

Composing a Community

A History of Writing Across the
Curriculum

Editors

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3 Circles of Interest: The Growth of Research Communities in WAC and WID/WIP

Charles Bazerman and Anne Herrington

Chuck: The moment of enlightenment occurred in the second floor men's room in Rabb Hall, Brandeis University in April 1971. I had just defended my dissertation and was wondering about what I could do with my life, now that the academic job market was collapsing. Prior to writing my dissertation, I taught first and third grades in Bedford-Stuyvesant Brooklyn for two years, during which I had become more committed to literacy than literature. For want of imagination, however, I had returned to write a dissertation on the poetry occasioned by the death of Queen Elizabeth I. That return had reminded me just how poorly academic writing communicated—or at least the writing I came across in my literary and historical studies. The writing was clever, graceful, and even smart—but it seemed as though nobody was talking with each other. Energy and intellect seemed wasted in minor squabbles or great vessels of imagination passing each other in fogs of their own thought. These ruminations—literacy, doing big things, unemployment, academic obscurity, and narcissistic scholarly communication—were floating around in my head one afternoon when I went to relieve myself of too much coffee. In caffeine-induced grandiosity these thoughts came together over the urinal: I decided my niche in the world would be to somehow improve scholarly communication—and that there was even a living to be had in it. I relieved myself far more easily of the caffeine than of this delusion.

Anne: *In the inside cover of my copy of Errors and Expectations, I have this inscription: "For Anne, My new-found friend from the front lines. Mina Shaughnessy, March 1977." I had asked her to autograph the book after hearing her speak at a conference. That meeting was the bridging point that connected work of my local colleagues and myself to participation in a larger national group of composition scholars and WAC program directors through a FIPSE grant that Mina had encouraged me to submit, a bridging point also between teaching and program development. Research would follow.*

While most of the history of Writing Across the Curriculum is in the programs, workshops, and networks that brought people together around the practices of writing and teaching, research and scholarship has helped inform this practice and has itself become another means by which practitioners of the disciplines have become aware of the importance and character of writing in their fields. Although attributed to individuals or small collaborative teams, this research is as much part of the general climate of concern that fostered the WAC movement and was nurtured by some of the same networks, as well as some others. In the narratives to follow you will find some large differences in the development of the research of the two co-authors, you will also find some major commonalities and points of intersection. We both began our professional careers at the college level in the early 1970s and both of us were teaching academic writing skills in open admissions programs. Our research and program development work arose from interests and questions that arose in our classrooms: what should we be teaching and how can we help our students succeed in college?

Our interests and local situations then took us in somewhat different directions: one more toward the study of the kinds of texts valued in other disciplines, the other more toward pedagogical work with colleagues in other disciplines. One pursued largely historical work transformed by interdisciplinary methods and theories from several social sciences while another drew more on ethnographic research traditions from educational studies. Thus, the plural "research communities" in our title. Still, the story we aim to tell is as much about the intersection of these two circles of interest, a dynamic intersection that has created a research community in WAC/WID. In recreating the stories of our initial moves into research, we also see the importance of pub-

lished research, of conferences and informal networks of scholars and program developers, and of federal programs that funded the development of many WAC or WAC-related programs, particularly in the 1970s. More broadly, the story we tell together is one of the emergence of a research community/ies with two centers: classrooms and professional sites.

ANNE'S STORY

My association with what I would later learn to call "writing-across-the curriculum" began with teaching for PROVE, a U.S. Dept. of Education Special Services Program for Economically Disadvantaged Students at Johnson State College, VT in 1972. I learned of the position just by happenstance, while looking for a summer job between working on my Masters degree at the University of Vermont. (Note that the Central College Program, directed by Barbara Fassler [now Walvoord] also received some funding from this same Program [Russell 283]). PROVE, the Johnson Program, aimed to provide academic and counseling support to Vermont students who were ill-prepared for college, many with GEDs, many recruited directly from social service agencies. Although the Program's designer was not guided by a WAC perspective, he centered it around a summer program where students took one Communication Skills course and one content course in the Humanities or Social Sciences and where teachers met informally to discuss students' progress: it was only over time working together and gradually learning about other WAC programs and principles that we came to be a WAC program. For the Program's first year, while none of us teaching in it had any special expertise or experience to prepare us for the challenges we would face, we approached them with idealistic energy, excited to be part of a program that aimed to support young adults who for reasons of class and other family circumstances hadn't had the same opportunities of many of us.

