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PRACTICES OF WRITING: EARLY MODERN METAPHORS OF LITERACY AND THE FUNCTION OF COMPOSITION, PAST AND PRESENT

by

Susan Hrach Georgecink

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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Approved by Sara J. van den Berg
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Abstract

PRACTICES OF WRITING: EARLY MODERN METAPHORS OF LITERACY AND THE FUNCTION OF COMPOSITION, PAST AND PRESENT

by Susan Hrach Georgecink

Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee: Associate Professor Sara van den Berg
Department of English

This dissertation is situated within the body of historical studies of literacy, critiquing the quantitative measurement of literacy in early modern England. In keeping with new trends in literacy studies, this rhetorical analysis of a diverse group of texts, from handwriting manuals to George Herbert's poetry, provides a conceptual counterpart to previous statistical studies of the period. The use of metaphor to frame each chapter lends a crucial flexibility to the act of describing early modern literacy practices, and provides a means of comparison with the literacy practices promoted by contemporary composition pedagogy. As well as enriching the context of recent theories of composition, this historical study of literacy elicits further questions about the fundamental orientation of the modern discipline. Early modern literacy guides manifest the implied virtues of education and demonstrate how moral-philosophical and economic merits of literacy have been placed in opposition. Through Stuart-era mothers' legacy texts and the poetry of Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth, the personal and social risks entailed in

writing are revealed; while a writer can establish social solidarity and signify an identity through text, the act of writing can threaten her with disenfranchisement. The circumstances of early modern women and contemporary student writers suggest that both engage in precarious practices of literacy. George Herbert's poetry evinces a private, protected practice of writing-to-learn that allows for rhetorical experimentation and a means to comprehension and cognitive exploration. The use of writing as a mode of contemplation, which Herbert ably demonstrates, offers all writers a model for expression as knowledge-transformation. Reflecting on the usefulness of early modern textual examples in addressing what purposes compositionists envision writing to serve, this dissertation ultimately seeks to address how composition pedagogies may encourage (or thwart) student writers in their pursuit of composing purposeful texts. Viewing literacy through an historical lens affords a new consideration of the role writing instruction plays within a system where education functions overtly as a class mechanism.

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DEDICATION

The author wishes to dedicate this dissertation to her children, Luke and Sarah Jane, who provided their mother with necessary distractions when she lost track of time working on her "big homework." Without the assistance of Joy Widener, who opened her home and her heart to care for Sarah while I was working, this project could not have reached completion. I remain grateful to my husband and to my parents for moral support.

INTRODUCTION

Francis Bacon's essay "Of Studies" (1597) provides one glimpse of an early modern Englishman's view of the proper function of an education.[1] The subject of study, writes Bacon, should be chosen by individuals as a remedy for respective mental weaknesses, "So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt." Intellectual pursuits, in Bacon's view, require delicate negotiation by the student, who is constantly threatened by an excess of learning; those who devote too much time to studies risk becoming lazy or snobbish: "To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament is affectation." Studies must be carefully tempered by experience. And Bacon cautions against relying on purely academic standards of judgment, since that would demonstrate "the humour of a scholar," presumably an unbalanced condition. The essay clearly indicates that learning has private and utilitarian ends, so that even "delight" and "ornament" are offered as important products of formal study, especially when enjoyed in moderation.

Bacon's advice for readers in this essay includes the well-known maxim, "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested." Less well-known is his advice for those who, "by deputy," do not read but are read to. Because reading aloud was a common Renaissance practice that entitled the unschooled to participate in group reading, especially in family settings,[2] Bacon addresses the concerns of the variously literate. His discussion of the uses of reading,

writing, and conversation provides a valuable indication of literacy practices during this period:

> Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not.

Bacon's inclusion of "conference" with reading and writing signifies a tripartite understanding of literacy practices that markedly differs from a subsequent definition of literacy, the text-bound, dual "reading/writing" that has held sway for much of the twentieth century. While he appears critical of the infrequent or poor reader, who lacks knowledge itself, Bacon does not assume that a reader will also write, a reflection of the early modern method of education in which students were required to master reading before beginning to write, and might not continue in school beyond basic reading lessons. Yet the indispensability of reading, writing and conversation are equally weighted. Bacon acknowledges oral interaction as an integral part of literacy practice.

Bacon's essay demonstrates a remarkably different notion of literacy than the notions we currently consider "traditional." Now delegitimized are theories from twenty or thirty years ago that sharply contrast literacy with orality (the "great divide," as aptly characterized by Ruth Finnegan) and the theories that followed these by placing literacy and orality on a continuum or in a dialectic. More than 500 years after the invention of the printing press, scholars are moving toward a rhetorical conception of literacy that bears a resemblance to the multi-layered, context-bound representation

offered by Bacon. Individuals are understood to be bounded by circumstance as well as inclination, and "wit," "memory," and "cunning" play roles as compensatory literacy skills, particularly in functional schemata. While "illiterate" still exists as an inflammatory epithet, literacy scholars recognize that few members of text-circulating societies can be wholly rendered to the void of "illiteracy," existing beyond even Bacon's province of "little" reading, writing or conversation.

