an author, you have the right to take credit for your ideas and words as they appear in the study. However, you also have the right to not be linked to them. We can at any time discuss the best ways to achieve either objective.

Benefits

You might enjoy reflecting on your thoughts of a creative writer/composition instructor with whom you have a relationship, and you also might enjoy seeing some of these reflections in a published study. However, the primary benefit might be the knowledge that your involvement in the study could potentially help us better understand the relationship between creative writing practices and composition practices.

Compensation

You will not be compensated for your time, inconvenience, or expenses while you are in this study.

Confidentiality

Your full privacy cannot be guaranteed. Your privacy will be protected to the extent permitted by law. I will keep any identifying data (such as: audio/visual recordings, copies of your writing, interview transcripts, etc.) in my private residence. While unlikely, the following may look at the study data and records:

1) The University of Louisville Institutional Review Board and Human Subjects Protection Program Office

2) Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP)
Voluntary Participation

This is a voluntary study, and, as such, you are not required to participate. In the event you wish to participate in the study, know that you may cease your participation at any time. You will be informed of any changes that may affect your decision to participate in or continue with the study. You may ask questions about your level of participation at any time, and those questions will be answered forthrightly.

Research Subject’s Rights, Questions, Concerns, and Complaints

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

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Please review and check off the options below to ensure that I know how your data may be used.

Use of my name:
As an author, you have the right to claim authorship or request a pseudonym be used. (If some of the texts you provide have been published, however, copyright would require me to use your legal name or the name under which the text was published in order to be able to quote from them.)

I would like to be identified by my real name in relation to any of the data collected.

Yes___ Signature: __________________ Date: _____________
No, use a pseudonym___.  Signature: _________________  Date: ______________

**Written texts I may provide the researcher:**
I agree that unless I specify otherwise, any texts that I have written and have provided for this research may be quoted, paraphrased, or represented as images in publications or presentations.

Yes___  Signature: _________________  Date: ______________
No___  Signature: _________________  Date: ______________

**Audio-recordings, video-recordings, or photographs:**
I agree to allow the following types of recordings. I understand that I am welcome to review or request copies of any of these recordings. Additionally, I understand that I may stop the recording of me at any time I choose, that I have the right to cease my participation in the recordings without penalty, and that I may rescind my offer to allow the recordings to be used as part of the data for the study.

- audio-recording (Yes____ No____).
  Signature: _________________  Date: ______________

- video-recording (Yes____ Yes, but only if my image is unrecognizable____ No____).
  Signature: _________________  Date: ______________

- photographing (Yes____ Yes, but only if my image is unrecognizable____ No____).
  Signature: _________________  Date: ______________

_____________________________  _______________________
Signature of Subject  Date Signed

_____________________________
Printed name of Subject

_____________________________  _______________________
Signature of Investigator  Date Signed

**List of investigators:**

3. Dr. Andrea Olinger, Ph.D  
   e: andrea.olienger@louisville.edu  
   p: 502.852.3051
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Site(s) where study is to be conducted: University of Louisville & other sites  
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University of Louisville's English Department. The study will take place in offices at the  
University of Louisville, other agreed-upon sites, over the telephone, and/or over Skype (or  
equivalent). Approximately 50 subjects will be invited to participate.

Purpose

This study investigates what theories of writing composition instructors with background in  
Creative Writing bring to the composition classroom.

Procedures

You may not have to do anything to actively participate in this study. By signing this consent  
form, you are specifying whether and how your likeness may be included in the audio- or  
video-recording of the activity, and, if applicable, whether and how your work that has been  
commented upon by your composition instructor (a primary participant in the study) may be  
examined.

Potential Risks

You may request that a pseudonym be used in place of your real name in any discussion of  
the study (whether written, spoken, etc.). You may request that any images of your face or  
identifiable marks may be removed or blurred from the visual media collected as part of the  
study. You will have as much control over your level of exposure as can possibly be  
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published materials associated with this study. Please also keep in mind that if I quote from any of your published work (for which I would seek your consent before doing so), I will have to use the name associated with the publication (whether that is your legal name, nickname, pseudonym, etc.), which could entail your exposure.

As an author, you have the right to take credit for your ideas and words as they appear in the study. However, you also have the right to *not* be linked to them. You and I (Jonathan Udelson) can at any time discuss the best ways to achieve either objective.

**Benefits**

The information collected may not benefit you directly. The primary benefit is to increase our knowledge of the influence of creative writing styles on practices within the composition classroom. The results may improve how people teach composition.

**Compensation**

You will not be compensated for your time, inconvenience, or expenses while you are in this study.

**Confidentiality**

Your full privacy cannot be guaranteed. Your privacy will be protected to the extent permitted by law. I will keep any identifying data (such as: audio/visual recordings, copies of your writing, interview transcripts, etc.) in my private residence. While unlikely, the following may look at the study data and records:

1) The University of Louisville Institutional Review Board and Human Subjects Protection Program Office
2) Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP)

**Voluntary Participation**

This is a voluntary study, and, as such, you are not required to participate. In the event you wish to participate in the study, know that you may cease your participation at any time. You will be informed of any changes that may affect your decision to participate in or continue with the study. You may ask questions about your level of participation at any time, and those questions will be answered forthrightly.