Each day before classes, our small group of about eight faculty met over coffee to commiserate over the reality of the challenge we faced. As I try to recall those conversations now, I remember mostly discussions about how individual students were faring, including questions of whether some were doing their work and whether others could do the work. Even the most veteran teachers were unprepared for the difficulties some had understanding the course readings and writing coherent sentences and paragraphs. With little theoretical frame to

guide us, in the Communication Skills courses we focused more on these basic skills. And, our morning discussions with colleagues teaching the sociology and economics courses pretty much took what they were assigning for granted and focused on how we, the Communication Skills instructors, and undergraduate tutors could help prepare the PROVE students for those courses. In short, at this point, we were guided more by a one-way service model with a focus on basic skills; there was little shared critical reflection on teaching approaches and the nature of our curricula. Still, these early discussions helped me and others see the value and "naturalness" of working together across disciplines to serve some common learning goals for undergraduate students, and begin to think about some of our teaching challenges as shared, not distinct.

In the mid-'70s one of our nation's periodic "literacy crises" provided the impetus for new programs and funding support from agencies like NEH and FIPSE. With this sense of crisis, fueled by the 1974 NAEP reports and such press articles as *Newsweek's* December 9, 1975 "Why Johnny Can't Write," my little school, like others large and small, faced pressures both from without, including our Vermont state college system, and from some faculty within the school to do something to insure that the students entering through open admissions were "literate." Proficiency testing reared its head. (The parallels with the present time do not escape me.) Fortunately, agencies like NEH and FIPSE were also interested in supporting progressive curriculum projects, such as the Beaver College program, funded by NEH. At Johnson, I could see no purpose to a test unless all faculty were involved in the effort to help students develop the skills to be tested and unless writing was being used in meaningful ways for learning across the college.

By this time, I had joined NCTE and was reading *CCC* regularly. In a 1976 issue, I read Mina Shaughnessy's essay "Diving In: An Introduction to Basic Writing," and it resonated with me as describing what our informal group of teachers were trying to learn to do. We had begun at Shaughnessy's second developmental rung for teachers, as missionaries "Converting the Natives" and were now starting to ask the kind of questions about student learning and our teaching that she associated with the third developmental rung, "Sounding the Depths," for instance, what were some of the specific difficulties students were having in our courses? What was working in some classes?

Next I read *Errors and Expectations* and was inspired by her closing chapters regarding the involvement of all faculty in developing students writing and in fostering their success. As pressures for some sort of proficiency test mounted, I read a notice in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* that she was speaking at a conference in March of 1977. I told a colleague we had to go.

After hearing her speak, we asked if we could talk with her a bit about our developing ideas to try to expand our PROVE summer program model and our concerns about the push for proficiency testing. Knowing of the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE)'s interest in funding some grants in writing, she encouraged me to submit a proposal to them. Since one of FIPSE's stated funding interests was assessment, I piggy-backed development of WAC workshops for faculty with development of a proficiency exam. I realized we already had a nascent WAC group at Johnson—the ones of us who had been involved in the PROVE program.

FIPSE funded seven grants in writing for the two-year period 1977–79, including two other WAC ones, one directed by Joan Graham at the University of Washington; another by Carolyn Kirkpatrick and Mary Epes at York College, CUNY. It also funded a research project co-directed by Sondra Perl, Richard Sterling, and John Brereton, also from CUNY. During the two years of the grants, FIPSE provided the funds to bring the directors of those seven grants, often with outside consultants, together twice per year ostensibly to encourage sharing ideas across our grants. It was through participation in this group that I came to have a name for what my colleagues and I were about: writing across the curriculum. Equally important, those gatherings served as an entry to scholarship and to a wider national network of composition scholars and WAC program directors. At our first gathering in 1977, the consultants that FIPSE brought in included Linda Flower and Lee Odell. David Russell's history reminds me that 1977 was also the year of the Rutgers NEH seminar on writing across the curriculum where Lee Odell was also a consultant along with Toby Fulwiler and others. NEH and FIPSE sponsorship of WAC programs and conferences, including the collaboration between these two agencies, proved central to the growth of WAC programs and a scholarly community across institutions.