Literacy specialists are reconsidering the terms of literacy: the ways in which it has been defined, measured and conceptualized. With no precise equivalent in several other modern languages, notably German and French,[3] our English word "literacy" exists as a concept only, remaining the site of contending and complex definitions. This loosely-configured subject has engendered studies ranging from politicized prescriptions for institutional literacy curricula, to theoretical accounts of literacy's cognitive effects on entire societies, to detailed tracings of the role of literacy in cultural histories. Particularly important has been the recent recognition that ideology plays a fundamental role in determining what literacy means. Scholars have undertaken careful studies of the language of literacy education, the ways in which literacy is described and defined and the "competing ideologies, competing discursive interpretations," in James Berlin's terms, that underlie our understanding of the ways people employ language.

This dissertation is situated within the body of historical studies of literacy, critiquing the quantitative measurement of literacy in early modern England. In using earlier statistical studies as foil for my own argument, I claim membership in Harvey J. Graff's "third generation" of literacy scholars, a group poised to address "key problems in conceptualization, interpretation, and explanation" of literacy in history.[4] As introductory matter, I will argue that quantification is ill-suited for understanding literacy practices. After addressing the temptations of quantification in literacy studies, I will argue for the use of a metaphorical framework as a way of defining and examining literacy practices, particularly in its usefulness as a means of comparing past literacy practices with our own. Lastly, I will preview the textual examples and arguments of the chapters which follow.

The work of David Cressy, Roger Schofield and Lawrence Stone (among others) has relied on a method of measurement -- counting signatures versus simple marks on official documents -- that must be considered narrowly useful, at best, in the context of new ways of conceptualizing literacy.[5] Interestingly, the signature-counting method has been both maligned and defended by these authors, but the lack of any other dependable record of "literates" leaves them with no alternative. My work approaches the issue of early modern literacy by changing the terms of the definition itself. It is true that relying on signatures to estimate the number of people who could read and write is highly suspect, but rather than seek a new source of data to replace this inaccurate one, I

attempt to meaningfully illuminate the traces of people's experiences with written discourse. If we understand literacy as a rhetorical practice, as a way of negotiating discourses and communicating in various settings, then signing one's name on a marriage certificate becomes only one behavior of many that make up an individual's literacy repertoire. Signature statistics capture only one rhetorical situation in the context of a person's entire life.

The drive to measure literacy "rates" may be understood as a benign contribution to the understanding of literacy practices, an attempt to observe or explain a complex phenomenon. Quantitative scholarship may have been fueled in part by the contemporary concern with public literacy and educational progress, a possibility made plausible by numeracy historian Patricia Cline Cohen's claim that, "to measure is to initiate a cure."[6] Measurement, on the other hand, exacts control, and as Deborah Brandt argues, literacy is tied to real social, political and economic power:

> Literacy, like land, is a valued commodity in this [marketplace] economy, a key resource in gaining profit and edge. This value helps to explain, of course, the lengths people will go to secure literacy for themselves or their children. But it also explains why the powerful work so persistently to conscript and ration the powers of literacy. The competition to harness literacy, to manage, measure, teach and exploit it, has intensified throughout the [twentieth] century.[7]

Brandt's account leaves quantifiers of literacy in a circumspect, if not malicious, position. Measurement is a form of control, and the power to label individuals "literate" or "illiterate" based on a mark of ink surely exemplifies an authoritative command. While

the political or economic rewards of mastering historical rates of literacy may not be obvious, the intellectual reward is demonstrable; David Cressy's statistics have been cited over and again in major and minor studies of English literacy in the decades since its publication.

Yet if the drive for quantification may be understood as a function of contemporary conditions or as a traditional quest for mastery (and maybe both of these are at work), neither explanation can ameliorate the fundamental problem: quantification is ill-suited for literacy studies. Writing, as one manifestation of literacy practices, eludes simple methods of measurement:

> The act of writing is a complex sociocognitive interaction with the world that entails, beyond mechanical control, such subtle practices as establishing and maintaining social positions, adapting to variable discursive conventions, and constructing ideas and relationships for oneself and others.[8]

Modern historians have categorized as "illiterate" any individual who was unable to decipher the handwriting of a personal letter or to produce a cursive script, yet such a person might possess perfect competency in reading the black-letter or Gothic type of print used in Protestant Bibles. Non-writing persons often developed elaborate systems of accounting and highly accurate memories which compensated entirely for any need they had of producing written text. Fluency in Latin comprised an additional layer of early modern literacy as well, so that "this elaborate hierarchy. . . makes it hard to determine just what proportion of the population was 'literate.'"[9]

Categorizing literacy practices in rigidly-defined ways (especially in designating the "literate" versus the "illiterate") requires a restriction and limitation of the wide varieties of individuals' interactions with text. Categorization demands that the social, political, and economic contexts of literacy events be excluded. Complexities are reduced, at an incalculable loss. Numbers cannot answer the questions of "the practical history of writing and forms of writing, and in what these can show us of how, in this increasingly important practice, people assumed, developed, extended, realized and changed their relationships."[10] Yet as Mike Rose describes the challenge of rejecting quantification, "What you couldn't represent with a ratio or a chart – what was messy and social and complex – was simply harder to talk about and much harder to get acknowledged."[11] Despite its inappropriateness for any thorough understanding, past or present, of literacy practices, our typical reliance upon quantification seems unavoidable in the case of historical study. Ethnography has emerged as the critically preferred mode of literacy-practice analysis, and the prospect of historical ethnographies presents seemingly impossible obstacles.[12]