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

1. You may contact Jonathan Udelson at 917.428.0489 (cell), or via email at jonathan.udelson@louisville.edu. You may also contact Dr. Andrea Olinger, Ph.D at 502.852.3051, or via email at andrea.OLinger@louisville.edu.
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The following will describe what participation in the study will involve. 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.

Please choose an option or options from one (and only one) of the three levels below to ensure that I know how your data may be used:

Regarding recordings:

**Level 1** - I consent to let the audio- and/or videorecording of me be used fully as outlined above. I would like to be **identified by my real name** in relation to any of the data collected.

Yes____ Signature: ___________________ Date: _____________

No, please use a pseudonym____ Signature: ___________________ Date: _____________

Also, I would like my **face in videorecordings to be unaltered** by a video-editing program.

Yes, you can show images of my face____ Signature: ___________________ Date: _____________

No, please alter images of my face____ Signature: ___________________ Date: _____________

**Level 2** - I consent to let the recording be used in analysis, but I do not want transcripts or videorecorded segments of me to be used in any research reports. Other segments on the tape can be used as long as my words and face do not appear.

Yes____ Signature: ___________________ Date: _____________

No____ Signature: ___________________ Date: _____________

**Level 3** - Now that I understand the research project, I do not want the recording with me on it to be used for research. Erase the segments where I was included.

You may not record me or use recordings of me; erase segments including my likeness____
Please choose an option from one (and only one) of the following three levels below:

Regarding work on which feedback was given:

**Level 1** - (If applicable.) I consent to let the work on which I have received feedback from my instructor be reviewed by the research investigators. I would like to be **identified by my real name** in relation to any of the data collected.

Yes_____ Signature: _______________ Date: __________

No, please use a pseudonym____ Signature: _______________ Date: __________

**Level 2** - (If applicable.) I **do not** consent to let the work on which I have received feedback from my instructor be reviewed by the research investigators.

I do not give consent_____ Signature: _______________ Date: __________

**Level 3** - Neither of the above two options is applicable to me, as I am not a composition student of one of the study’s primary participants.

I am not a composition student of one of the primary participants_____ Signature: _______________ Date: __________

__________________________________________ _________________
Signature of Subject                          Date Signed

__________________________________________
Printed name of Subject

__________________________________________ _________________
Signature of Investigator                    Date Signed

**List of investigators:**

5. **Dr. Andrea Olinger, Ph.D**  
   e: andrea.olinger@louisville.edu  
   p: 502.852.3051

6. **Jonathan Udelson, Ph.D Fellow**  
   e: jonathan.udelson@louisville.edu  
   p: 917.428.0489 (cell)
Appendix C:

IRB-Approved Interview Questions, Topics of Discussion, and Rationales

Initial interviews with Primary Participants will focus on these participants’ self-reported backgrounds in/with creative writing and their integration of creative writing practices and theories into the composition classroom, as well as their assessment of the effectiveness of any such practices and/or theories. Interview questions of this kind may include the following:

1. What types of creative writing forms (such as fiction, non-fiction, poetry, drama, etc.) do you practice?
   a. What brought you to creative writing and to these forms in particular?
   b. Why do you practice them?
   c. How, if at all, has this practice influenced your thoughts about writing, generally speaking?

2. Are you currently working on a creative writing project, or a project that involves creative writing? If so, could you explain it?

3. Where, or in what context, did you receive your creative writing training? Can you, for instance, identify certain programs, teachers, and/or sponsors who have influenced your practices?

4. What theories of or concepts about creative writing have influenced your identity as a creative writer?

5. What is your current educational level? Do you have any educational training in composition studies, education, pedagogy, or related field?

6. In what order, if any, do you identify yourself as the following: creative writer, and composition instructor?

7. To what degree are you comfortable teaching composition?
   a. If applicable: to what degree are you comfortable teaching creative writing, or the equivalent?

8. What is/are the general structure(s) of your composition classes? What do you consider when creating lessons/units, leading class discussions, evaluating student work?

9. Do you believe you incorporate elements of creative writing practices and theories in your composition classroom?
   a. If so, can you identify those practices and theories you incorporate and the way(s) in which you incorporate them?
   b. If not, do you believe your background as a creative writer influences your approach in any way(s) to teaching composition?
      i. If so, can you describe that/those way(s)?
10. How, if at all, do you incorporate (or would like to incorporate) practices of “craft” in your composition classroom?
   a. What do you believe is the relationship between “craft” and “style”?

11. Do you have a theory about creative writing—its conceptual underpinnings, its practice, its value, etc.—that you could explain or discuss?

12. How many years of teaching experience do you have? How many in subjects on or related to writing? How many in composition at the college level? How many in creative writing at the college level?

13. Do you assign any creative writing assignments in your composition classes?

14. What are your current views on assigning creative writing assignments (or creative writing-inspired assignments) in composition classes?

In event that a Primary Participant is willing to share her/his creative writing and/or course materials, or if the Primary Participant has allowed me to record her/him while teaching or while participating in a writing activity (such as a workshop), I will seek to conduct one or more follow-up interviews with that participant. These follow-up interviews will be more discussion-based and will be influenced by my interpretation of the responses furnished during the previous interview, as well as my interpretation of the creative writing, course materials, and/or recordings that I will have seen. Points of discussion may include the following:

1. The participant’s reflections on the previous interview. As well, whether the participant would like to further elaborate on, clarify, add to, or retract previous responses.