I invited Lee to lead two workshops at Johnson State, and he was tremendously influential in shaping our work as teachers, introduc-

ing the notion of writing to learn and teaching approaches as well as an analytic frame for planning writing assignments. It also during this two-year period, that I met Elaine Maimon at a jointly sponsored meeting of FIPSE and NEH-funded writing projects. In other words, my circle was beginning to expand beyond Johnson and to include not only teachers, but program directors and scholars. I recall that period as one of intense excitement: for us at Johnson, excitement about our teaching and our students' accomplishments, and excitement that we were part of a small, but energetic and growing national movement.

Having the grant also required me to evaluate grant activities and that marked my first steps into research. With advice from Lee Odell and another expert on program evaluation, I began a number of activities to evaluate our work. For our WAC project, that included surveying faculty and students about their experiences, as well as collecting samples of assignments and students' writings.

The first article I wrote, "Writing to Learn: Writing across the Disciplines," draws on that data. I wrote it out of an impulse to signify the worth of our enterprise and, implicitly, make a case for it to others. In other words, I was writing as an *interested* participant, both teacher and program developer. My focus was on teaching strategies assumed to be effective across disciplines, not on particulars of writing within a given discipline. The scholarly work that influenced me in shaping my ideas included two early WAC-related articles: Janet Emig's "Writing as a Mode of Learning" and Lee Odell's "Teaching Writing by Teaching the Process of Discovery." I note now that I also cite an article written by Don Tobey, a resource economist and one of my Johnson colleagues, on "Writing Instruction in Economics Courses," and an interview by Lois Rosen with James Britton.

Through the grant—largely through attending conferences—I became more and more aware of wanting to read more and develop scholarly research skills. (My c.v. reminds me that my first national conference paper on WAC was in 1980, "Across the Disciplines: Writing as a Way of Learning," at CCCC's.) So, I began doctoral studies, working primarily with Lee Odell and also studying rhetoric with Michael Halloran. When I entered graduate school, I knew that I wanted to pursue studies related to writing across the curriculum. I was convinced by the arguments made by Lee Odell and Janet Emig that writing is a powerful way of learning, convinced that that learning included more than solely cognitive skills, really interested to know

about what shaped the nature of that learning for students. As a graduate student, my reading expanded to include scholarship associated with Composition Studies, particularly with cognitive and personal growth approaches (for example, Britton, Nancy Martin et al.'s *Writing and Learning across the Curriculum 11-16*, Fulwiler and Young, all ones I would associate with WAC) as well as scholarship in rhetoric, argumentation theory, and sociolinguistics (from Aristotle to Toulmin to Hymes). I also read a piece by Charles Bazerman, "What Written Knowledge Does: Three Examples of Academic Prose" (1981) that was influential in helping me conceptualize writing in specific disciplines and think about distinct ways of creating knowledge within specific disciplines. In 1982, I sought him out at MLA, hearing him deliver a paper and speaking with him afterward; at my request, he sent me a copy of his paper, "Discourse Paths of Different Disciplines," (I still have that yellowed mimeographed copy in my files.) These areas of scholarship combined fit with my sense that there were pedagogical issues that cut across disciplines, that writing did play a profound role for learning, and that the nature of that learning varied with disciplinary genres and contexts.

Thus, my study of writing in two college chemical engineering classes, a study shaped by the emerging scholarship that has contributed to WAC and WID, although at the time, I would not have cited that distinction. Both circles of scholarship enabled me to answer the questions I wanted to get at about what I sensed as distinct kinds of learning that were furthered by the writing students were doing in distinct courses within chemical engineering and about classroom situations conducive to that learning ("Writing"). I see that study as centered at the intersection of WAC and WID: looking at writing as shaped by and embodying the purposes, social roles, ways of reasoning of not only a given discipline/profession, but distinct forums within a given discipline/profession; and at looking at classroom situations conducive to learning. These were questions of a researcher, not a teacher-researcher or a program developer.