The ethnographer, rather than attempting an "objective," detached view of cultural practices, engages him- or herself within a social setting in order to describe and analyze events in a way which validates the participants on their own terms, richly capturing the discourse behavior of a community as it is observed from within. While the literacy scholar cannot re-live historical moments, he or she can apply the valuable

lessons of ethnography by striving for rich historical contextualization of events and for self-consciously subjective analysis. Germane to an ethnographic philosophy, it is the nature of *metaphorical* thinking to draw on personal experience in trying to understand the unfamiliar and to articulate new understanding. "Rather than being rigidly defined," explain George Lakoff and Mark Johnson,

> concepts deriving from our experience are open-ended. Metaphors and hedges are systematic devices for further defining a concept and for changing its range of applicability.[13]

Metaphorical thinking, therefore, gives rise to historical analysis that overtly involves the perspective of the critic. The use of metaphor lends a crucial flexibility, moreover, to the act of defining elusive or amorphous concepts, like literacy.

Metaphor facilitates comparison rather than contrast. An irony of this study for me has been the consistent way in which my effort to respect historical specificity inevitably leads me to note similarities in literacy practices past and present. The metaphorical impulse, while making literacy practices meaningful, fosters a coherent rather than discontinuous organization of experience. Joining two entities metaphorically permits us to understand and (re)define a concept in ways which pertain to our own experiential gestalt; it is difficult to imagine escaping contemporary subjectivity in the interest of historical accuracy at any rate. "It is genuinely difficult," writes Raymond Williams,

> for someone who has spent a working life with print, and has had access, through it, to writing in societies quite unlike his or her own, to take seriously the idea that the conditions the reader shares with those available writers, through the common property of texts, are socially specific conditions, which cannot be simply read back as the central truths of all active reading and writing.[14]

In finding continuities rather than historical particularities of literacy practices, I aim not to discount valuable interpretations which emphasize differences in historical contexts: "Historical circumstances," warns Gerd Baumann, "come in single sets, not in neatly comparable pairs; so do cultural practices of literacy."[15] My examinations of early modern texts in search of explanatory literacy metaphors, while ultimately directed at comparing past and present literacy practices, attempt to respect the unique social conditions of each writer.

Metaphor-making is a powerful cognitive process. M.A.K. Halliday has argued for the importance of metaphor as a meaningful linguistic choice for speakers and writers: "Since construing experience in the form of language is already an inherently metaphorical process, it is no surprise to find a further dimension of metaphor present within language itself."[16] While Halliday's interest lies in distinguishing the ways that metaphorical expression differs grammatically from what he calls "congruent" expression, Lakoff and Johnson have argued for the significance of metaphor as a linguistic means to knowledge and comprehension. The employment of metaphor in specific terms, they suggest,

> allows us not only to elaborate a concept (like the MIND) in considerable detail but also to find appropriate means for highlighting some aspects of it and hiding others.[17]

A metaphor will always partially reveal the concept being defined. The entailments of metaphor are the associations, or details from our wide knowledge, that we apply to our new understanding of the concept. Entailments are thus crucial indications of a metaphor's ideological orientation.

Literacy metaphors can be broadly categorized according to their ideological framework. Traditional metaphors, represented by phrases like the "achievement" or "acquisition" of literacy, involve conceiving literacy ideologically as an independent entity that occupies some territorial space outside of the individual. Although these metaphors continue to hold popular currency, the ideological framework they invoke has been largely discredited within the academy. Thinking of literacy like an objective, clearly-demarcated region not only involves postulating illiteracy as its ever-present "outside" place, but implies that any written text encountered by a reader has an autonomous meaning that will transparently reveal itself to any person with the proper keys. Just as literary theory has called this view of text into question, literacy theory has interrogated its attending metaphor of literacy.

Another ideological framework metaphorically identifies the ability to read and write with a state of being. In this sense, one might classify oneself as "literate" (again, versus "illiterate") in order to indicate one reads and writes at a certain level of

competency. Yet the metaphorical entailments of literacy as state-of-being suggest that literacy is not only a capability, but a cognitive endowment. "Literate" connotes more than a basic level of language ability, but a prized, valuable condition; it implies a thorough understanding of the subject at hand ("Professor X published a literate book review of that volume"). "Illiterate," by contrast, connotes cognitive disability, or an inherently diseased condition. State-of-being metaphors have proven dissatisfactory since they entail an oppressive ideological framework. Not only do they preserve the sharp contrast between literate and illiterate, but they dismiss persons whose strategies for working with written text do not adhere to conventional definitions.