2. The participant’s self-reported teaching practices since the first interview: the ways they may or may not have changed, or how they might change in the future.

3. The participant’s views on the relationship between style and craft since the first interview: whether those views have changed.

4. The participant’s creative writing and class materials: the ways the participant interprets her/his creative work, and how the participant interprets her/his class materials’ pedagogical effectiveness.

5. The participant’s interpretation or explanation of any sessions I have recorded.

6. My interpretation of what I have noted in the participant’s creative writing, class materials, or recordings that may offer additional or alternative views to the participant’s self-reporting and assessment.
   a. Participant will have a chance to respond, and we will discuss any interpreted differences.

7. A review conducted between the Primary Participant and me of a Secondary Participant’s responses to questions about the Primary Participant’s writing, writing habits, writing training, theories of writing, and teaching practices. (See below for more details about questions I may pose to Secondary Participants.)

Interviews with Secondary Participants will focus on these participants’ knowledge of Primary Participants’ writing, writing habits, writing training, theories of writing, and

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35 As of the completion of this dissertation, secondary participants have not been recruited for this study.
teaching practices. It is my hope that any Secondary Participant may provide new information about a Primary Participant that can then be further reviewed between the Primary Participant and me. Interview questions of this kind may include:

1. What are your own experiences in creative writing, teaching, and/or composition (or other) pedagogy?
2. For how long and in what context(s) have you known the Primary Participant?
3. Why do you believe the Primary Participant identified you as a person whom I may contact for more insight into the Primary Participant’s creative writing and/or teaching practices and theories?
4. What role does the Primary Participant play in the context in which you are acquainted with her/him? (For example, if known through a workshop: what role do you believe the Primary Participant plays in that workshop, or how would you characterize the Primary Participant’s involvement in the workshop; if known through creative projects: what have been the Primary Participant’s contributions to the project; if known through teaching: how would you characterize the Primary Participant’s teaching strategies and practices; and so on.)
5. How would you characterize the Primary Participant’s work processes, insofar as these processes regard creative writing or pedagogical practices? In other words, can you provide and insight into the Primary Participant’s methods to produce and/or prepare creative or pedagogical materials (or performances)? And if so, what are the details of one or more of these insights?
6. Have you read and/or reviewed work (either pedagogical or creative) from the Primary Participant? If so, how would you characterize this work? What issues (again, pedagogical or creative) do you believe these works address, if any?
7. What are your thoughts, if any, on the relationship between creative writing, creative writing pedagogy, and composition pedagogy? What are your thoughts, if any, on the effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) of incorporating creative writing practices into the composition classroom?
8. Has the Primary Participant ever explicitly discussed with you the role creative writing practices and/or pedagogies might play in a composition classroom, or the relationship between creative writing and composition? Or has the Primary Participant ever discussed with you the implementation of such practices in the composition classroom? If so, how would you characterize or summarize the details of those conversations or exchanges?
Appendix D:
Sample Course Assignments from Focal Participants Discussed in Chapter 4

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ENG 107: Rubric for Final Portfolio - Due on Tuesday, May 2nd at 5:30 PM (on Canvas)

This portfolio will be entirely comprised of your own original writing. It is designed to be a culmination of all of the work and learning you have done in the course to date - utilizing the elements of craft (poetry, fiction, and nonfiction) that we have discussed and learned. The writing portfolio is meant for you to take beginning steps into the craft of creative writing, and for you to begin to discover who you are as a creative writer and thinker.

Requirements:

- Three (3) original poems - *first draft and final draft with revisions required*
  - You must turn in 3 - first draft poems on Canvas by April 18th (small-group day).
  - Your TA Instructor will give you revision suggestions by April 25
  - You must include BOTH drafts of EACH poem in your completed portfolio (total of 3 first drafts and 3 revised drafts = six pages of portfolio)
  - There MUST be evidence that each of the three poems has been revised
- 3,000 words of fiction or nonfiction, *to be split up however you choose.*
○ This means that you may write 3,000 words of fiction, or 3,000 words of nonfiction or 1,500 words of each, or a series of flash pieces, etc. The total must add up to 3,000 words.

○ Although revisions are not required for this piece of the portfolio, we will look for the elements that are listed below.

○ If you would like some feedback on a particular piece of prose, please speak to your TA instructor.

What We’re Looking For

● Does the portfolio meet the requirements for length?
● Are the elements of craft that we’ve highlighted in class present?
● Is this portfolio original?
● Is there a sense of story (for the fiction/nonfiction) or a sense of something happening beyond the surface of the words?
● Are the elements of D.E.L.I.M.E. present?
● In General (some of these will clearly be more geared to fiction/nonfiction or poetry):
  ○ The piece will include specifically developed paragraphs, clear sentences, and create some tension for the characters or story to work through.
  ○ The piece should include a title. The title should be an invitation or some sort, an open door for the reader to walk through. Titles should not obfuscate the work’s intent.
  ○ The piece should be developed as a unified whole.
  ○ The piece should have a logical organizational plan, in which the ideas/sentences build on each other toward some satisfying ending.
  ○ The sentences within the story should be linked together for coherence.
  ○ The piece does not necessarily need a theme, but should have some logical plot which ties the work together.
  ○ The piece should have a strong opening and an ending that leaves the reader both satisfied and thinking.
  ○ Each piece should include a speaker, a voice or persona which tells the story (Person/POV).
  ○ Each piece should avoid cliché, unless refreshed is some way.
  ○ The sentences should include specific nouns and strong, active verbs.
  ○ The diction of the pieces should be precise and recognize the words’ connotations and denotations.
  ○ The pieces should enlist the language necessary to show the mood and tone.
Grading:

The portfolio will be worth 30% of your total grade for this class, and it will be graded out of **100 points**. The grade scale is as follows:

- **A**: 100-90
- **B**: 89-80
- **C**: 79-70
- **D**: 60-69
- **F**: 59-0

Submitting:

Your portfolio is to be submitted to Canvas by the due date as *one, single Word Document*. You are to begin each separate piece of the portfolio on a separate page, and each piece should have its own title. A cover page is optional. Please number your pages.
WRD 110: The Formal Proposal

Rough Draft: Due Friday, October 13th by class time (2 hard copies; Canvas upload)
Final Draft: Due Friday, October 20th by 11:59 PM (Canvas upload)

*Each copy/upload of the proposal should include both partners’ names.

Overview: With your partner, you will write a 1,500 word minimum proposal that presents background and history related to the facet of the UK community you are writing about and shows why this aspect is one worthy of your time and efforts. With this assignment, you are now convincing your audience of your topic’s value and meaning. This proposal will also explain why your topic is significant for a target audience of freshmen who will arrive at UK in 2018. The proposal must also outline the research plan and include specific assigned tasks and due dates for both you and your partner. We will workshop these proposals in small groups before a final draft is due. This formal proposal, the rough draft and the final draft, are together worth 15% of your final course grade and are due on October 13 and 20 respectively.

The Rough Draft

1. Content: The proposal should address the following four questions regarding the community you have chosen. What are the details of the background and history of your community (this is the research bit)? Why it would make a good website project (this is the "so what?" question)? This question leads into, and can overlap a bit with this question: Why is this significant for incoming freshmen (here is where you will incorporate characteristics of your audience as part of your answer for this)? And, finally, what is your research plan (this plan outlines specific tasks they will accomplish, due dates for those, and who is responsible for them)?

2. Cohesion: The proposal is a fully formed piece of writing. That is, it adheres to a logical progression of ideas, contains transitions between those ideas, and is read as a single, unified document. This means, also, that the proposal utilizes the appropriate syntactic and grammatical structure necessary for accomplishing this: it is made up of complete sentences and contains distinct paragraphs.

3. Fulfills Requirements: The turned-in assignment meets all the requirements of form, length, content, and cohesion, and is turned in as 2 hard copies and a Canvas upload by class time on October 13th.

Grading:
- Content: 20 points
- Cohesion: 10 points
- Fulfills Requirements: 10 points
- Total: 40 points

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Although this is a rough draft and therefore won’t be graded as stringently as the final draft, each of the components are expected to be present.

The Final Draft

The final draft will be graded on the same criteria as the rough draft, with the added component of revision. That is, the final draft should display specific, as-needed revision, suggestions for which will be gathered from both the instructor and from the in-class workshop. This revision should occur within both the content and the mechanics of the proposal (in other words, both the writing itself and the stuff you’re writing about). The final draft should be uploaded to Canvas by Friday, October 20th at 11:59 pm.

Grading:
- Content: 25 points
- Cohesion: 10 points
- Fulfills Requirements: 10 points
- Revision: 15 points
- Total: 60 points
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<td>(4) “RLST 3000: Foxfire/Community Portrait Project”</td>
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**ENGL 1101 Literacy Narrative Assignment**

A narrative essay tells a story. A literacy narrative tells a story related to your experience with language, with reading and writing, with learning literacy. The purpose of a literacy narrative is to look at a time in your life when reading and/or writing had a significant effect on you and then to analyze this effect and reflect on it. Following are possible topics:

- An early memory about writing or reading that you recall vividly
- Someone who taught you to read or write
- A book or other text that has been significant for you
- An event at school that was interesting, humorous, or embarrassing, which related to reading or writing or language
- A writing or reading task that you found (or still find) especially difficult or challenging
- A moment that represents an important moment in your literacy development
- The origins of your current attitudes about writing or reading
- The experience of learning to write instant messages, learning to write email appropriately, learning to construct a website, creating and maintaining a Facebook page, or other electronic medium of literacy
- Reading to someone else or watching someone learn to read (or teaching someone to read)
- Experiences using different “codes” with different audiences
- A conflict you experienced in which language was a big part of the problem
- Your experience in keeping a diary or journal

Remember that a good memoir is focused on usually a relatively brief period of time. It focuses on a single event or 2-3 that are very closely related. Make sure you draw the reader into the essay by using description, narration, dialogue, etc. Remember to reflect on the event and its significance in your life (insight). How did it affect you? Does it still affect you?

**Specifications**

The essay must go onto the fourth page. Make sure you go through all the required drafts, at minimum, and that you turn in all your work relating to the essay. I do not accept final drafts by themselves, unaccompanied by all the drafts leading up to them. For paper format, use MLA headings and page numbers (see either textbook). Make sure the essay has a title, intro that gets the reader’s attention, as many body paragraphs as the essay needs, conclusion. If you want to try a more creative format, I’m open to that as long as you talk with me about it first.

