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## Literature and Composition Pedagogy

Christine Farris

In 1998, Sharon Crowley in *Composition in the University* summed up the view of most English disciplinary historians: that "composition gives literary studies something to define itself against" (2). The other side of the coin, of course, is that literature (or not-literature) has been, for over a century, the key factor shaping the identity and practices of Composition Studies. The relation of literature to composition is central to pedagogical and political issues in English Studies.

Boundary disputes between literature and composition can be traced as far back as the revision of the classical trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and logic), study intended to develop intellectual rather than occupational abilities. The tension between literary knowledge and literacy skills figures prominently in the rise of English as a discipline and in perpetual reconsiderations of the purpose of a college education. Binaries abound and continue to shape what is at stake in the lit/comp relationship: (1) the centrality of writing over reading in first-year English courses; (2) hierarchy and labor in departments where composition instruction makes large-scale literary specialization possible; and (3) a growing fear that down-sized English departments will be reduced to service courses as a consequence of a competitive education marketplace that pits vocationalism against a liberal arts life of the mind. Nevertheless, what literature and composition specialists share in their understanding of reading and writing as complex cultural practices can reshape introductory English courses and their purpose in the college curriculum, provided we do not lose sight of our students in attending to our professional and disciplinary needs.

Institutional and economic shifts that pose new challenges to the relationship between composition and literature were just coming over the horizon six years ago, when my literature colleague Judith Anderson and I edited *Integrating Literature and Writing Instruction*, a collection that examines successful pairings of literature and composition in courses centered on textual analysis and production applicable to students' work across the curriculum. After MLA published our book, a friend from another university, who had not yet read it, inquired as to its

content and the gist of our argument. A literature colleague of his had mentioned that apparently it was okay to teach literature again in composition. For a minute, I felt like Fredo in *The Godfather* when his brother, Michael Corleone, tells him not to ever take sides with anyone against the Family. What in the history and tradition of composition explains my friend's incredulity and the necessity of my defense? While the new generation of English MAs and PhDs in the current job market may be striking a balance in their attention to literature and writing, it is important to know something of the history of that separation. When we choose to use literature in a writing course, we need to attend to what purpose it serves and why others might applaud or contest its use.

Composition's one-hundred-year association with a required set of disciplinary skills has made it something literary specialists try to move up and out of as soon as possible. Historically, in a course thought to have no "content," originally designed to address gaps in secondary education, ideas in literary works served as prompts, models, and jumping-off points for the writing of daily or weekly "themes." Traces of this tradition remain, most often where there is a second required course focused on writing about literature. The rise of Composition Studies as a discipline concerned with the ways in which literacy is context-dependent, has, thankfully, less, rhetoric and composition specialists in many English departments have fought an uphill battle in arguing for the legitimacy of their field, despite a body of work linking composition studies and literary studies. Winifred Horner's edited collection, *Composition and Literature: Bridging the Gap* in 1983, includes essays by J. Hillis Miller, Wayne Booth, and E. D. Hirsch, variously making the case for reading and writing as mutual acts of interpretation.

John Clifford and John Schilb, in *Writing Theory and Critical Theory*, a 1994 follow-up to their 1985 essay "Composition Theory and Literary Theory," also attempt to bridge the lit/comp gap, in a collection of essays utilizing philosophical schools of thought that transcend literary theory and inform the study of situated discourse more broadly. Rhetoric, most often, provides that bridge. Schilb and Clifford's textbook, *Making Literature Matter*, is both a literary anthology and a practical enactment of their earlier work—a writing text that helps students and a rhetorical strategies to develop their positions. Literary texts make arguments, as do we, when we interpret them. Schilb and Clifford offer students strategies for constructing arguments that often begin with interesting questions they find in a poem or narrative. Similarly, Faye Halpern sees herself as teaching argument when she encourages students to make the case for one reading of a literary text over another, as opposed to acknowledging and producing "endless close readings" that don't "need much proving" (146).

