



INKSHED

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for the Study of Writing and Reading

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

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In the February 1990 *Inkshed*, the University of Alberta advertised a tenure-track position aimed at a specialist in "modern language-composition-rhetoric" who is interested in "helping to plan and administer the Department's courses in composition and rhetoric, from first year to graduate levels." It is the kind of position that we have been demanding universities offer for years.

Yet in the same issue, Kay Stewart laments that "this is the third time we've tried to fill this position." Soon the University of Alberta may give up and advertise in the United States. What is happening here? Is the field of Canadian rhetoric so sickly that it cannot produce a single person interested in such a made-to-order opportunity?

As I see it, the major obstacle to filling this position is the very thing that makes it so important that it be filled: its high standards. The posting asks for a Ph.D. in the field, teaching experience, even publications. If rhetoric is to be a respected discipline, it must be populated at least in part by people who are sufficiently engaged with it to meet this description. But *where are these Ph.D.s in the field going to come from?* There is, to my knowledge, only one institution in Canada that offers a Ph.D. with a specific specialization in English Language/Rhetoric: the University of British Columbia. But only a handful of students have graduated from the program, and I am aware of no others that graduate Ph.D.s in rhetoric. Why?

We are all familiar with laments that English departments neither respect nor support rhetoric, especially the branch of rhetoric more properly described as composition theory. But there is more involved here. Rhetoric in Canada, at the university level at least, has simply not reached the critical mass needed to become self-sustaining as a discipline. For instance, U.B.C. had a phenomenal team of specialists in the field, Andrea Lunsford and Nan Johnson. But a team of two simply cannot support a discipline as wide-ranging as rhetoric. Glen Deer's recent appointment should have been a sign that the program was expanding in proportion to the influence it was beginning to have across the country. But although Glen provided important new blood, his appointment was not a sign of expansion in numbers. Rather it was an attempt to forestall contraction, a replacement for Andrea who, having tried for too long to do too much with too little, left for Ohio. There she has found a department that *does* have enough scholars to have a real conversation without running up a phone bill the size of the national debt, enough graduate supervisors that students do not have a career-threatening crisis if one of them leaves, enough teachers to spread the monumental workload of teaching undergraduate composition. Acceptance of and reward for serious work in the discipline of rhetoric is only part of what universities like Ohio can offer. This critical mass of scholars and teachers is also an essential component of a thriving rhetoric program.

This lack of critical mass in the discipline does more than drive people away to greener pastures. It eviscerates the entire educational system by which disciplines sustain themselves: the feeder system of courses at the undergraduate and M.A. level that induces students to take the field seriously. This means more than a hierarchy of courses that teach writing as a skill, although these are important too. It means undergraduate courses in both the history and theory of traditional rhetoric from Aristotle to Burke. It means specialized courses at a senior level that concentrate on periods and figures in rhetoric so that students can have more than

a passing acquaintance with its major ideas. It means courses on how people write and how they learn to write, on the cognitive processes that underlie language processing.

But these courses are so thinly spread as to be almost transparent. Most universities offer at the very most one undergraduate course in the history and theory of rhetoric, and perhaps one graduate course. The theory and methodology of teaching composition is firmly centred in the Faculty of Education, invisible to any English students but those who already care enough to cross disciplines and take a few options outside their department. These courses are mainly taken not by students who might one day want to apply for positions like the one the U. of A. has been advertising but by students who want to be school teachers. Those students who take these courses and go on to work in universities are almost certain to end up in the Faculty of Education, researching how school-age students learn to write. Can you imagine a Ph.D. in English Education applying for the U. of A. position? Or being accepted if she did?

In short, there is no sound mechanism within the typical English department for getting students to smell an interesting field of study and head for it, and no way for graduate courses in the field to establish a solid base. Rather, such graduate courses must start virtually from scratch with students whose undergraduate training is elsewhere. (Imagine teaching graduate courses in literature to students who have had only one introductory survey.)

Of course, many professional faculties such as Law and Medicine have always got on well without an explicit undergraduate base. But these are highly visible (and highly paid) professions that have no trouble attracting a clientele. Rhetoric, on the other hand, is only barely recognised as a field in this country. Without a network of related undergraduate courses, students have no role models to suggest that it is an area worth specializing in. And of course, without the pressure of undergraduates coming up from below, what incentive does a department have to lay on enough graduate offerings to justify awarding a specialized degree?