For me, the informal network of researchers grew during the early to mid-1980s through participation in smaller conferences that lend themselves more to informal consultation. Not surprisingly since I was at Penn State during this time, the Penn State Conferences on Rhetoric and Composition between 1984 and 1986 come to mind. I recall finally meeting Barbara Walvoord there and spending time talking

with her and Virginia Anderson regarding research projects they were launching related to their WAC program, subsequently published in *Thinking and Writing in College*. That conference also provided the venue for further conversations with Chuck, also with Lucille McCarthy and Steve Fishman, and Carolyn Miller. While I can imagine that someone doing a review of research would sort us and even different work any one of us has done into WAC or WID groupings or even other groupings (e.g., sociology of science), I resist thinking of those groupings as fixed or distinct.

My work as a teacher and researcher has been and remains stimulated by what Chuck terms the boundary dialogues that occur across groupings and the blurring of boundaries that ensues. We prompt such at our own schools by creating occasions to work with a cross-disciplinary groups of faculty to reflect on our teaching and students' learning. For instance, sitting with colleagues at UMass to try to identify learning objectives for our WAC Program became an opportunity to discuss teaching approaches that could be used across disciplines as well as to try to understand the different genres and functions of argument in, say, English and Management. Such discussions are also prompted by conferences, other scholarly exchanges, and collaboration across institutions, specifically ones that bring together various perspectives and scholars with somewhat different research focuses. In more recent years, the National Conference on Writing across the Curriculum has fostered such exchanges. For me, collaboration with colleagues in the Language Development Programme at the University of Cape Town has also spurred my reading of Critical Discourse Theory and brought it into my own research as a way to address questions of power and identity as we seek to understand the dynamics of language learning and writing in all our courses across the curriculum (Herrington and Curtis). In short, both now and in my formative years, standing within the intersections and moving among circles has been generative for my scholarly work as well as teaching and WAC program development.

CHUCK'S STORY

Although I may have thought in 1971 that one could earn a living by improving academic writing, the world did not confirm my illusion. Upon finishing my dissertation, I went back to New York without a job. After posting my services on bulletin boards around the

many universities in the city, I got all of one response, from a foreign student who wanted me to edit his dissertation. Then I went to an employment agency that offered me the opportunity to ghost write a dissertation in psychology. Keeping my eye on the prize, I let both opportunities pass.

After a term of piecing together jobs on several campuses in and around New York, I landed a full-time position teaching writing to open-admission students at Baruch College of the City University of New York. Open Admissions was initiated just a year before and many of my colleagues were shell-shocked by nontraditional students. I recognized in these students, however, the more successful older siblings of the elementary students I had recently taught—the ones who hadn't dropped out, who weren't in gangs, who hadn't over-dosed, who survived deeply troubled schools with a residual belief in education and literacy. They were motivated and willing, despite the schools failing to provide them the resources to do well in the university. To figure out what they needed in order to meet the writing demands of college (this was in the prehistoric days before graduate training in composition), I began to look at the kind of writing students were doing in their other courses. What I found was that writing assignments were closely linked to reading assignments. And I worried a lot about the research paper, because students who had done well in the first term course based on personal and argumentative writing seemed to have much greater difficulty with the research paper, which was the central assignment of our second term course. What a research paper entailed was vague to me other than it required technically correct footnotes and bibliographies. Although it seemed to bear some resemblances to equally vaguely described term paper in other courses, I was able to gain no clear definition from colleagues, professional materials, or textbooks of what a research paper was or what skills were useful to accomplish it well.

Fortunately, I wasn't alone in this journey of understanding the needs of the nontraditional student. The early years of open admissions evoked a legendary response by teachers on each of the 18 campuses of the City University, and these were gathered together city-wide under the leadership of Mina Shaughnessy, Bob Lyons, Harvey Wiener, Ken Bruffee and others. A new term "Basic Writing" reframed how we understood students who were only late in their educations being introduced into the power and struggle of writing. The newly

formed organizations of the CUNY Association of Writing Supervisors (CAWS) and the Instructional Resource Center brought together writing instructors from across the city committed to teaching, program development, and research and in writing. We first characterized the literacy tools for academic success in general terms of academic registers and discourse, as eventually spelled out in the later chapters of Mina Shaughnessy's *Errors and Expectations*.