The metaphorical framework now widely accepted by literacy scholars moves away from the literacy/illiteracy binary. These metaphors recognize the rhetorical nature of reading, writing and speech by describing literacy as a "practice," a "performance," or a "construction," which also grants agency to the individual. While the concept of multiple literacies allows contemporary studies of the US population to productively address the present range of cultural and linguistic diversity, I find rhetorical practice metaphors equally useful for examining texts from the seventeenth century. "Lettered" persons brought to the writing situation very different backgrounds, purposes and identities. By acknowledging that people engage with written texts and communicate in ways that vary widely and are often embedded in complicated social contexts, we are able to redefine literacy as *literacies*, as strategic multiplicity.[18] The social context of any

given situation will affect the choices an individual makes in representing him or herself to a specific audience. Thinking of writers' engagement with texts as a reflection of multiple literacies permits a much broader analysis of the material than a strictly quantitative one.

While a metaphorical framework satisfies the need for historical literacy studies to respect multiplicity and ambiguity in literacy practices, this approach has the potential power to define reality, as Lakoff and Johnson explain:

> Metaphors may create realities for us, especially social realities. A metaphor may thus be a guide for future action.[19]

Because I am concerned in this study with drawing useful comparisons between early modern composition practices and contemporary ones, particularly those cultivated by colleges and universities, the potential of metaphor to create realities and prescribe future action presents yet another strategic advantage. The historical study of literacy becomes capable of producing new evidence in support of various contemporary theories of composition, as well as eliciting more questions about the fundamental orientation of our discipline. Viewing literacy through an historical lens assists us in considering anew our role as teachers within a system where education functions overtly as a class mechanism. In what manner are we encouraging to students to write, for which kinds of purposes?

I have elaborated my use of metaphor to define early modern literacy practices in a coherent system grounded on the experience of *purpose*. Metaphor-creation

may be categorized according to type and properties, as outlined by Lakoff and Johnson. My system relies on the previously-established metaphorical concept of literacy as a rhetorical practice (a structural metaphor likewise drawing on the experience of *purpose*), originally created as an alternative to literacy metaphors based on *participants* or *stages* such as literacy-as-state-of-being or illiteracy-as-disease. All of these literacy metaphors are structural, that is, they are grounded in "systematic correlations within our experience."[20] My own selection of metaphors, grounded in the experiential gestalt of *purpose*, is described by Lakoff and Johnson in these terms: "From birth (and even before), we have needs and desires, and we realize very early that we can perform certain actions (crying, moving, manipulating objects) to satisfy them."[21] The organizational metaphor for my study of literacy therefore draws on the assumption that the traces of individuals' interactions with written texts can be read as evidence of attempts to satisfy needs.

Included in this study are self-help guides published for aspiring writers and a self-help satire, advice texts written by gentlewomen for their children, the love sonnets of Lady Mary Wroth and the contemplative poetry of George Herbert. While all of the texts were composed during the first thirty-odd years of the seventeenth century, I have tried to select a wide variety of texts and writers so that I can demonstrate a range of literacy practices, all being enacted within a relatively narrow time-frame.[22] The writers are men and women, aristocrats and members of the "middling" class, composers of

poetry and prose, writers of personal sentiments and public declarations. Some express trepidation at taking up the pen, others, pride, and still others, a conviction that composition resides at the heart of a meaningful existence. The purposes or functions of these compositions differed (as the metaphorical chapter titles serve to indicate) and they manifest different literacy strategies: utilitarian, conservational, performative and exploratory. The texts deepen our understanding of each writer's practice of composition and additionally enable us to situate the practices of writing we commonly encounter and foster in first-year student writing at the university. Student writers practice a literacy which demands a certain audacity; they perform through written texts an identity which is not wholly under their control, but determined by powerful readers; they disclose for our perusal their developing thoughts and ideas. Willfully submitting to this scrutiny, students relinquish authority and control in order to reap the self-enhancing rewards of college literacy.

Literacy practices, in the early modern period as now, functioned as an economic discriminator. Attempts to master new writing technologies or to access specialized information provided learners with the cultural capital necessary to achieve or maintain upper-class status in a market economy. Literacy educators, however, then as now, often resisted their roles as bankers of cultural capital by emphasizing the moral-philosophical virtues of literacy merited by diligent learners; this topic is the subject under consideration in chapter one. The texts of the "Professors of the Pen" exploit

literacy's claims to moral virtue as a justification for promoting the "arte" of handwriting, while a "Tom of All Trades" interrogates the very basis for such claims in his satirical send-up of the self-help genre. Powell's parody shows that the omission of economic rationales for acquiring various literacies was duly noted, an unspoken premise floating just beneath the surface of self-help guidebooks. These texts permit us to historicize current tension between the virtues of literacy in composition studies. Compositionists value the potential of the writing course to foster (moral-philosophical) democratic principles by granting students a new awareness of social discourses and their rhetorical functions. At the same time, students expect to gain an economically valuable skill in learning "how to write." College literacy offers students the means to livelihood, an inescapable reality that college educators must reconcile with our own desire to assist in moral-philosophical development.