Claims for rhetoric, textuality, and genre studies as common intellectual bases for reconfiguring departments and curricula, however, have not been all that successful on the ground. Typically, English departments just add new faculty lines and courses, expanding into new subfields, which struggle for power, resources, and students (Graff, *Beyond the Culture Wars* 10; Seitz 155). Literature scholars, while boundary-crossers in work with gender, race, and postcolonial studies, may

still defend the turf associated with periodization and the pleasure and creativity of language—as Robert Scholes, Nancy Comley, and Gregory Ulmer say, "those things that make literature literary" (*Text Book* iii). For composition scholars, who may themselves cross disciplinary borders, literature in composition courses may signal the return of literary interpretation at the expense of attention to students' writing processes and production of texts, which are central to what composition does. In short, there is political and pedagogical ground to be won and lost for both sides.

While tied to larger disciplinary and institutional issues, the stakes in the composition/literature relationship have focused primarily on what first-year composition is *for*, more than on whether or not faculty in both fields study and teach the same thing. The purpose of the course was the key question posed by Erika Lindemann, first in her historic debate on the role of literature in composition with Gary Tate at the 1992 Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), and then in follow-up essays published in 1993 and 1995 in *College English*. By the time these debates took place in the early 1990s there was consensus, for the most part, that first-year composition students should master a process of written communication in preparation for future writing in college and beyond. Informed by a revived attention to the canons of rhetoric, especially invention, and, later, in the 1980s, by the "social turn," instruction emphasized writing as a rhetorical act and a means of discovery. Concerns in the 1960s and 1970s with the personal growth and cognitive development of student writers coalesced into the "process movement," displacing literary texts as models and sources of writing ideas. While entire literary texts were seldom included in early twentieth-century courses, as Robert Connors (323) and Sharon Crowley (97–98) point out in their respective histories of composition in American colleges, their employment was designed to maintain standards of usage and taste. No longer charged with preparation for public rhetoric, college courses replaced the classics with imaginative literature, the appreciation of which presumably was shared by educated persons. English departments grew larger, however, primarily because of a series of "crises" in basic literacy skills of incoming students, even as literature specialists distanced themselves from the more utilitarian composition courses intended to address these deficiencies. College courses were concerned first, as Connors points out, with belletristic and, later, modal classification of the features of finished products codified in textbooks (224). Driven by grammar rules and prescriptive modes (narration, description, exposition, persuasion), curricula settled into what would later be called "current-traditional" composition for half a century.

In the 1960s, reform efforts to align and redefine K–16 English and find antidotes to top-down canon mastery and form-and-correctness resulted, as Joseph Harris points out, not in a reintegration of literature and composition, but in new pedagogies emphasizing subjectivity in interpretation and strategies of the writing process: prewriting, drafting, and peer group work, key tenets of composition to this day (*Subject* 13–14).

The composing process of student writers became the concern of both student-centered compositionists like Peter Elbow and Donald Murray and quasi-empiricists

like Janet Emig, James Britton, and Sondra Perl, whose findings from case studies of writers in the 1970s and 1980s were central to composition's search for a disciplinary identity grounded in research, the findings of which produced a generalizable model of "good writing." In both approaches, school-based writing that imposed structure and restricted expression was the primary foe. Literature in a writing course was also considered an obstacle to the delivery of direct composition instruction, which had shifted emphasis from the features of finished products to the years, challenges to a monolithic model of composition and revision. In the last twenty-five directions, some of which are linked to historical, textual, genre, and cultural inquiry in the rest of English Studies; they all offer possibilities for a revitalized use of literary texts in writing courses.

One challenge has also come from the Writing Across the Curriculum movement, which, beginning in the 1980s, called into question the extent to which one first-year writing course could adequately prepare students for the rhetorical practices and genres in "discourse communities" beyond English, but for which English, nevertheless, felt responsible (Crowley 27). Lindemann's rejection of literature is tied to this responsibility of composition to offer "guided practice in reading and writing the discourses of the academy and the professions. That is what our colleagues across the campus want it to do; that is what it should do if we are going to drag every first-year student through the requirement" (Lindemann 1993, 312; cited in Crowley 28). Use of imaginative literature, as opposed to texts from a variety of disciplines, risks shifting the emphasis in writing courses from students' composing processes to their teacher-centered reception of texts. Crowley finds this rationale for a requirement—that composition instructors can "anticipate every discursive exigency" in disciplines and professions other than their own—no more satisfactory than the notion that first-year composition students should read literary works for their inspirational value to their lives and craft, the position advanced by Gary Tate and other participants in the *College English* exchanges. Anticipating "the increasing professionalization of undergraduate education in this country," Tate laments the extent to which, by replacing literature with rhetoric, composition has been turned into the "ultimate 'service course' for all the other disciplines in the academy" ("Place" 319). He would use literature to help students join "conversations . . . *outside the academy*" (320), a traditional humanist position as objectionable to Crowley as Lindemann's service ethic, but one that does resurface in the pedagogy of critical literacy and cultural studies.