Thus the malaise in Canadian rhetoric goes far deeper than the lack of job opportunities. Canadian universities are beginning to want a certain job done--even occasionally willing to pay enough to have it done right--but they cannot provide the educational infrastructure to teach people to do it. Like mule breeders that have to keep breeding horses with donkeys to get new stock, universities will have to keep converting English Literature and English Education specialists rather than using rhetoricians to breed rhetoricians.

I wish the analogy of rhetoricians as mules were not apt in so many other ways as well--I'm tired of being whipped. But maybe our strong backs and stubbornness will eventually get us where we want to be. A few Ph.D.s are trickling out of institutions such as U.B.C. A few jobs are opening up, such as the one at U. of A. The *Inkshed* survey of writing programs (March 1988) contained several highly encouraging signals. Waterloo has a real M.A. program in rhetoric and composition and is working toward a Ph.D. program. Memorial has not one but two graduate-level courses in rhetoric. The Faculty of Education at McGill, through the Centre for the Study of Teaching and Writing, has opened an avenue for Education students to become genuinely interested and experienced in university-level

rhetoric. Perhaps this trend will gather enough momentum to result in a truly self-sustaining field.

On the other hand, could there be something essential to the psychology of the typical Canadian English department that keeps such programs the exceptions rather than the rule? Canadian English departments seem to have grave difficulty assimilating the humanities bias of philosophical rhetoric and the social sciences bias of composition studies. They can accept, however reluctantly, the job of teaching writing, but not the job of teaching writing teachers--nor can most Education faculties allow this territorial encroachment. A specialist in "modern language-composition-rhetoric" is so firmly interdisciplinary that the typically Balkanized university is structurally incapable of producing one.

In her bitter address to the 4 Cs in 1985 (printed as "Breaking our Bonds and Reaffirming our Connections," *CCC* 36 [1985]: 272-82), Maxine Hairston suggested a radical solution: why not, like speech communication before us, simply walk out on the English department? But aside from philosophical objections to introducing yet more fragmentation into an already too-fragmented field, there is the practical problem of where to go. To establish a separate department of rhetoric and composition would require precisely that body of teaching and scholarship that cannot be created without it--Catch 22 again. In the U.S., Hairston's suggestion provoked hot debate; here it is merely laughable.

Interdisciplinary faculties, such as the Faculty of General Studies here at the University of Calgary, may provide a way out of the dilemma. Such faculties can provide both the scholarly infrastructure and the cross-disciplinary connections that rhetoric must have to survive. They may be able to allow us to do what Maxine Hairston insists we must do: not just get out from under the umbrella of literature studies but also to "extend our connections to disciplines outside our field--not only to linguistics, philosophy, cognitive psychology, and speech communication, but to less obviously connected fields such as biology, economics, and even the arts" (279-80).

Yet here too there are deeply corrosive problems. At the University of Calgary, General Studies has the bottom end of the field, a university-wide testing and remedial writing program that can provide a pool of experience in practical composition teaching. It also has the top end, a handful of courses in practical and theoretical rhetoric at the third and fourth year level. But the English department has the entire middle slice, for it has full responsibility for all introductory credit composition. And language teaching methodology is still taught by the Faculty of Education. Rhetoric in General Studies is allied, not with the humanistic discipline of composition, but Communications Studies in the social sciences tradition. It is this tradition, not what readers of *Inkshed* would think of as rhetoric and composition, that provides much of the centre of gravity of the undergraduate program and completely dominates the graduate program. We will never, ever turn out a Ph.D. in "modern language-composition-rhetoric" unless we can create a definition of "Communications Studies" that includes not only mass media studies but also theoretical and practical rhetoric.

Perhaps this is not impossible, though as we attempt it we often feel we would prefer to be getting a camel through the eye of a needle. Money is of course a primary problem, and

so are territorial border wars. It is not entirely clear to me whether this fight is more or less difficult or valuable than trying to cold-start rhetoric in small corners of the English department. However, although working under the banner of Communications rather than English will certainly produce something very different from Ohio State, or even U.B.C., it may be worth a try. It might even turn out to be as exciting as it is frustrating. I will report on this program at more length some other time. For the moment, at least I can report that in a faculty of General Studies, no one can tell us that our scholarship is in the wrong discipline.