Student writing is always an apprentice writing, governed by a different set of standards from the sanctioned writing of accredited professionals. Yet written assignments require students to assume an authorial position in producing texts despite their lack of sanction or credibility. For first-year students in new and uncertain territory, the risks of written expression are high. In a like manner, seventeenth-century women who composed advice for their children approached writing as interlopers in a mode of discourse controlled by more powerful (male) others, as I show in the second chapter. By examining the prefatory remarks and epistles in the texts known as "mothers' legacies,"

and by carefully noting the circumstances of the manuscripts' publication, I explore the risks of literacy display for these women. Gender undeniably operates here as an important element in each writer's rhetorical positioning, but it should not overshadow the real differences among the writers' interactions with text. The women differ in the nature of their expressed motivations to write and they anticipate varying degrees of hostility to their activity as writers. Only the need to preserve some vestige of themselves and of their cherished beliefs superseded social risk. Displaying literacy represented an audacious rhetorical act for all; Dorothy Leigh and Elizabeth Richardson attempt to lessen the affront by apologizing and offering excuses for entering the world of print, while Elizabeth Grymeston and Elizabeth Jocelin try to limit the potentially-offended by keeping their manuscripts private. Jocelin articulates, within a conventional genre of the period, the ways in which literacy brings a burden to its practitioner: learnedness presents problems in a culture that supremely values modesty.

The act of producing text can signify a social identity and establish social solidarity within a community. University discourse communities utilize first-year composition as a mechanism to bring student writing into compliance with community standards, ultimately evaluating student texts as performances of academic identity. Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth's practice of literacy demonstrates that texts can also threaten a writer with social betrayal, carrying within words and discourse structures the power to permanently disenfranchise, to impose a future sentence of silence. Wroth's writing

exemplifies in many ways the epitome of Renaissance belles-lettres, as I discuss in chapter three, and she is represented in most contemporary literary anthologies as a paradigmatic "minor" early modern writer: aristocratic, able to be linked to other famous historical and literary figures, suitably interesting from a biographical standpoint. Yet the fact remains that Wroth was cast out from her literary and social community largely as a result of publishing her work. Mary Wroth's activities leave her occupying a position as both Renaissance poet première and Renaissance poet deviant. Although Wroth's writing served to legitimate her identity within the Jacobean court discourse community, her eventual rhetorical and ideological transgression of the community's boundaries functioned to banish her from the group and from literary/literacy activity itself. Wroth agitated the court community on three identifiable ways: she took social risks that left her vulnerable to authority, she wrote texts that both enticed and frustrated courtly readers, and she violated the standards of elite discretion by publishing in print. Despite a natural and nurtured identity as a Jacobean courtier, Wroth rendered herself inadmissible when she exceeded the limits of the society's conventional practices of literacy. If little historical certainty about her intentions exists, the events of 1621 still testify to the power of social convention.

A private, protected practice of writing allows for rhetorical experimentation and intellectual development. Students benefit from the opportunity to write within "safe spaces," as a means to comprehension and cognitive exploration. In

the final chapter, I address issues pertaining to the meaning and uses of literacy for George Herbert and the ways in which he grapples in his poetry with the proper employment of literacy in the service of Christian devotion. I argue that for Herbert, the writing of verse in the vernacular served a highly personal function; Herbert's apprehension of poetic conventions made possible a literacy practice aiming to reveal his soul to the divine, to disclose both to himself and to God the nature of his innermost thoughts and feelings. Rather than representing "the memory of states of restlessness now securely overcome," Herbert's poems disclose his on-going mediation between experience and thought. In his personal verse, he occupies the role of "creative adequator," so that his representation of experience adheres to acceptable epistemological parameters even as it goes about the invention of discourse. Herbert's on-going attendance to the larger narrative organization of the poems performs a broader function of self-representation, which encompasses continuities and discontinuities alike. Read within the context of Herbert's education, career and diverse other writings, The Temple becomes a remarkable collection of poetry due to its status as the most private and carefully protected writing Herbert ever did. The aesthetic treasure chest of Herbert's poetry has inadvertently obscured critics' understanding of the composition's rhetorical situation and the text's manifestation of literacy-as-disclosure.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

[1] While Bacon's sentiments should not be taken as entirely representative, they do reflect his typically Elizabethan training in rhetoric. "Bacon's style was born of Tudor school-books, the university curriculum and the notebooks of keen young lawyers," writes Penguin editor John Pitcher. See Pitcher, Introduction, Francis Bacon: The Essays (New York: Penguin, 1985) 14.

[2] See Roger Chartier, ed., A History of Private Life: Passions of the Renaissance, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1989) ch. 1 for several illustrations from the period depicting the reading circle, notably two paintings showing a salon group and a peasant family, each listening to one member read.

[3] Gerd Baumann, Introduction, The Written Word: Literacy in Transition, ed. Gerd Baumann (Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press, 1986) 14.

[4] Harvey J. Graff, The Labyrinths of Literacy: Reflections on Literacy Past and Present, rev. ed. (Pittsburgh and London: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995) 305.

[5] The specific studies to which I refer here are: David Cressy, Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Roger S. Schofield, "The measurement of literacy in pre-industrial England," Literacy in Traditional Societies, ed. Jack Goody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968) 311-25 and "Dimensions of illiteracy in England, 1750-1850," Explorations in Economic History 10: 437-54; Lawrence Stone, "Literacy and education in England, 1640-1900," Past and Present 42: 69-139.

[6] Cohen qtd. in Mike Rose, Lives on the Boundary: The Struggles and Achievements of America's Underprepared (New York: Free Press, 1989) 200.

[7] Deborah Brandt, "Sponsoring Literacy," CCC 49.2 (May 1998) 169.