## LITERATURE AND WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) doctrine, however, has also been used to turn composition back toward the teaching of literature, most notably in Art Young and Toby Fulwiler's collection, *When Writing Teachers Teach Literature: Bringing Writing to Reading*. Most of the contributors, who identify with composition, emphasize the ways in which attention to students' writing processes can disrupt the transmission-of-knowledge model long associated with literature instruction

and help students connect personal experience to the works they encounter. Published in 1995, Young and Fulwiler's volume is faithful to the tenets of both the writing process and writing-to-learn movements, regarding literature courses, for the most part, as sites for the same sort of pedagogical intervention WAC makes into other disciplines.

In keeping with what Crowley calls composition's "legitimizing claim" to prepare students for future discursive work (262), literary scholar Gerald Graff, in *Clueless in Academe* (and in his textbook *They Say/I Say*, written with Cathy Birkenstein), stakes such a claim for literature and composition alike: We can fill literacy gaps by clarifying for students the "culture of ideas and arguments" we take for granted and by demystifying the common moves of argument and analysis that constitute the reading and writing "game" in the academy (*Clueless* 3). Graff, who for years advocated sharing with undergraduates "the conflicts" among scholars in literary studies, is not alone in tackling how students become acclimated to interpretive communities and academic habits of mind through reading. Reading (what "*they say*"), not literature per se, is key.

## READING AND TEXTUALITY

David Bartholomae, in his landmark essay, "Inventing the University" and in his textbook authored with Anthony Petrosky, *Ways of Reading*, similarly argues that what students "need" to learn is how to do interesting and increasingly complicated things in their writing with the ideas in what they read. While Bartholomae and Petrosky are pioneers in exposing even basic writers to complex, mostly non-literary readings from a variety of disciplines, their approach to the connection between close and critical reading and successful writing has implications for the use of literary texts. *Ways of Reading* argues that what student writers need most is to locate themselves within academic, not just literary, discourse. They employ a method of rereading and sequenced assignments that invite student writers to use the ideas of one author to complicate those of another as they evolve their own increasingly complex interpretations. Bartholomae and Petrosky believe strongly in providing students with difficult but "readable" texts, as opposed to short and tidy readings that would serve as models or that "solve all the problems they raise" (viii).

Their notion of using texts that "leave some work for readers to do" in their papers has made all the difference in my own use of literature in a writing course. Rather than choosing works that would elicit only emotional or ideological responses for writing, I go for those texts that present interesting and vexing problems. There is analytical and rhetorical "work to do," for instance, when I teach Tim O'Brien's *In the Lake of the Woods* and ask students to make an argument for whether one of the main characters has deliberately disappeared or has been murdered by her Vietnam-veteran-turned-politician husband. Students have to contend with O'Brien's construction of a hybrid (detective, historical, and psychological) text and with their own genre expectations. O'Brien provides no definitive answer but rather chapters from multiple perspectives and extensive intertextual footnotes regarding the My