Turn the essay packet in with all of the work held together with a binder clip in backwards chronological order: Letter to the Reader on top, final draft, peer workshop drafts, other drafts, planning. The Paper Packet is due at the beginning of class on the due date. The final draft should also be submitted electronically to Turnitin.com by 11:59 pm on the due date.
ENGL 1102 Honors
Analysis or Imitation of Innovative-Form Nonfiction

OPTION 1: TRADITIONAL ANALYSIS PAPER

Using techniques of literary and rhetorical analysis (which we’ll review in class), analyze one of the pieces of Innovative Form Nonfiction we’ll read in this unit. Remember to have a focused thesis statement supported by textual evidence. In other words, remember to make a claim about the work, perhaps its theme or its narrative strategies, and then defend/ explore prove that claim.

Innovative Nonfiction We’ll Read:

- Dinty Moore, “Number Nine” and “Son of Mr. Green Jeans: A Meditation on Missing Fathers”
- Christopher Mohar, “Six Ways of Looking At a Car Crash”
- Leslie Jamison, “Empathy Exams”
- David Finkel, Prologue to Thank You For Your Service

SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE ESSAY

- The essay must go onto the fourth page, with the Works Cited as the fifth or later page.
- The essay must center around one of the pieces listed above.
- If you include outside sources, remember to cite them correctly, including in-text citing and listing them on your Works Cited. Outside research is not required but might make a valuable contribution to the essay’s effectiveness.
- Go beyond surface-level thinking. Answer the “so what?” question. Get to meaning, significance, connections, consequences, causes, solutions, or whatever would be appropriate for your topic and for how you’ve decided to narrow the topic (your angle).
- Remember and follow all the rules for correct quoting, paraphrasing, documentation and citing of sources (see Writer’s Reference or Purdue OWL).
- Include a Works Cited page that includes bibliographical information for each work you reference in your essay.
- Use MLA style to document/cite works in the text of your essay and on your Works Cited page (see Writer’s Reference or Purdue OWL).
- Include in the essay packet source copies of all outside written sources (outside our textbook). I must have these to check your quoting and paraphrasing, etc., and I cannot grade the essay without them.
• Use a binder clip to fasten all the material together in this order. Letter to the Reader on top, then final copy with its Works Cited page. Next will be the source copies, peer workshop drafts, other drafts, and planning.

• Paper Packet is due at the beginning of class on the due date. Electronic copy is due to Turnitin.com by the end of 11:59 pm on that date.

OPTION 2: CREATIVE OPTION

For the Creative Option, write your own imitation of one of the Innovative Form essays we will read in this unit. We'll brainstorm ideas and techniques for doing so in class.

Choosing this option automatically gets you bonus points for difficulty.

INNOVATIVE FORM STRATEGIES

For the purposes of this unit, we'll define "innovative form" as an essay that 1) employs a braided structure and/or footnotes to break up the usual narrative flow, and/or 2) incorporates at least one other kind of text within the main text (diary entry, info from a pamphlet or FAQ, etc.).

SPECIFICATIONS

• The essay must go onto the fourth page but really should be long enough to accomplish what it needs to accomplish

• The essay must use "Innovative Form" (see definition above) and must be in imitation of one of the innovative essays we read in this unit

• When you include other texts, info from research, etc., use "Informal Documentation" as you would if you were going to get this published in a magazine or literary journal. Identify the source in your sentence or in a playful footnote or section heading, or something that fits the "innovative form" techniques you're using. But don't do page number in parentheses or a Works Cited, unless, again, it suits the "innovative form" strategies.

• Go beyond surface level thinking here too. Answer the "so what?" question. Get to meaning, significance, connections, consequences, causes, solutions, or whatever would be appropriate to develop your themes.
Freewrite a paragraph or more on each of the following. Be as specific as you can.

1. What is your piece about on the surface level?

2. What are the deeper layers of what it’s about? In other words, what is it also about?

3. Discuss form. How is your piece in an “innovative” form? How does the form contribute to the meaning? In other words, what does it accomplish to be in that form?

4. What images did you see/hear/smell/feel as you worked on it?

5. What do the opening and ending do?

6. How would you describe the “you” that is the implied narrator here?

7. If you had all the time and money in the world, what else would you do in revising this piece?
For this project, you'll have a choice between two options: a Foxfire Project or a Community Portrait. Both options require you to interview someone (primary research), transcribe the interview, and then discuss to provide context for what your interview subject said. The discussion section will ask you to think toward secondary research.

In both options, your process will go something like this:

1. Choose which type of project you want to do.
2. Identify an appropriate person to interview. You may need to talk to several people to choose the best interview subject. You are encouraged to interview someone related to your Practicum, if possible. Record your interview, preferably in more than one medium.
3. Transcribe your interview in script format. This will be due on a certain day (see schedule) so we can work with it in class. Make sure to get down all of what your subject said, in his or her exact words. Do not translate or interpret at this stage.
4. Then discuss what themes and topics came up at the interview. What all do we learn from it? If this were going to be further developed as a research project, what topics could you research? What questions would you ask? If you were going to interview more people, what would you try to find out? See below for more hints as to what to talk about here. Also, we'll provide some examples.

**PURPOSE**: If we had all the time in the world, and if you weren't also doing a Practicum, you'd actually carry out this research. As it is, what we want you to do is get the experience planning and carrying out the interview, then thinking through what could be done with it afterward.