In the short run, however, the U. of A. position will probably be filled by an American.

* * *

A Call for Information

The above article makes a number of assumptions based on anecdotal evidence. I hope that I have started a conversation that will continue in these pages; however, I also would like data of a somewhat more formal nature to substantiate my assertion that there is little infrastructure to support rhetoric in Canada.

On the last page of this issue is a brief survey which I hope proves me wrong. If people from as many institutions as possible would fill it out and return it to me, I will be more able to assess how far away we are from the "critical mass" that I argue for in the article. I am particularly interested in the relationship between English departments and Faculties of Education. I have identified a vertical rift with English teaching writing and Education teaching writing teachers who do not pursue careers in English departments. Is this rift really as wide as I have made it out to be? How has McGill managed to bridge it--or have they?

I would also appreciate hearing from some of our American counterparts. Why do *you* think there are several American institutions offering Ph.D.s in "modern language-composition-rhetoric" there and practically none here? Or is the grass really greener on your side of the fence?

Roger? Jean? Andrea?

General Studies
University of Calgary

RESPONSE TO KAY STEWART: CANADIAN CANDIDATES FOR RHETORIC AND
COMPOSITION POSITIONS // // HEATHER GRAVES, ROGER GRAVES, DENNIS QUON

Ask not what you can do for your country,
but what your country can do for you.

With the arrival of *Inkshed* (February 1990), we learned of Kay Stewart's plea for response to her questions about the search for rhetoric and composition job candidates for Canadian universities. Given that we are three potential candidates studying at The Ohio State University, we were especially interested in responding to this request. Let us begin by noting that it is Kay Stewart, in an English Department, asking why her Department can't fill an advertised position. We'd like to take the question back a step and begin with, "Where will we, Ph.D. candidates in rhetoric and/or composition, place ourselves in the Canadian academy?"

There are options. Indeed. Stan Straw is in an Education department; Susan Stevenson teaches in an Engineering department; Doug Brent teaches in a department of General Studies. But why do we even have to look outside of an English department? A reason may be that composition studies is not valued in Canadian English departments. There are historical and cultural accounts for this undervaluation, but we do not have space to go into these here. Instead we will focus on the current status of rhetoric and composition in Canadian institutions and on the more important problem of definition. What constitutes composition study? What constitutes rhetoric? Are they fields? disciplines? Before addressing the question of why rhetoric and composition positions are difficult to fill in Canada, these other questions must first be answered. In the four comments below, we've tried to give some answers to Kay's questions, as well as present perspectives that induce genuine "intellectual transaction."

There are very few Canadians trained to teach and research in rhetoric and composition. How many of us are there? We need to find out how many Canadians are doing graduate work in this field. What and where are the opportunities to do graduate work? There aren't many opportunities in Canada to do graduate work in rhetoric and composition, and travelling to the U.S. to study is not an option for everybody in Canada who might want to do graduate work in these fields.

How much promotion and support do rhetoric and composition receive? With little disciplinary security and even less encouragement, who would want to specialize in this field? In a 1953 article, "The Humanities--60 Years," A.S.P. Woodhouse complained that the present aid forthcoming for the humanities was inadequate and that Canada depended upon the United States for "aid at the pre-doctoral and post-doctoral level. But what is Canada doing to help herself from her own resources? Little enough." Today, in 1990, only a very few of us have received any kind of Canadian-sponsored aid. We're not just talking about financial aid; we're also referring to the scarce but precious intellectual and academic nurturing of interest in rhetoric and composition at Canadian universities. Why did we, in particular, come to The Ohio State University?

There are many varying definitions of "rhetoric and composition." Even knowledgeable members of these fields don't agree on definitions. These areas are often interdisciplinarily

associated or contradistinguished in manifold ways. Some people assume that rhetoric and composition are akin to linguistics and philology; others locate them with educational theory and practice; still others see their connections with cognitive studies; and yet others associate them with epistemology or cultural studies. When the University of Alberta, for example, advertises a position in rhetoric and composition, which definition(s) are they invoking?

Research and study in rhetoric and composition include methods not traditionally associated with literary scholarship. While English departments do not engage strictly in literary scholarship, their research doesn't generally include empirical or theoretical enquiry into discourse beyond literary texts, biography, bibliography, and literary history. In rhetoric and composition, we respect and use these traditional methods of literary enquiry, but we also value empirical research (including case study methodology, ethnographies, true and quasi-experiments) and original theoretical speculation. We also define the subjects of our research more broadly than traditional textual studies; for us, student texts are very important and not simply instruments of evaluation.