[8] Lil Brannon, "(Dis)missing Compulsory First-Year Composition," Reconceiving writing, rethinking writing instruction, ed. Joseph Petraglia (Mahwah, NJ: L.Erlbaum Associates, 1995) 240.

[9] Keith Thomas, "The Meaning of Literacy in Early Modern England," The Written Word: Literacy in Transition, ed. Gerd Baumann (Oxford University Press, 1985) 99-101. Ann Moss writes that "the language of commonplaces in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. . . was Latin," which further muddies the distinction between the

"literate" and "illiterate"; despite our association of Latin with the literate elite, even those with little reading or writing ability would likely be familiar with phrases not in the vernacular. See Moss, Printed common-place books and the structuring of Renaissance thought (Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press, 1996) 2.

[10] Raymond Williams, Writing in Society (London: Verso, 1983) 2.

[11] Rose 200.

[12] Graff 307.

[13] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, Metaphors We Live By (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980) 125.

[14] Williams 4.

[15] Baumann 14.

[16] M.A.K. Halliday, An Introduction to Functional Grammar, 2nd. ed. (London: Edward Arnold, 1994) 343.

[17] Lakoff and Johnson 61.

[18] The notion of "literacies" was first introduced by Brian V. Street in Literacy in Theory and Practice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

[19] Lakoff and Johnson 156.

[20] Lakoff and Johnson 61. "Structural metaphors," write Lakoff and Johnson, "provide the richest source of such elaboration. . . allow[ing] us to use one highly structured and clearly delineated concept to structure another" (61). Literacy-as-entity metaphors, in contrast, are orientational in nature.

[21] Lakoff and Johnson 82.

[22] Two other major writers of poetry and prose in this period, John Donne and Ben Jonson, have been studied previously within a rhetorical framework similar to mine. See James S. Baumlin, John Donne and the rhetorics of Renaissance discourse (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1991) and Arthur F. Marotti, John Donne, coterie poet (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986) on Donne and Robert C. Evans, Habits of Mind: evidence and effects of Ben Jonson's reading (London: Associated University Presses, 1995), Richard Helgerson, Self-crowned laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton and the literary system (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983) and Jonathan Goldberg, James I and the Politics of Literature (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990) on Jonson.

CHAPTER I: LITERACY AS SELF-ENHANCEMENT: THE LESSONS OF THE "PROFESSORS OF THE PEN" AND A "TOM OF ALL TRADES"

The books I will treat in this chapter, unlike most of the texts to follow, explicitly address a public audience. Advertised as self-help guides rather than school textbooks, these manuals allow us to glimpse utilitarian uses made of reading and writing by adults, including by the authors themselves as professional writers. The buyers of self-help texts, already basic readers at least, sought to expand their literacies, some by mastering the various handwriting technologies of the period, others by gaining information previously restricted to word-of-mouth channels. Attempts to master new writing technologies and to access specialized information provided learners with the cultural capital necessary to achieve or maintain upper-class status in a market economy; literacy practices, then as now, functioned as an economic discriminator. Literacy educators, however, then as now, sometimes resisted their roles as bankers of cultural capital by emphasizing the moral-philosophical virtues of literacy merited by diligent learners. The texts of the "Professors of the Pen" exploit literacy's claims to moral virtue as a justification for promoting the "arte" of handwriting, while "Tom of All Trades" interrogates the very basis for such claims in his satirical send-up of the self-help genre. These texts permit us to historicize current tension between the virtues of literacy in composition studies.

For the buyers, borrowers and writers of seventeenth-century literacy guides, the acts of acquiring or producing books occasion the virtue of literacy. "Literacy-as-salvation" or "-state-of-Grace" indeed exist as some of the most enduring structural metaphors of literacy: the performance of socially-valued textual practices provides evidence of a person's exalted state-of-being. The "Grace" of literacy in modern times has become doubly-metaphorical, since its blessing is distinctly secular and social, but early modern texts foreground this religious metaphor by emphasizing the actual moral virtue to be gained.[1] Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine have explored the failure of classical Humanism to provide grounds for the moral virtue (state-of-grace literacy metaphor) it claimed as its program. Scrutinizing the Renaissance schoolroom, Grafton and Jardine conclude that the charisma of a gifted teacher ultimately provided the instructive moral force behind a Humanist curriculum.[2] Literacy guides, in comparison, betoken readers working toward their own states-of-Grace. Taking pains to access technology and information literacies, these readers illustrate the "self-improving" and "self-enhancing" functions of literacy.

In contrast to a school-based literacy in which reading and writing are sometimes pursued solely for the purpose of academic advancement, here I will define "adult literacy" as the management of written text to accomplish social, economic, or political aims, undertaken with self-enhancement (if not at least self-interest) as a primary ideological orientation.[3] Given that the popular, small booklet-like "chapbook" made reading material inexpensive as well as easily distributed even to rural villages by a

"chapman," an adult literacy may have been practiced by a significant segment of the reading population.[4] By naming adult literacy as a category of literacy practices, I am focusing on the uses made of written text rather than on the ranking of literacy practices according to perceived levels of skill. My framework thus differs from that of educational specialists and from Grafton and Jardine when they analyze the kinds of literacy tasks demanded of humanist pupils in order to identify and define "advanced" literacy skills, i.e., the treatment of texts as "potential objects of interpretation, rather than simply as transmitters of information or instruments of recall."[5] As with the chapters to follow, I am interested here in how the reader/writer employs text, rather than in how he processes text.[6]