**ORGANIZATION**

Intro
The Interview (transcript)
Discussion
Conclusion
Works Cited/References

**OPTION 1: FOXFIRE PROJECT**

In the Foxfire Project, you interview someone older than you from a rural background who has a story or stories to tell that relate to rural life or show a rural person's experience. It might help to think in terms of history, sociology, folklore, farming, folk life. Think in terms of something you'd like to document for future generations. A quick list of topics students have addressed in the past: someone who served in Vietnam then came home to Decher, someone who has a story to tell about desegregation in Colquitt County, how tobacco farming has changed through three generations of particular farmers in Mitchell County, folk arts such as making brooms from broom sedge or cane syrup or quilts. "Talking the fire out" of burns, etc. We'll brainstorm more ideas in class.
Discussion: What themes/topics came up that we've talked about in our class or your other RS classes? How is this material interesting or important to document? Why? You might wonder how this person's experience does or does not fit into general trends of the time, or how it does or does not fit with other people's experiences. Or how it contributes to knowledge in a field, or what the background/context is from history or sociology. Etc.

OPTION 2: COMMUNITY PORTRAIT

In the Community Portrait, you interview someone from a rural area about his or her experiences in relation to his or her particular community/town. Pick someone you think is somehow "in the know." Think in terms of someone who could help you understand how this community/town works. Think in terms of positive things as well as what might be improved. Where is this community/town going? Where have they been? How is it functioning? We'll look at some frameworks for analyzing communities in class.

Discussion: What themes or topics emerge in the interview? If you were going to fully flesh this out as a research project, what demographics (for example) would you include? What does this community/town have going for it? What challenges does it face? Who else might you interview? What other information would you look for to put it in a broader context? How is this community/town different from others? How does its particular location function? Etc.

SPECIFICATIONS

- The paper must go onto the sixth page of text, plus Works Cited as the seventh or later page. This is a minimum. There is no maximum.

- The Works Cited/Reference page must list a minimum of one source, your interview. If you cite additional sources, then list them as well. Again, we encourage you to make connections between your research and your other learning in the RS Program (this class, your other classes, your practicum, etc.).

- Your essay should use section headings. It may also include relevant visuals. Follow good document design principles with visuals: cite your source, caption the visual, and refer to it in a surrounding paragraph (direct us to it).

- Go beyond surface-level thinking in your discussion. Look for places to push the thinking into some depth.

- Remember and follow all the rules for correct quoting, paraphrasing, documentation and citing of sources.

- Include a Works Cited or References page (whatever is appropriate for the citation style you choose) that includes bibliographical information for each work you reference in your essay.
• Use one of the main styles for citation (MLA, APA, Chicago) and be consistent.

• If you use written sources other than our two class textbooks, include Source Print-Outs in your packet so we can grade your paper.

• Use a binder clip to fasten the material together in this order: Final copy with its Works Cited on top. Next will be Source Print-Outs, if any. This is what we’re calling the “Paper Packet.”

• Paper Packet is due at the beginning of class on the due date. Electronic final draft is due to Turnitin.com by 11:59 pm on that date.
The Composition Cut-Up

The Purpose:

You've engaged with your idea, plunged in, and gotten a feel for what might be interesting to you. You've generated plenty of thoughts. You may even feel like you're on your way toward a claim. The Composition Cut-Up allows you to:

- get a little loose, a little down-and-dirty with your words. It allows you to move your ideas around on a page and find the spaces that are worth deeper exploration. These might be the spaces where you feel a little heat (where you're interested), places where you're confused, where something is strange, or where something is different from something else (maybe one piece of evidence slightly contradicts another). By moving things around, you find these rich places to mine. And:

- you make space for Gladwell's voice. By cutting the text up and rearranging, you may sense where it is that he might pipe up and say something, where he might introduce or contradict you, where he has a perfect piece of evidence. From there, you might offer up something else of your own, generating a bit of friction in your essay. (A good thing).

Instructions:

1. Identify possible claims by underlining them. These are places where a claim isn't fully thought-out (though it may be). Often these are places where an idea might lend itself to further exploration.

2. Cut it up: Cut the text apart after each underlined sentence (i.e. the last sentence of each chunk should be an underlined sentence).

3. Rearrange it: Play with it. See how it looks to move the beginning toward the top. How does it feel to open with one section, rather than another? What does it do to bring in one of those underlined sentences in earlier? What tension is generated when you put one paragraph against another? Don't worry about the missing "connective tissue"—this can be added later.

4. Tape it down in its new experimental order, but leave plenty of space for writing between each chunk. (That might mean your two pages are now five).

5. Ask yourself "So What About It?" Address the part that you underlined in the blank space by answering the question. (i.e. "So maybe these are exceptions to this..."")—also, this isn't true for a person who hasn't had a chance to live in another place...", etc.—it can be a list).

6. Let Gladwell Say Something: For each blank space find a passage, a quote or a page number that connects to the underlined section. (Make sure you're clear about what it is so that you can find it again).
7. Check In Again Think about your overall topic. Have you created any places where your point is now more specific? Complicated? Followed up with a “but”, or “except in cases when”, or “although Gladwell would argue otherwise?” etc. If so, you may have a new central claim.
Within Chapter 10 of Rosenwasser and Stephen’s *Writing Analytically*, we learn that the 10-on-1 method of analysis “allows you to draw out as much meaning as possible…” from a representative sample within a text. Simply put (and for our purposes); it’s a way of looking closely, teasing apart, and finding meaning within a smaller passage. This is both a slowing down and paying close attention. What you’ll find in the 10-on-1 is the implicit meaning, the folded in. And we can only find the implicit by digging beneath the explicit.