We read the University of Alberta's job announcement with great interest, of course, but puzzle over what constitutes a "suitable" candidate. Besides "publications" and "teaching experience," what determines a candidate's suitability? What kind of publications are acceptable? For example, how does the University of Alberta's Department of English define research in rhetoric or composition? In terms of publication record? In terms of administrative service? In terms of research interests and methods? As you can see, we are left with many questions about this position, questions that likely apply to other positions as well, questions that must be answered before we can find the position suitable for us, before you can find a candidate suitable for your program.

Department of English
The Ohio State University

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CALL FOR PROPOSALS
CANADIAN CAUCUS SPONSORED SESSION: 1991 CCCC IN BOSTON

Members of the CCCC Canadian caucus plan to propose a session for next year's conference entitled "Making Our Own Traditions." Our intention is to continue exploring the theme of composing ourselves differently by focussing on how the lack of a long-standing tradition of freshman composition affects the teaching of composition and/or literature in Canadian post-secondary education. As a fairly high percentage of us teach in non-traditional contexts, we thought it might be interesting to explore how we make our own traditions both within and without English departments.

Depending on the number of responses to this proposal, we will submit either a regular session with three 20-minute presentations or a roundtable discussion with five or six 10-minute presentations.

We need your proposals as soon as possible and **no later than May 15th**. Please send them to

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* * * * *

**EMPOWERMENT THROUGH COMPOSITION: ECONOMIC SURVIVAL,
BILINGUALISM, AND ETHNIC PRIDE** / / / SUE RICKELS

"This, this, is the first humanistic and historical task of the oppressed: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well.... Only power that springs from the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both. Any attempt to 'soften' the power of the oppressor in deference to the weakness of the oppressed almost always manifests itself in the form of false generosity; indeed, the attempt never goes beyond this. In order to have the continued opportunity to express their 'generosity,' the oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well. An unjust social order is the permanent fault of this 'generosity,' which is nourished by death, despair, and poverty."

--Paulo Freire, *The Poverty of The Oppressed*

Roger Graves' article in the February 1990 edition of *Inkshed*, "Moving From Revolution to Exploration: Changing the Ways We Teach," has given me a chance to reflect on empowering students through composition from my unique context at Laredo Junior College on the Texas-Mexican border in the most Hispanic city in the United States. Empowerment through composition is not an abstract issue here in the context of Laredo; therefore, the idea of basing courses on our "ideological beliefs about writing" rather than from an empirical method based on pragmatic considerations seems oppressive. While I too deplore authoritarianism and see my role as teacher as that of facilitator, I perceive a "false generosity," as Freire puts it, in the "exploration" and "construction" of knowledge that Graves proposes.

Graves draws on current pedagogical theories, particularly the work of James Reither, about teaching composition when he states that "students must have authority in the classroom over their own knowing and writing teachers should intervene only at 'stuck-points and teaching points,' assignments should be rhetorical (driven by student interest and need), and teachers should function as facilitators" (4). I would like to address his questions about "what interactions between writing and culture we should incorporate in writing courses" and "how to negotiate the interests and background of our students against the interests and backgrounds of the institution they are encountering."

Ideologically, I am in agreement with current writing theories that seek to empower students. Yet I see much of current theory as potentially oppressive because of the "false

generosity" to students such as mine at Laredo Junior College. As a teacher I know how to name what's going on even if I have no answers. At least by defining some issues, I give the students a reality, something useful.

I see the problem here as twofold: how to get our students out of a linguistic ghetto while fostering pride in their unique ethnic heritage.

CONTEXT

Laredo, Texas, is located on the north bank of the Rio Grande River. Historically, Laredo (founded in 1755) was part of Mexico, and our sister city, Nuevo Laredo, was settled in 1848 by former Laredo families who chose to cross the river to remain Mexican citizens when Texas joined the Union. The sister cities have remained close through family and economic ties. Laredo is geographically isolated, 150 miles from San Antonio and 150 miles from Monterrey. It is the largest inland port in the United States, located at the end of the U.S. I-35 and the Pan-American Highway that stretches through Mexico into Central America. Laredo is 98% Hispanic, making it the most Hispanic city in the United States. (San Antonio is about 50% Hispanic; El Paso, 65%; and other South Texas cities such as McAllen and Brownsville are about 85%.) Laredo's population is estimated at 120,000 while our sister city, Nuevo Laredo, is between 350,000-400,000. Thirty-four per cent of our population is under the age of eighteen; half of Mexico's population is under the age of eighteen. The median household income for 1990 is \$19,000. Sixty-one per cent of the population has not finished high school.