1. EARLY MODERN HANDWRITING MANUALS AND THE MORAL VIRTUE OF PEN-TECHNOLOGY

For early modern English citizens, reading and writing were activities charged with moral value. Reading most commonly served the purpose of preparation for future action, naturally "lead[ing] to the improvement of the individual and thus of the society."[7] An inspirational verse in this vein by "I.S.," "In The Prayse Of *Writing*," prefaces David Browne's 1622 penmanship guide. Set forth in hymn-like form, the poem extols the virtues of all persons engaged in the profession of writing:

> Rejoyce all *Writers*, who liue by the Penne,
>   For your Arte with Royaltie is clad:
> The honour whereof lay hidde amongst Men,
>   But now is universallie spread.

Rejoyce all *Engravers*, and Yee that Found
Types for Letters of Writ and Print,
Since the Spring of your Cisterne doth abound,
And now runneth ov'r the olde extent.

Rejoyce all PRINTERS, whose Calling depends
On *Writing*, that most auncient Arte:
For it your chiefe from whence yours descendes,
Is promoted in everie parte.

Rejoyce all *Learners*, who may, when yee list,
Learne all times, by this magnifique Worke.
And All give GOD prayse, who doth so assist
This your Patron, that excellent Clerke.

The verse brims with enthusiasm and optimism for a growing publishing industry, nevertheless reminding the reader that the technologies of the pen and the press stem from ancient and honorable beginnings, like royalty or a fresh-water spring. Rather than praising writing technology itself, the poem singles out practitioners of the trade for commendation; their vital endeavors carry on the work of God himself, "that excellent Clerke." The practitioners of writing technology -- pen-men, engravers, printers and even those aspiring to learn how to write -- are here specially blessed for carrying on a holy vocation.

In the late sixteenth century, adult literacy advice for the aspiring middle class focused less on penmanship and more on proper speech behavior as the means to advancement. Walter Darell appended the manners treatise Galateo (1576) by Giovanni Della Casa to his advice text for male servants, A short discourse of the life of seruingmen (1578); in his work, Della Casa spends eighteen pages addressing mannerly

speech. "Talke in a forreigne Language" is generally considered rude, while one should modulate one's "Voyce and Tounge" so that the quality is neither horse nor shrill.[8] "Silence" itself occupies the final subsection of Della Casa's topic of speech, including the following sound but trying advice: "It is good maner for a man to speake, and likewise to hold his peace, as it comes to his turne, and occasion requires."[9] A century later, Hannah Woolley will include for aspiring maidservants examples of the polite scripts necessary to learn; in the course of the seventeenth century, practicing the technology of the pen became as necessary for occupational promotion as knowing when to keep quiet.

Learning how to navigate vernacular written text in the notoriously diverse hands of this period constituted a legitimate technological skill, and thereby conferred upon a practitioner the corresponding cultural capital. Renaissance "Pen-men" made a living by meeting an increasing public demand for technological proficiency, that is, an ability to read and write in the scripts of the day (mainly the secretary and the italic hands, although as many as seven or eight different hands were considered legitimate styles). The "excellency" of being able to write carried indisputable currency from the perspective of social elites:

> Is [writing] not one of the hands by which not onely this, but all other Common-wealths are upholden? The key which opens a passage to the descrying and finding out of innumerable treasures? The handmaid to memory? The Register and Recorder of all Arts? And the very Mouth whereby a man familiarly conferreth with his friend, though the distance of thousands of miles be betwixt them?[10]

Writing is credited here with stabilizing national order, assisting intellectual work and preserving human relationships. In expressing such views, chapbook-size copy-books acted to "preserve and even diffuse traditional popular culture" as well as the values of the upper classes, a point which complicates the notion of literacy as a revolutionary force.[11]

Adult literacy involved participating in the technology of the pen: decoding the scripts written by others and producing one's own script, preferably in a manner which conveyed at least competency, if not mastery, of the requisite form. Legibility was not an especially prized feature of early seventeenth-century hands; rather, the well-appointed script followed the aesthetic conventions of a particular style. Notwithstanding the negative assessment of a twentieth-century critic, this passage asserts the period's preference for ornamented penmanship:

> A decorative feature of the folios of copy-books outrunning discretion was the flourishing known to the writing masters as 'striking' or 'command of hand.' The desire of the penmen to shine by examples of amazing skill led them to performances that made writing subsidiary to ornament.[12]

Prestigious scripts in other periods have been marked by legibility, but like any Saussurean system of signs, the meaning of styles of writing is socially assigned. Certain Renaissance hands are named after the places in which they are expected to be produced, such as the "Court" or the "Chancery" hands, so that for different stations, different semiotic markings exist. A significant difficulty for the modern reader of copy-books

consists in decoding the semiotics of the seventeenth-century pen. Possessing only the examples of the most elite writing masters, we are left to speculate on what specific differences in unpublished masters' hands led them to be labeled "ignorant scribblers" and mercenary technicians rather than virtuous practitioners of the "Arte."