As I struggled with teaching the research paper, I began to focus on the challenges of writing about reading, which I then came to see as central to academic writing. A few years later, literary theory invoked the term intertextuality to address some issues surrounding authorship and textual integrity; that term came to encompass the concerns I was addressing, although I believe composition's use for the term raises broader and more fundamental issues than the literary usage (see Bazerman, "Intertextualities"). Moreover, as I explored the research paper's relation to writing assigned elsewhere on campus, I found there were substantial differences in the structure and expectations of the assignments from one class to another, as well as the intertextual and skill resources they needed to draw on to write those papers. In order to explore these issues I did some faculty surveys in 1976 through 1978 which resulted in some institutional reports and a several unpublished regional conference papers on such topics as "English and the Other Departments," "The Role of Reading in the Kinds of Writing Students do in College," and "The Importance of the Literature in Writing in the Social Sciences." However, when first doing this work, I had not yet linked up with contemporaries with similar interests, and I found my sources and inspiration in prior generations of literacy educators such as I. A. Richards, Mortimer Adler, and Richard Altick.

Only with the last of these papers, presented at the Delaware Valley Writing Conference, held at Beaver College outside Philadelphia in October, 1978, did I become aware of the Writing Across the Curriculum movement. It was with great excitement I found out about the WAC program at Beaver, the collaborative work of workshops on that campus, and the research and textbooks being carried out by the Beaver faculty. Outside the conference meetings I met with Elaine Maimon, Barbara Nodine, Finbarr O'Connor and other Beaver colleagues to share what we had been finding about disciplinary differences in writing and our plans for textbooks (theirs to be *Writing in the Arts and Sciences* and mine to be the *Informed Writer*, both appearing

with 1981 copyrights). Later that academic year I visited Beaver again to see their workshops in action. While much of the early WAC movement was directed by writing to learn pedagogy and writing reinforcement across the curriculum, we agreed that these needed to be carried out in a discipline-sensitive way through dialogue with disciplinary faculty and research on writing in the disciplines.

At the same time as I was finding the WAC movement I was also finding the value of sociological thought and research for understanding writing. In composition the psychologically-based process movement was already becoming a major positive force; I was, however, looking at the social organization of disciplinary activities rather than at internal processes of individuals, although ultimately disciplinary practices and standards become embedded in each practitioner's thought and habit. In the spring of 1978, a colleague directed me towards the sociology of science seminar at Columbia University run by the eminent sociologists Robert Merton and Harriet Zuckerman. During my sabbatical year of 1978–1979 devoted to finishing the *Informed Writer*, I attended the seminar regularly and was to continue to participate as my teaching schedule allowed for the next several years. Coincidentally at that time within the sociology of science, a strong interest was emerging in the rhetoric of science and the discursive construction of scientific knowledge, with scholars such as Susan Cozens, Bruno Latour, Steve Woolgar, Karin Knorr, Nigel Gilbert, and Michael Mulkey beginning to publish in this area. In the fall of 1979 I began attending the meetings of the Society for the Social Studies of Science, and immediately attempted to draw composition folk into the exciting knowledge being presented there; for over a decade writing people formed a small but continuing constituency of that interdisciplinary society. My own publications and talks became explicitly sociological as I presented a papers at the C's in 1979 on "Written Language Communities" attempting to introduce that term to composition, but composition did not yet seem ready for sociology as I could not get it published. One rejection letter from a then eminent leader of the composition profession observed that all this was old hat to rhetoricians. This is just as well, because I soon found the term "community" too broad and undifferentiated: I moved to more concrete ways of talking about communicative forums, text circulation networks, and social roles mediated by texts. In a 1983 article "Scientific Writing as a

Social Act" I found some more satisfactory ways of applying the sociology of science literature to writing.

In the summer of 1979 by attending Richard Young's NEH Summer seminar I also linked up with the national composition and rhetoric research community that was forming as it clustered around Carnegie Mellon. Based on general models of invention, writing process, and rhetorical argument, this world had not yet addressed discipline specific issues raised by the WAC movement or research into disciplinary writing practices. As part of that seminar I stretched the bounds a bit by presenting a paper on composing processes of sociologists, based on an analysis of the accounts reported in the volume *Sociologists at Work*. The relation between general and situated discipline specific models of process and argument has remained a continuing issue defining WAC's relation to general composition teaching and practice. This boundary dialogue with general composition and rhetorical studies has been as important in shaping WAC as the internal dialogue among WAC practitioners and the external dialogue with social studies of disciplinary cultures, knowledge, language, and practice. Other important boundary dialogues for WAC are with scientific and technical writing as well as business communication.