ECONOMIC SURVIVAL

There can be no empowerment of students on the Texas-Mexican border if they cannot survive economically. Because of the availability of cheap labour from Nuevo Laredo, Laredo is a minimum-wage town. The biggest employer in Laredo is the government--federal, state, and local. U.S. Customs, Immigration and Naturalization, Border Patrol, Department of Agriculture, and two school districts are some government agencies that offer middle class jobs. Laredo's border is less that of a river than that of the northern tip of the Third World. When James Michener did research for *Texas* seven years ago, he concluded that the Texas-Mexican border functions economically and sociologically much like a country unto itself. Many of our students come to us with specific career goals in nursing, education, and law enforcement which will allow them to enter the middle class. Empowerment through composition must ensure that these students can pass standardized exams in their fields, write clearly and grammatically for reports in medicine, law enforcement and education. Their welfare and the common welfare rests on this. It would be a "false generosity" on my part not to demand high standards from them and to send them out to "construct knowledge" when I, an Anglo member of the "oppressive" class, know the rules of the game. My students don't have time to construct or discover something that I, as "expert", can coach them in.

BILINGUALISM

While Laredo is a bilingual city, Spanish is the dominant spoken language. Indeed, most employment in Laredo requires a knowledge of Spanish. It is not, however, the more refined

Spanish (Castellano) of Mexico City or the high school Spanish teacher; natives refer to it as border Spanish, Tex-Mex, or Spanglish. Many of our students do not know Spanish well enough to survive economically in Monterrey or Mexico City, nor English well enough to make it out of the barrio in San Antonio or Houston. Yet it is the presence of Spanish that marks the cultural heritage and pride of our students.

In an effort to raise academic standards, in September 1989 the state of Texas began implementing a new law that requires all public colleges and universities in Texas to test all students in reading, mathematics, and writing and to place in mandatory remediation all students who fail the statewide exam (TASP--Texas Academic Skills Program). The writing portion of the test contains an essay component to be graded holistically. In addition, last fall our English department instituted a holistically graded final exam essay for our college-transfer freshman composition course. Empowering our students through composition means making sure they can write edited standard English.

Furthermore, sixteen states (including California, Florida, and Arizona) have adopted measures making English their official language. Texas is undoubtedly going to face this issue in the near future. My students have never heard of the movement, and if I don't tell them they may never know until it is too late.

ETHNIC PRIDE

Because of their geographic and linguistic isolation from mainstream American or Mexican culture, our students have little awareness of their unique cultural identity. Perhaps the most difficult challenge I have in empowering my students is to encourage them to find their voice, their identity as individuals in a unique culture. Here I am clearly the facilitator, but undoubtedly in a more active way than Graves. This is not by choice, but necessity, for I am the outsider who wishes them to see their world, not through the eyes of a stranger, as the Anglo sees it, but to differentiate it for themselves. Frequently they lack self-esteem and have little awareness of the power of their culture, and without economic security or a viable language, they remain silent. Like most American freshmen, they know little about American or world history, current events or literature, and they know nothing about Chicano literature, Mexican writers, or Mexican history.

At this point, through activities and assignments that are process-oriented, students begin to explore and discover a self and a voice. They start to think critically about themselves, their culture, and its relationship to mainstream American culture.

TEXTS

The St. Martin's Guide to Writing
Vocabulary 3600

Photocopied newspaper and magazine articles

Field research for profile: Laredo and Nuevo Laredo

ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

In freshman composition, 95% of the course grade is based on their writing. Students must pass the English department's final essay in order to pass the course. They write eleven essays during the semester: five multiple draft essays, five impromptu essays, and a final essay which is an evaluation of their portfolio and the course with suggestions for improving things they like as well as what "didn't work." They keep a journal which counts as a twelfth essay grade. Class participation (discussion, peer editing), quizzes on vocabulary, and readings comprise 5% of the grade. Although their final grade is based on the quality of their writing at the end of the course and their completion of all assignments, each essay is carefully marked for organization, unity, focus, and development. In addition, I mark most errors in grammar, mechanics, and usage and individualize instruction in these areas. Some students receive assistance at our learning centre in the form of computerized instruction as well as individual tutoring and editing on multiple-draft essays. Because I require all out-of-class essays to be typed, all students receive instruction in using Professional Write by the learning centre staff.