Lai massacre trial and post-traumatic stress disorder, all of which may or may not function as evidence. Similarly, Paul Auster's intertextual meta-detective novel, *City of Glass*, is not just a "whodunit" but an opportunity for students to investigate the relationship between language and reality as they try to distinguish Paul Auster, the character, from Paul Auster, the book's author, and determine, finally, who is narrating the story and whether or not Auster is "playing" them as readers. Students who say they hate novels but love puzzles have written papers on *City of Glass* that make convincing, if not brilliant, arguments. I bring difficult or enigmatic texts to the composition course in the context of what I hope are compelling topics (Private and Public Identities, in this case) that generate questions that will drive the writing, rather than as texts to master or simply appreciate. The argument for putting literature in a composition course, as Clyde Moneyhun points out, should not be "that since a text is a text, we might as well use literature" (230). Literature has to be more than just a test object for amassing details that support arguments with which no one would disagree. As Faye Halpern discovered in her work with the Harvard Study of Undergraduate Writing, some students may even excel at exegesis, but then hit a dead end with what becomes a formulaic claim that, on closer reading, a text is more complex than we first thought—what the Harvard Study called the "complexity thesis" (127). What's often missing, she says, is what the complexity signifies about the work or the topic as a whole, why it matters. Students' ability to move to the "So what?" in their writing depends, I think, on how we have framed the course: Is there a topic for sustained inquiry? Do some readings provide "lenses" for reading more critically or analyzing one work in terms of another? Have we included a variety of texts, both literary and nonliterary, that generate questions worth writing about?

Robert Scholes has long been the main advocate for intertextuality as the way to reunite literature and composition in compelling multigenre courses. Coming from literary studies back to rhetoric, he proposes in *The Rise and Fall of English* and in *Text Book: Writing Through Literature* (written with Nancy Conley and Gregory Ulmer for students), a modern trivium that would shift the focus of English from canonical literature to intertextuality as the core of a curriculum "organized around a canon of concepts, precepts, and practices" to be understood through the analysis of works from a range of media (*Rise* 120). His goal, like Bartholomae and Petrosky's, is to have students *work* with literature—to teach reading (narrative, metaphor), along with writing, as a "craft."

Both Scholes and Graff ("Afterword") argue for uniting the concerns of literature and composition around textuality, recommending that students in introductory courses analyze rhetorical language in both literary and nonliterary works. Scholes takes issue with the exclusion of literature as advocated by Lindemann and the WAC mandate, claiming that what faculty in other disciplines respect about our expertise in English is not so much "that we will teach them to write like social scientists or engineers . . ." as that "what we can teach about writing involves mainly those elements of it that are literary or rhetorical" (*Rise* 34).

Joseph Harris, a former colleague of Bartholomae's at Pittsburgh, also believes that students learn to write intertextually, focusing on a method for writing

in terms of the ideas of others. In his innovative book, also written for students, *Rewriting: How to Do Things with Texts*, Harris complicates the process approach, echoing Bartholomae and Petrosky's re-reading assignment sequences and Scholes' new canonical practices in his sequential method for introducing students to the "moves" of the critical essay: Coming to Terms; Forwarding; Countering; Taking an Approach, and Revising. What matters in his pedagogy is not which texts are taught, or even what genre, but what you teach students to do with them in their writing. In several writing courses I have taught with literature, I have followed Harris's suggestion (*Rewriting* 131) and constructed a digital class forum to encourage deeper and more complex collaborative readings of texts. In taking turns as first and follow-up responders to one another's entries, students cannot merely repeat or agree/disagree. They must pick up a thread in the first responder's post and build on an idea, taking it somewhere new. Class discussion, then, following the online discussion, can proceed right to specific passages in a text that particular students have already investigated and to issues they have raised.

## LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE

Taking some cues from Scholes, Conley, and Ulmer's focus on literary language and form, my colleague Judith Anderson and a group of graduate instructors designed a course combining composition and literature, Language, Metaphor, and Thought: The Way We Think in Words, described in detail in our volume. Early in the course, the lectures, discussion, and writing assignments focused on the dictionary, etymologies, the function of words, naming, and categorizing. Readings included excerpts from the autobiographies of Malcolm X and Helen Keller; Addie's chapter in Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*; and the chapter on the language reformers in Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. As the course built in complexity, they took on the colonization of language, cultural metaphors, and word play, examining works by Anzaldua, Friel, Lewis Carroll, Borges, Auster, and excerpts from Morrison's *Playing in the Dark*. Students' writing, in both short exercises and longer comparative analyses, reflected new awareness of how language shapes their thinking and the ways in which metaphor is fundamental to culture and common ground across genres and disciplines (Anderson and Farris 281–305).