As genre became an organizing concept for myself and others working with specialized writing practices, I became interested in the historical development of forms of writing in relation to the histories of science and technology. This connection was facilitated by the joint meetings in the 1980s of the various science studies societies (Society for the Social Studies of Science, History of Science Society, Society for the History of Technology, and the Philosophy of Science Association). As I pursued this work I found the extensive archives of scientific writing continually useful, such as the American Institute of Physics, the Dibner Collection and the Burndy Institute, the Bakken Collection, and the Edison papers. The archivists of these and other collections were extremely helpful, as they understood the importance of the textual manifestation of science and technology. The work of historians of the sciences, technologies, and other disciplines provides a rich source for understanding writing practices which I believe writing studies should draw on more fully. A number of historians have also done work directly relevant to rhetoric and writing—including Jan Golinski, Ted Porter, Peter Dear, Larry Stewart, Adrian Johns, Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer.

The importance WID researchers attributed to the concept genre also gave us common cause with applied linguistics, particularly the ESL specialty then known as English for Special Purposes and now known as English for Specific Purposes. While I only first became aware of this field in 1982 when meeting John Swales in Singapore, in the U.S. there were already many people who regularly worked at the border of composition and ESL and were quite familiar with the value of ESP approaches for WAC. Over the years this point of connection has become increasingly important, connecting WAC up with both linguistically informed practitioners in the U.S. (such as Dwight Atkinson, Ann Johns, Ulla Connor, and John Swales who had moved to the U.S.) and to people who do similar work to ours in the rest of world (such as Vijay Bhatia, Ken Hyland, Aviva Freedman, Britt Luise Gunnarson, and Anna Trosberg). In much of the world teaching of first and second language writing in higher education is the domain of applied linguistics rather than literature departments. Moreover, these applied linguists tend to take a specific purposes approach, in line with the tendency of the undergraduate curriculum in most of the world to be more closely tied to disciplinary tracks than the U.S. system of majors. At the same time we recognize that ESP applied linguists are our counterparts, it is also worth recognizing that WAC has the potential of being a major contact point with burgeoning higher education writing programs throughout the world.

One final simultaneously developing network of scholars has been of importance to WAC has been the Rhetoric of Inquiry movement. Founded in the early 1980s at the University of Iowa—by economist Donald (now Deirdre) McCloskey, political scientist John Nelson, and historian Allan Megill—it engaged an interdisciplinary group of scholars into reflexively understanding the rhetoric of their own disciplines in order to increase the clarity, focus, and purposefulness of disciplinary inquiries. In 1984 the group sponsored a major conference on the Rhetoric of the Human Sciences, which resulted in a major volume of the same name in 1987, that brought rhetoricians together with disciplinary practitioners examining the rhetorics of their field. The continuing work of the Project on Rhetoric of Inquiry (POROI), has advanced knowledge of disciplinary rhetorics and has sponsored numerous opportunities for WAC scholars to interact with disciplinary specialists. The ongoing work of the center can be sampled at <http://www.uiowa.edu/~poroi/>

Perhaps because Baruch College never developed a WAC Program during the years I was there (1971–1990), despite some attempts to get one going, I devoted my attention mostly to research. While I remained committed to the project of WAC, I understood that the research and pedagogy I was developing was looking more to practices in the disciplines than to the immediate design and operations of WAC programs. Even though I believed and continue to believe that WAC programs should be informed by writing practices in the disciplines, I recognized that WAC had a different programmatic interest, and research into WAC was not the same as research into writing in the disciplines. This recognition led to my giving a subtitle *Using Sources in the Disciplines* to the second edition of *The Informed Writer* appearing in 1985.