Journals: Journal topics are assigned for two-week periods. I give a list of journal prompts that require a personal response relating to the readings and rhetorical strategies that we are studying. The journal gives me a chance to dialogue with my students--I respond to their entries and reveal myself--my voice. When I return the journals, they eagerly start reading the comments and often come to me after class or in my office to continue the dialogue. The journal comments allow me to break down the teacher/student dichotomy. I have not had them share their journals with one another because the Mexican American people have a very private dignity that I respect. I want them to feel as uninhibited as possible in expressing themselves.

Conferences: Conferences are the backbone of my course. The first conference is crucial for building trust. I schedule conferences for everyone during extended office hours, and I also have conferences during class while they peer edit.

Essays: At the beginning of the course, I tell my students that they have two kinds of writing to master: the multiple-draft essay with conferencing and peer editing and the timed, impromptu essay. The multiple-draft essays encourage critical thinking and the discovery of a "voice" while the timed essays are aimed at test-taking survival skills. In practice, the two approaches and the journal reinforce each other. To make an analogy with learning to play the piano, the journal writing is like improvisation, the timed essays are like sight reading, and the multiple draft essays are like recital pieces.

The in-class essays include a variety of topics that usually change each semester. Some of the topics include: Influences on My Writing, Why One-Third of Texas Students Drop Out of High School, The Case For (or Against) Mandatory Testing and Remediation, Why We Should (Should Not) Have an Exit Essay in English, Compare and Contrast: American Soaps and Spanish Novellas, or an American City and a Mexican City.

Multiple-draft essays begin with autobiography--Remembering People. We read

Wideman's "The Argument," Rodriguez' "My Parents," Angelou's "Uncle Willie," Hurst's "The Scarlet Ibis." The second essay is to compare and contrast two of these essays or Baker's "Smooth and Easy" and Ellerbee's "The Lost Weekend." Essay three is reporting information, with each of them using a different cover article from *Newsweek* and giving a brief oral report. Essay four is taking a position on bilingual education or English as the official language movement. Essay five is a profile that involves field research and interview here in Laredo/Nuevo Laredo. The profiles have been very successful in promoting ethnic pride and self-confidence. The border has truly come alive to me through these papers. Students begin fearfully, then become excited about their subjects, and rework the final draft with an eye toward their audience--usually the person interviewed. They have profiled an immigration judge, a state senator, a curandera (folk healer), a chivero (a Mexican smuggler of such American goods as stereos and small appliances), the director of Ballet Folklorico, the Nuevo Santander Museum, a sixteen-year-old street boy of Nuevo Laredo, a retired matador of Nuevo Laredo, the director of the Texas Tourist Bureau, the used clothing business to mention a few. This is a major research project with Laredo/Nuevo Laredo as a "text."

CONCLUDING REMARKS

While the context I teach in is radically different from Graves', I think the issues I confront are faced by many community colleges and universities in the United States as we move toward a future where whites are a minority and the English-only movement is gaining momentum. Canadians have tended to foster their ethnic diversity far more than Americans and have already faced the bilingual controversy and linguistic tensions in a multicultural nation.

Graves' proposed course might work for a middle-class Midwestern American school, but for my students it would spell the doom of the false generosity of the oppressor that Freire addresses so clearly.

English Department
Laredo Junior College

4 C'S PRE-CONVENTION WORKSHOP

"ETHICS IN THE PLURALISTIC CLASSROOM: HOW DO WE RESPOND TO WRITING THAT PRESENTS WORLDVIEWS WE FIND REPUGNANT?" / / / PHYLLIS ARTISS