In their commitment to courses that demystify academic discourse, Graff, Bartholomae, Scholes, and Harris would seem to agree on the importance of the transferability of academic writing skills to other courses in the college curriculum. While they consider their methods applicable to all of English Studies, they also help make an argument that writing in terms of literary texts can be part of something transferable as well as disciplinary.

## LITERATURE AND CULTURE

However, the reintroduction of literature to composition, along with nonliterary and visual texts, has the potential to change what English is exporting. Any work

with texts—reading, writing, and interpretation—is context-dependent, with significance in the world beyond the university. James Berlin, in his final book, *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures*, points to the importance of “textuality in all its manifestations” in the redesign of a profession responsive to changes, not just in the university but in the world (176). He calls for literary and cultural studies scholars to collaborate with specialists in rhetoric and composition, who focus on production as well as reception of a wide range of print and visual texts that persuade in ways that are not merely aesthetic. In short, English Studies can heal the rhetoric/poetics split and shape our responses to issues. In doing so, we equip students not just for the writing that is to come in college but for lifelong critical awareness and civic participation.

What has been termed *post-process theory*, in questioning both the notion of a unified writing process and that of a monolithic academic discourse into which students are acculturated, assumes that writing is a situated, public, noncodifiable act (Kent 1–2). Composition’s shift in attention to writing as situated and affected by larger forces has resulted in courses that include literary and nonliterary texts and artifacts that address historical and social issues, so as to raise students’ awareness of how literature and other texts intervene in culture (Robison and Wolfe 209) in ways that can still introduce them to lines of cultural inquiry typical of other disciplines.

Genre theory also has the potential to unite literature and composition around the mutual understanding, as Amy Devitt maintains, that “text and textual meaning, whether literary or rhetorical, are not objective and static, but rather dynamic and created through interaction of writer, reader, and context” (699). It might be helpful for students in writing courses to think not just of rhetorical texts as responsive to purpose and audience but also of literary texts as social actions that respond to particular moments and needs, “requiring,” as Devitt, says, “both conformity with and variation from expectations” (715).

Lori Robison and Eric Wolfe frame their literature and composition course in terms of Stephen Greenblatt’s notion of literature as “working at the ‘boundaries’ of culture, against the ‘limits within which social behavior must be contained’” (Greenblatt 226, 225; quoted in Anderson and Farris 197). Students read Greenblatt’s essay “Culture” and write essays analyzing the arguments that works of fiction, like Shirley Jackson’s “The Lottery” and Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper,” make against “dominant beliefs and social structures” (Greenblatt 231; quoted in Robison and Wolfe 197). Writing—that of authors and students—becomes part of larger ideological conversations both in and out of school (Robison and Wolfe 209).

### WHY LITERATURE IN COMPOSITION?

Both textuality and the notion of literacy as social action, as emphasized in first-year courses, have the potential to curtail the endless demarcation of the iconic Lindemann–Tate literature/composition boundaries. If we cannot narrow the gap

between humanists and utilitarians—literacy for life vs. literacy for other disciplines and professions—we can at least offer new terms and foci as we reconsider the purpose of English, writing, and a college education. The question of whether a first-year course, including literature, focused more broadly on language as a social phenomenon could still deliver writing instruction is what brought me into collaboration with my colleague Judith Anderson, a Renaissance scholar—first in the design of first-year courses and the graduate proseminars that preceded them, and then in the volume we put together for MLA, *Integrating Literature and Writing Instruction*. We benefited from a department that is less bifurcated than some. A long-time PhD concentration in what was originally named Language, Literacy, and Literature and a two-semester version of composition, Introduction to the Study of Literature and Writing, meant that, unlike some English departments, first-year pedagogy was the business of more than just the rhetoric-composition faculty, and graduate instructors came to the teaching of composition-with-literature only after teaching a version of composition with nonliterary print and visual texts. I believe that our instructors have been successful at integrating literature into writing courses because they first teach composition without it. As the director of composition, I deliberately designed a common curriculum emphasizing strategies for rhetorical and ideological analysis that instructors and their students can apply to a variety of cultural texts—critical essays, photographs, newspapers, advertisements, and films—not just literature. Our graduate instructors teach first with a common syllabus and sequence of moves: summary, critique, comparative analysis, and research-based analysis, tied to readings (Nietzsche, Foucault, Du Bois, Geertz, Berger) that provide broader frameworks and theoretical and methodological lenses for understanding representation. In addition, we assign Rosenwasser and Stephens’ *Writing Analytically*, which offers strategies for analyzing patterns in the language and images in any text and for evoking a complex thesis in terms of confirming and complicating evidence.