I also came into contact with other writing researchers beginning to take an interest in scientific and other disciplinary writing. At the 1979 4C's I remember being delighted to meet Carolyn Miller and Jim Zappen who were also presenting papers on writing in science. Carolyn Miller was in presenting an early version of her paper on genre that was to influence so many of us so deeply. Other good friends I met in those early years who were to form a nucleus of WAC researchers included Carol Berkenkotter (at Richard Young's NEH seminar), Anne Herrington, David Kaufer, Lucille McCarthy, Marie Secor, and Jeanne Fahnestock. As a group formed, with several collaborators I helped bring together conference panels and symposia throughout the 1980s, and then developed publication opportunities to support the production of more research on disciplinary writing, including the symposia on "Rhetoricians on the Rhetoric of Science" and "What are We Doing as a Research Community?" and the edited volume (with Jim Paradis) *Textual Dynamics of the Profession*. My awareness of the role of texts in disciplinary formation gave impetus to discipline building activities: at the 1988 CCCC, Cheryl Geisler and I started the Research Network Forum and at the 1991 CCCC, Janice Lauer and I began the Consortium of Graduate Programs in Composition. Since the 1980s this cluster of WAC and WID scholars has grown and I have done my best to support the communication networks that bring them together. Another important aspect of communal discipline and knowledge building is the writing of reviews of literature, which I began with "Scientific Writing as a Social Act" (1983) and "Studies of Scientific Writing: E Pluribus Unum" (1985) and have

continued to this day along with more extended reference and summative volumes. This is a work others have shared, particularly David Russell with his history and review articles and our shared editing of *Landmark Essays in Writing Across the Curriculum*; Randy Harris has also edited a volume of *Landmark Essays in the Rhetoric of Science*. The research literature provides an important intellectual infrastructure for any profession, and it is important that we all contribute to maintaining and making that network for each other.

These support networks also helped me carry forward and give focus to my own research in this period of the early and mid-1980s, which was building towards *Shaping Written Knowledge*, which appeared in 1988. But the story of those studies is beyond the scope of this movement-oriented essay, and I have described it elsewhere (see particularly the introduction to *Constructing Experience* and "Looking at Writing; Writing What I See.")

This research role and the networks developing around it have often been at some distance from the practical work of developing Writing Across the Curriculum programs, but I would like to think it has provided some support and direction for WAC. At the very least I know the work of the researchers has provided reading materials for seminars and served as fodder for legitimation of the field. I know I have often enough spoken for just such purposes of getting dialogue going at WAC seminars and/or providing academic warrant for WAC programs just starting up. But I am afraid that still by the later 1980s, where we break off this narrative, to some in the composition field and even some engaged in WAC programs this research remained arcane and specialized. As WAC programs brought writing specialists more and more in dialogue with faculty in other disciplines, writing specialists came to take seriously the particularities of disciplinary practices, and WAC programs evolve informed by this knowledge. Research into disciplinary practices is simply a way of helping along this process of learning about the differences of writing practices in different domains at the same time as pointing out that writing is extremely important to them all.

CHUCK AND ANNE

The divergence of the narratives of our networks reflects the divergent experience of a number of our colleagues as well. Some, such as David Russell, Carol Berkenkotter, Paul Prior, Cheryl Geisler, Tom

Huckin, Anthony Pare, Graham Smart, and Anne Blakeslee, have hewed more to researching writing practices in disciplines and professions—and have headed into interdisciplinarity, while others such as Lucille McCarthy, Steve Fishman, Lee Odell, and Barbara Walvoord have kept their researchers' eyes on classroom and programmatic developments—staying much closer to the field of composition. Yet we all remain in contact, reading each others work, publishing in similar venues, seeing each other at conferences. And we provide each other rationale and resources for each other's work.

In this we remain a cluster that stands between English departments and regular composition on one side and other disciplines on the other. On the humanities border we extend understanding and practical and critical engagement with the powerful discursive practices of the disciplines and professions, where knowledge, power, and social decision making are forged and in which our students will participate in creating a future for all of us. On the social science and sciences border we help make visible the important role writing, communication, and discursive skills play in disciplinary work and we provide means for improving and making more reflective the discourses that are so shaping of our world. As well we provide means for more democratic and diverse access so that these discourses of power are open to influence by all who have a stake in the consequences of disciplinary and professional actions. Our continuing research in writing in the disciplines and in disciplinary classrooms across the curriculum will help clarify what writing does in the world, how it does it, and how people can come to learn to wield that power. In this work is realized important intersections of the humanities and the other disciplines, and continuing value humanities approaches to human creation can have in the world. After all, if disciplinary and professional knowledge and decisions are created in the writing of individuals participating together, then it is no stretch to see all of the disciplines as humanistic endeavors. But we need the research to show this and the important gains to be made by taking this perspective.

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