First a brief account of the origins of the workshop. One provocative question that cropped up in the Inkshed IV conference (Winnipeg, 1987) was "How should we respond to student papers expressing views that differ profoundly from our own?" Because there seemed to be so much interest in that question we decided to make "Values and Evaluation" the theme of Inkshed V (St. John's, 1988). Although many discussions at Inkshed V related indirectly to that question, it struck me after the conference was over that we hadn't tackled it directly, with specific examples of writing from our own students, clients or others whose papers we are expected to evaluate. Last May at Inkshed VI eight of us sat down over lunch at Bowen Lodge to discuss a proposal for a workshop to explore this issue at this year's 4 C's. Our proposal was accepted, and all of the Inkshedders who originally worked on it, plus about a dozen others, gathered in Chicago on March 21 for what proved to be a most productive exchange. Because it worked so well we plan to propose a similar workshop for next year's 4 C's, and a number of us intend to conduct similar events in our own institutions. In case any other Inkshedders want to join us in our proposal for the 4 C's in Boston next March, or try out something similar in their own institutions, I'll give a brief rundown of this year's workshop.

All participants (including leaders) were asked to bring copies of at least one "problem paper" that they had difficulty evaluating because the opinions expressed in it seemed racist, sexist, violent or offensive in other ways. For the first hour and a half we introduced ourselves, briefly describing the papers we brought and the situation in which each was submitted. After a break we passed around and read each other's papers--silently, for the most part, though some informal discussion took place as we read. This took up the remainder of the morning. After lunch we discussed the issues arising from the papers, and shared ideas about approaches to use in different situations. We then did some inkshedding and had a brief discussion about possible follow-ups--which took us the rest of the afternoon.

The format worked well, I thought, in that there was virtually no distinction between those designated as "leaders" and the other participants. Everyone contributed; everyone was on an equal footing (except for me--as chair I had both the advantage of directing traffic and the disadvantage of having to keep out of the traffic myself--or of trying to, at any rate). The discussion touched on everything from practical advice about grading specific papers to the wider political and philosophical implications of the choices we make in grading such papers, or indeed in allowing or encouraging students to write on controversial issues.

Leaders: Ann Beer, Jane Ledwell-Brown, and Carolyn Pittenger (McGill); Jean Chadwick (Memorial); Rick Coe and Anne Hungerford (Simon Fraser); Susan Drain (Mount St. Vincent); Kristine Hansen (Brigham Young); Jacqueline Howse (New Hampshire); Nancy Mack (Wright State); Kathleen Shaw (Modesto); Graham Smart (Bank of Canada).

Department of English
Memorial University

PRELIMINARY PROGRAMME

**INKSHED VII
Marginalia and Other Rhetorics**

SATURDAY MAY 12th

4:00-6:00 Introduction to Inkshed VII
Exploring Literacy

Jamie MacKinnon (*Bank of Canada*) and **Lorri Neilson** (*Mount Saint Vincent University*)

6:00-7:30 Defining and Defying Margins

Phyllis Artiss (*Memorial University of Newfoundland*)

a theoretical perspective on the defining of margins and some pedagogical attempts to defy and transform the structures of academic language and power

SUNDAY MAY 13th

Sessions today focus on academic structures and strategies, at both the institutional and classroom levels.

9:00-10:15 Teaching at the Margins

Hilary Clark (*Simon Fraser University*) and **Elsbeth Stuckey** (*REACH, South Carolina*)

Break

10:30-11:30 Writing Instruction Inside/Outside Canadian University English Departments

Roger Graves (*Ohio State University*)

Lunch

1:15-2:45 Classroom Practices

Bill Boswell (*McGill University*), **Jack Robinson** (*Grant MacEwan Community College*), and **Gail Heald-Taylor** (*University of Windsor*)

Break

3:00-4:30 Teachers Silencing Texts: Texts Silencing Readers

Stan Straw and **Robert Graham** (*University of Manitoba*)

5:15-5:30 Depart for Hubbards

MONDAY MAY 14th

Sessions today focus on the role of gender

9:00-10:15 Quiet Voices/Women and Schooling

Ann Beer (*McGill University*) and **Katherine McManus** (*Memorial University of Newfoundland*)

Break

10:30-11:45 Women's Voices

Heather Graves (*Ohio State University*) and **Barbara Powell** (*University of Regina*)

Lunch

1:15-2:45 Beyond (Dis)Identification: Feminist Approaches to Teaching "A&P"

Deanne Bogdan, **Alice Pitt**, **Judith Millen** (*OISE*)

Break

3:00-4:00 Concluding Observations (Panel)

4:00-4:30 Next year in Montréal?