The two-semester thematic literature and composition course which both Judith Anderson and I taught numerous times no longer exists, but after one or more years teaching composition, our graduate instructors are encouraged to design their own one-semester writing courses, called Projects in Reading and Writing, which focus on sustained inquiry into an issue or problem, often combining classic, theoretical, and popular works from a variety of fields in the investigation of cultural phenomena, concepts, myths, and stereotypes. For instance, an instructor might design a course on monsters that traces their hold on us—from Shelley’s *Frankenstein* to AMC’s *The Walking Dead*, or a course on the single woman in American culture that includes Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie* as well as *Sex in the City*’s Carrie Bradshaw. Instructors already have experience making visible to students, a la Graff and Harris, the moves of academic analysis and argument. They have experience teaching students to be active, critical subjects, aware of how language and visual representations invite them to occupy various and sometimes conflicting positions as readers and writers. We trust that instructors will be able to connect, not “separate the writing done by students from the texts they write about” (Scholtes et al., *Text Book* iii).

Other English departments and programs have also successfully integrated literature and writing instruction. Judith and I found numerous other instances and collaborations in a variety of private colleges and public universities. Instructors, many of them well aware of the history and stakes in the comp/lit debates, found ways to move beyond the composition/literature divide in the design of their institutional contexts, and humanities core courses. In keeping with their institutional contexts, our contributors describe courses that do more than merely balance literature and composition. We were struck, as we say in our Introduction, by how much we all encouraged students “to work with binaries, tensions, and contradictions in both their reading and writing; for example, between their own voices and interpretive frames and those typical of literary discourse, between historical and fictional narratives, between contemporary and earlier treatments, between and within generic conventions and between these and social change, and those of their peers” (Anderson and Farris 14). These tensions, between the literary and nonliterary and between academic and student discourse can, in fact, become, as Graff says, the textualized “object of study” in courses that brings the concerns of literature and composition together (“Afterword” 333). The three include core humanities courses with literature and writing; courses with literature as a source of discovery; literature as a means of engaging with culture; and then the final chapter, in which we outline our cross-disciplinary faculty/graduate student collaboration and the course I described earlier that focuses on language and metaphor as the basis of reading, writing, and conceptual thinking.

Another collection, *Composition and/or Literature: The End(s) of Education*, edited by Linda S. Bergmann and Edith M. Baker and published by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in 2006, also revisits debate over the teaching of literature in composition courses, but it is somewhat less optimistic about collaboration and unification. Essays by its eleven contributors review the historical bases for the split between composition and literature, discuss the mental and institutional conditions surrounding it, and examine several classroom applications, which, as in our volume, redefine “literature” to include a wide range of texts and contexts for writing. The main thrust of this volume is reexamination of the divisions between the two specialties and what should reconstitute the teaching of rhetoric, reading, and writing in the “postuniversity,” as contributor Eve Wiedeheld, invoking Bill Readings, terms it (88). Patricia Harkin, in her “Afterword,” acknowledges the institutional and disciplinary “roadblocks” to rebuilding described by several contributors, but she points to the ways in which even those who oppose the use of literature in composition “approve of critical attention to reading” as a dialectical process. What’s important, she says, “regardless of departmental or disciplinary affiliation,” is that we are *teaching* reading, not merely assigning it (217).

I would echo Harkin’s charge in my question to any instructor incorporating literature in a writing course: Why include literature? Ask to what extent you are teaching reading and textual work that informs writing—as opposed to an introduction

for English majors or your specialty adapted for the freshman level. In turning to the concerns of those who have debated the use of literature and of those who more recently scrutinize and seek to streamline postsecondary general education, we must ask what is the purpose of the course? Will it permit students to work with and write about texts in ways that are different from high school English?