Please choose a passage that, to you, connects to the American Dream. It might address the American Dream explicitly, or it might simply suggest the American Dream. This passage should be no shorter than half a page and no longer than a page.

Read and reread your passage, noting the details that stand out to you after closer inspection. It could be a phrase, an image, a name, a description. Identify ten (you may make a list) and next to each, write what’s interesting, important, or strange about it.

When you’re finished, write one paragraph in which you explore more deeply the one that stands out to you most. Allow yourself to consider what it connotes (like the color of the Great Red Shark, for instance), whether or not it’s a thread within the book, or how it relates to the characters.
Fairy tales

You may remember fairy tales as simple bedtime stories, but the study of folk and fairy tales is full of lively debates about cultural significance. In this unit, we'll use a close examination of the deeper meaning of fairy tales to uncover questions and spark research about culture and cultural belief systems.

In unit 2 you'll write a sustained research essay in which you'll consider a variety of perspectives about your topic. I'll expect to see you investigate a fairy tale, to trace the changes it's undergone over time, to explore critical interpretations of your fairy tale by multiple scholars, and to "use your research toward some end"—whether it is making claims, complicating an issue, illustrating a point, or any of the other uses of sources we'll identify and practice across the unit. None of you will be doing this work alone; the next six weeks of the course are devoted to learning how to be critical researchers and effective writers of research.

Assignment Specifics

Your task for this unit is to:

1. Choose a fairy tale.

2. Conduct research on the various versions of the fairy tale that have been told and written over time, as well as different scholarly perspectives on your fairy tale.

3. Create your own analysis of the ideological function of your fairy tale. i.e. What does your fairy tale reveal about issues of power and difference, our values, or the representation of particular groups?

Notes:

1. Source Requirements: I would like to see you locate and use a range of sources, including, but not limited to: 3 versions of your
fairy tale, 3 scholarly sources that offer an interpretation or argument about your fairy tale, and 2 alternative sources related to your fairy tale—film versions, images, fiction, poetry, song lyrics, television or radio programs—that help you represent, illustrate, and/or contextualize your topic and issues related to it.

2. It’s crucial for this essay that you keep in mind that fairy tales don’t exist in a vacuum and that we can’t just take them at face value. As you look at the changes your fairy tale has undergone over time, you should consider how these changes reflect the values and norms of the times. You might think about how our own ideological beliefs have been influenced or informed by fairy tales. For instance, our ideas about love, marriage, and sex may have been shaped (without our knowing) by fairy tale logic, structure, and values. You might focus on pop culture, and how fairy tale beliefs show up in popular movies, music, television shows, and video games. You should also consider what messages are encoded in the fairy tale. Don’t look at the obvious—for instance, remember that “Little Red Riding Hood” is saying more than “don’t talk to strangers.” Your fairy tale might have encoded meaning about sex, love, religion, morality, gender roles, class, race.

Details

Your final 10-12 page essay is due on Thursday, March 26th and is worth 30% of your final grade. Your essay should be carefully edited, should include accurate and consistent MLA or APA citation, and should reflect your perspective, your voice, and your active, engaged presence.
CURRICULUM VITAE
Jonathan A. Udelson
Department of English, 315 Bingham Humanities, Louisville, KY
40292 917.428.0489 // jonathan.udelson@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Rhetoric and Composition
University of Louisville
2014-2019 (Expected)
Dissertation: Character Arcs: Mapping Creative Writers’ Trajectories into the Composition Classroom
Committee: Bronwyn Williams (Co-chair), Andrea Olinger (Co-chair), Paul Griner, Timothy Mayers

Master of Fine Arts, Creative Writing
The City College of New York
2005-2010
Thesis: You Tell Me: (stories)
Thesis Director: Mark Mirsky

Bachelor of Arts, Individualized Study
New York University
2000-2004
Concentrations in Media Studies, Film Studies, Literature, Creative Writing

PUBLICATIONS

ACADEMIC


CREATIVE & OTHER


UNDER REVIEW


WORKS IN PROGRESS

Ristow, Ben and Jon Udelson, editors. Qualitative Approaches to Studies in Creative Writing. (In negotiation with Bloomsbury Academic and Multilingual Matters.) Expected 2020.


GRANTS AND AWARDS, SELECTED

University Fellowship, School of Interdisciplinary and Graduate Studies University of Louisville. 2014–2015, 2017–2018 ($20,000)
Graduate Student Council Research Grant Award
University of Louisville. Fall 2018 ($430)

Graduate Network in Arts & Sciences Research Fund Grant
University of Louisville. Spring 2016, Spring 2017, Spring 2018, Fall 2018 ($100 - $250)

Pedagogical Development Cohort Scholar
The City College of New York. Winter 2013 ($1000)

Faculty Cohort in Hybrid Online Course Training
The City College of New York. Summer 2011 ($500)

Pedagogy Fellow

Adjunct-CET Professional Development Fund
The City College of New York. Summer 2010 ($3000)

Archer City Writer’s Retreat Resident
Archer City, TX. Summer 2008 ($3000)

CONFERENCE ACCEPTANCES & PRESENTATIONS


“Creative Writing Styles and Transfer: Creative Writers in the Composition Classroom.” Thomas R. Watson Conference: “Mobility Work in Composition.” Louisville, KY. Fall 2016.