INKSHED VII

MARGINALIA AND OTHER RHETORICS

Inkshedders new and old are warmly invited to participate in the seventh Inkshed working conference. This year's conference takes place on the campus of Mount Saint Vincent University; here on the margin of the city, our wooded hillside provides paths for walks, ponds for reflection, and a vantage point overlooking the waters of the Bedford Basin.

The conference programme is taking shape nicely: a range of proposals have been accepted, and the conference committee is working with the proposers to weave a thematic web of ideas about boundaries, margins, and otherness in reading and writing. A preliminary programme will be sent to registrants as soon as it is available.

We are confidently looking forward to an engaging, active working conference--but we have not forgotten the fun which has characterized Inksheds in the past. Allan and Lorrie Neilsen have invited us all to their home in Hubbards, on Nova Scotia's South Shore, for a lobster feed and Talent Night. And of course, wherever Inkshedders gather, there is a warmth and an intensity of interaction that makes for good times.

The first session of the conference will be held on Saturday evening May 12th, after the conclusion of CCTE; you should try to be here by 3:00 p.m. The last session will be Monday afternoon, May 14th. Travel to and from Halifax should present little problem; the airport is half an hour from the Mount. Please note that the conference includes a Saturday night, so you should be able to get the best possible air fare.

Please register early. Conference registration is strictly limited to forty-five; and registration is first-come first-served. A deposit of \$60 (or the full fee of \$175) is required with your registration. The conference fee (one size fits all) entitles you to full participation in and all materials for the conference sessions, two nights' accommodation in residence, and six meals, beginning with supper Saturday evening and ending with lunch Monday. The lobster feast is included. If you require accommodation on Monday evening, please indicate below; you can pay the modest additional fee on arrival. Please note that there are very few double rooms available; if you wish to share, please indicate that request below. Registration forms mailed after April 1st will incur a late registration fee of \$15. If you will be accompanied by someone who will not be attending the conference, a meal-and-accommodation-only package is available for \$110.

The Inkshed VII committee is looking forward to welcoming you to Halifax.

Susan Drain
Allan Neilsen

Kenna Manos
Lorri Neilsen

MARGINALIA AND OTHER RHETORICS

INKSHED VII

HALIFAX, NS

MAY 12-14, 1990

Pre-Registration Form

Name: _____

Mailing: _____

Address: _____

Telephone (home): _____

(office): _____

Please enclose your cheque (payable to Mount Saint Vincent University) and check off the appropriate boxes below.

____ Conference fee of \$175 enclosed

____ Deposit of \$60 enclosed

____ Late-registration conference fee of \$190 enclosed. (applicable only if this form is mailed after April 1st)

____ Meal-and-accommodation-only package (\$110)

____ I will need accommodation for the night of May 14th

____ I wish to share a room with _____

Please return this form to

Susan Drain
English Department
Mount Saint Vincent University
Halifax, NS
B3M 2J6

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Institutional Affiliation: _____

Telephone Numbers: (home) _____ (office) _____

Research/teaching interests: _____

K-6 _____ 7-12 _____ College _____ University _____ Adult _____ Teacher Education _____

Research in progress (including theses--descriptions up to 200 words will appear in the newsletter periodically). Attach sheet if necessary _____

Material you would like to see in the newsletter: _____

Material you are willing to contribute: _____

Reviews _____ Selected bibliographies _____ Testing _____

STATE OF RHETORIC SURVEY (see pp. 1-4)

Please return to: Doug Brent
Faculty of General Studies
Social Sciences Second Floor
University of Calgary
2500 University Drive N.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N7

- 1. Your name:
2. Institution: 3. Faculty/Dept.
4. What faculty/department bears chief responsibility for teaching undergraduate composition?
5. How many writing courses are offered at the following levels: 100 level: 200? 300? 400? Grad?
6. How many courses in the teaching of writing are offered? a. Undergraduate? In what faculty/department(s) b. Graduate? In what faculty/department(s)
7. How many courses in the history/theory of traditional rhetoric are offered?
8. Does your institution offer a graduate degree in rhetoric, composition, or anything like it? What level?
9. How many people at your institution have formal positions in rhetoric/composition?
10. What is your formal position?
11. What is your educational background?

Anecdotal comments are welcome, either directly to me on the back of this survey or through the pages of Inkshed. Complete program descriptions (calendar entries etc.) would also be useful.