In thematic first-year experience or humanities core courses, for instance, which are often team-taught, instructors typically do not emphasize a literary canon or traditional aesthetics, but rather practices of textual and hypertextual analysis across genres and disciplines that students will transfer into upper division courses. In the Anderson and Farris volume, Clark and Losh describe UC Irvine’s Humanities Core, in which literary texts foreground language, unlike the other genres colleagues bring to an interdisciplinary investigation of a topic like Exploration and Discovery. As Clyde Moneynhun, also in our volume, points out in his defense of transferability, juxtaposition with other genres makes students aware of what literature and literary criticism are not (217). Moneynhun describes a course he designed that includes three “Assignment Games” (Authorial Intent, Reader Response, and Text in Context) that point to “the artificial and constructed nature of the interpretive frames” (219–226). Moneynhun’s chief reason for using short stories and novels is that they make it easier for students to understand that meaning is “highly constructed, shaped by a writer with intentions (the first assignment), created by an active reader (the second assignment), and understood in a critical context (the third assignment).” That understanding, he says, “can be sharpened into a disciplined habit of mind and then transferred to the interpretation of any text, including the nonliterary texts students encounter in other classes and beyond the classroom” (230).

Courses that successfully integrate literature and writing can give students new “work to do” in calling attention to genres across disciplines, sometimes by pairing accounts of the same event, as Tamara Goeglein does in her first-year seminar course on historical fiction, so that students will grapple with “what constitutes truth in historical fiction writing and fiction in history writing” (150). In analyzing point of view, characterization, narrative sequencing, and cinematography in multiple genres, including the Ken Burns’ documentary, *The Civil War*, her students “learn how figurative modes of language operate in nonliterary texts.” Figurative language, Goeglein says, “calls forth our imagination to apprehend and to comprehend the relations among the real, the true, and the past” (172). Certainly, one goal of humanities general education that shapes composition courses with literature, and which we hope to retain, concerns the ways in which figurative language is, as Goeglein suggests, “an analytic habit of mind . . . a way of knowing” (172).

Laura Brady points to the importance of “contingent local practices” as the most effective means of redrawing the boundaries between composition and literature (80). I agree that collaboration with our colleagues across the department and across our institutions—actually teaching reading and writing together in new ways, not just talking about what we mean by reading, writing, texts, and genres—is our best hope for changing the literature/composition relationship and the best evidence of progress, not just in our theory but in our practice.

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## New Media Pedagogy

Collin Gifford Brooke

Humanities 2.0 is a humanities of engagement that addresses our collective histories and concern for history. To be valued by one's time requires making oneself responsible and responsive to one's time. For academics, this engagement entails a willingness to reconsider the most cherished assumptions and structures of their discipline.

—Cathy Davidson, "Humanities 2.0: Promise, Perils, Predictions." *PMLA* 123.3 (2008): 707–717

In the ten-plus years that have elapsed since the first edition of this volume was published, there has been no larger "growth industry" in the field of composition (and perhaps in pedagogy more broadly) than the study and adoption of new media in our lives, classrooms, and institutions. Charles Moran's chapter in that volume, on "Technology and the Teaching of Writing" has not aged well, though no fault of his own. In the late 1990s, applications like "electronic mail," online discussion platforms, the Web, and hypertext/media were (with some exceptions) the province of a small subset of the field, a community comprised mostly of graduate students and assistant professors. Online journals in the field were in their infancy,<sup>1</sup> which explains what would now be a startling absence of electronic resources in the bibliography of Moran's chapter. The various (economic, cultural, social) barriers to access and adoption, while not insurmountable for most, were nonetheless significant.

Moran closes his chapter with an "envoi" that presages Cathy Davidson's remarks in my epigraph. He explains that, if our students have access to contemporary information and communication technology, "they will be using it" (220). It is our responsibility as writing teachers, he says, to understand the scenes where our students write, the tools they will be using to write, and the often uneven attitudes (and access) that our students may have with respect to these technologies. To put it in Davidson's terms, Moran's conclusion can be read as a promise (or threat) that our

<sup>1</sup>Katros, for example, published its first issue in 1996.