“Creative Writing Styles and Transfer: Creative Writers Teaching in the Composition Classroom.” Creative Writing Studies Conference. Asheville, NC. Fall 2016.


ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE

Assistant Director of Business Communication Writing Lab
University of Louisville, College of Business, Fall 2018

- Coach College of Business students in written communication, presentation development, and document design
- Copyedit for publication scholarly works by business faculty
- Provide writing, editorial, multimodal, and research assistance for departmental projects, including forthcoming textbook *Competent: Becoming a Better Business Communicator*
Special Projects Assistant, Creative Writing
University of Louisville, 2016-17
• Coordinated the “Sonnets on a Sunday,” a sonnet writing contest for University of Louisville and Walden Theatre students
  o In celebration of the arrival and tour of Shakespeare’s First Folio in Louisville, KY
• Teamed with colleagues and professionals in and around Louisville to produce performance by University of Louisville and Commonwealth Theatre Center students
• Served as liaison for collaborative work with other programs at University of Louisville

Assistant Director of Creative Writing
University of Louisville, 2015-2016
• Organized University of Louisville’s Axton Reading Series, which brings distinguished writers from across the country to University of Louisville
• Managed submissions and judges for University of Louisville’s Calvino Prize, a fiction competition awarding outstanding fiction in the fabulist style of Italo Calvino
• Worked with colleagues and professionals outside the English Department to arrange CART captioning at all reading events
• Collaborated with Director of Creative Writing and IT Department to create a digital archive of Creative Writing program materials, audio recordings of readings, and transcripts

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE, 2015–2017; 2018–2019
• Business Communication: 1 section, College of Business
• Science and Technical Writing: 1 section
• Intermediate College Writing: 2 sections
• Business Writing: 1 section
• Introduction to Creative Writing: 1 section
• Introduction to College Writing: 1 section

BARUCH COLLEGE, 2010–2014
• Writing II: Violent by Design: 5 sections
• Writing I: Perception & Reality: 1 section
• Writing I: Writing the Real: 1 section

THE CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK, 2007–2014
• Writing for the Sciences: 7 sections
• Freshman Inquiry Writing Seminar: Killer Stories: 8 sections (3 Honors sections)
• Freshman Inquiry Writing Seminar: Comics & Conflict: 1 section
• Freshman Inquiry Writing Seminar: The Graphic Novel: 1 section
- Freshman Inquiry Writing Seminar: Contemporary Popular Music: 1 section
- Writing Lab: 1 section, Early College Program
- Prose Workshop: 3 sections
- New Student Seminar: 2 sections
- Critical Reading and Writing II: 1 section
- World Humanities: 1 section, Teaching Assistant
- Freshman Composition: 1 section

**Lehman College, 2010**

- Introduction to Computer Usage and Applications: 1 section, Early College Program

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**Writing Center & Tutoring Experience**

**University of Louisville**

- Consultant, University of Louisville Writing Center. Spring 2017, Spring 2019
  - In-person and online, through the Virtual Writing Center
  - Contributed content on style pedagogy for Writing Center website
- Bizcomm Coach, University of Louisville, College of Business. Fall 2018
  - Offered tutoring in written and oral communication, as well as in presentation design

**The City College of New York**

- Writing Consultant & Workshop Developer, Student Support Services. Fall 2012–Spring 2013
  - Developed and led three-part “Personal Statement Workshop”
  - Developed and led two-part “Cover Letter Workshop”
- Consultant, The City College Writing Center. Fall 2010–Spring 2012
- Writing Consultant, Skadden Arps Program. Fall 2010–Spring 2011
  - Part of a coaching and tutoring program for pre-law students, sponsored by Skadden Arps international law firm

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**Additional Professional Service**

Editor, Research: Qualitative & Quantitative
*Journal of Creative Writing Studies*
Spring 2017–Present

Chair of Creative Writing Standing Group
Conference on College Composition and Communication
Spring 2017–Present
Peer Mentor – Ph.D. Students
University of Louisville, English Department
2016, 2018

Co-Editor
Cardinal Compositions: A Print and Digital Journal of Undergraduate Student Work
Spring 2017–Fall 2017

Co-chair of Creative Writing Special Interest Group
College Composition and Communication
Spring 2017

Submission Reader
Fiction Magazine
The City College of New York, English Department
2007–2010

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Conference on College Composition and Communication

National Council of Teachers of English

Creative Writing Studies Organization

REFERENCES

Bronwyn Williams
Professor of English and Director of University Writing Center, University of Louisville
bronwyn.williams@louisville.edu
502-852-2173

Andrea Olinger
Assistant Professor of English, University of Louisville
andrea.olinger@louisville.edu
502-852-3051

Paul Griner
Professor of English, University of Louisville
paul.griner@louisville.edu
502-852-3053

Kiki Petrosino
Associate Professor of English and Director of Creative Writing, University of Louisville
cmpetr04@louisville.edu
502-852-2186
Timothy Mayers
Associate Professor of English/Writing Studies, Millersville University
timothy.mayers@millersville.edu
717-871-7296