The growth of a new literacy-based occupation, the writing master, signaled the early modern expansion of pen-technology and the accompanying transition, although resisted by many masters themselves, of handwriting from art form to instrument. The relationship of handwriting to artistry became an increasingly contentious issue in this period. Once the domain of highly-skilled artisans, penmanship was increasingly practiced by clerks, merchants, and other formerly-unlettered persons for a variety of practical purposes. Even the earliest copy-books and writing instructions assume that handwriting is a technological device, but as pen-technology became more widely-practiced, the artistry of one's hand provided a way for masters (and ordinary writers) to discriminate amongst themselves. Calligraphy slowly emerged as the mode of "high handwriting."

While the first English publication of a handwriting manual, John Beau Chesne's and John Baildon's A Booke Containing Divers Sortes of Hands (1570) consists wholly of ideal models for seven types of script, other early copybooks comfortably accommodate a diverse range of writers' purposes. Peter Bales' The Writing Schoolemaster (1590) divides itself into three separate guides for different types of

writing: "The first, teaching Swift writing; The second, True writing; The third, Faire writing." Bales names the respective practices "Brachygraphie," a crude shorthand; "Orthographie," a complete yet basic hand; and "Calygraphie," the skillful hand of accomplished writers. Calligraphotechnia, the title of Richard Gething's 1619 "Coppie-booke of the usuall hands written," suggests a conception of writing that includes mutually-reinforcing notions of art (calli-) and device (-technia). Such mixes of "high" and "low" forms of handwriting in published guides are unique to the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

"Calligraphie" first enters the language in 1613 as "faire writing," a manifestation of the need to preserve penmanship as an art.[13] By mid-century, the prolific Edward Cocker would publish over two dozen elaborate copy-books, demonstrating that the public interest in calligraphy had spawned a lucrative book market. Cocker would "embroider his copy-books with fantastic creatures, exotic birds, dragons, dancing bears, angels, fauns, sea monsters, grotesque masks, warriors and delightful ships, all woven into an absurd medley of ornament round his pages,"[14] a fanciful approach to handwriting artistry which decidedly displeased his peers:

> Joseph Champion in his The Parallel [; or, Comparative Penmanship (1750)] writes that 'Mr. Edward Cocker, a voluminous author, led on by lucre, let in an inundation of copy-books and these followed by others, either vile imitators or pirates in PENMANSHIP, had almost rendered the art contemptuous, when col. *John Ayers*, a disciple of Mr. *Topham's*, happily arose to check this mischievous spirit (which was about the year 1690) and he actually began the reformation of LETTERS. . . ."[15]

The seriousness of Cocker's critics shows that calligraphy, as a practice of "high handwriting," mattered for reasons other than its obvious aesthetic appeal. "Faire writing" served as a discriminating marker among writers, so that any perceived irreverence for this elite practice provoked a vigorous protest.

Adult learners who recognized and accepted the rhetorical distinction between fashionable handwriting and mere scribbling would be conscious of the effect of their texts' appearance, but those who needed pen-technology for everyday business remained less concerned about how closely they adhered to standard scripts:

> Shopkeepers, corndealers, colliery foremen, bailiffs, all found it easier to function if they could read and write. The expansion of trade created a new demand for commercial clerks; and that in turn led to the replacement of secretary by 'round' hand, because it could be written faster.[16]

The titles of publications by writing masters after 1642 indicate precisely how fast (and how far) penmanship moved from the realm of art into the realm of mere device or tool. Thomas Shelton contributed Tachy-graphy. The most exact and compendious methode of short and swift writing that hath ever yet been published by any (1645), a well-developed shorthand guide; Sir William Petty offered A declaration concerning the newly invented art of double writing (1648), interestingly labeled an "art" while selling the "benefit," "feasibility" and "use" of said "Invention" in clearly mechanical terms; and Richard Hodges published a spelling primer, Most plain directions for true-writing (1649), which included mathematical tables for the buyer's use but no penmanship guide. Practical necessity accounted for handwriting's movement away from art form toward

transparent technology. Written text served new purposes for groups of people new to pen-technology, so that a change in the technique and the appearance of script would seem inevitable, if not desirable.

The writing manuals of Martin Billingsley and David Browne, both masters at the Jacobean court, bear witness to the unsettling issues of signification and functionality which surround the teaching of handwriting in the first decades of the seventeenth century. The texts of Billingsley and Browne evoke a sense of the embattled; John Davies of Hereford, in his own copy-book, undoubtedly refers to these contemporaries as those who write "some envious Discourses against other Teachers, and other frivolous[ness] in high Phrases (used by some) above the capacity of Learners."[17] Billingsley and Browne, as practitioners of "faire writing," are fighting a losing battle to maintain aesthetic standards because the demand for access to pen-technology encouraged any minimally-qualified writer to advertise himself as a teacher, reproducing a degraded quality of penmanship.[18] Billingsley fumes in The pens excellencie, or the secretaries delighte (1618),

> First you shal observe that these botchers (for they deserve no better title) are, for the greatest part of them, of no standing, nor ever have had any ground in the Art, onely have a certaine confused kind of writing, voide eyther of *Life, Dexterity,* or *Art* it selfe. . . . [They], being fitter for other Mechanicall occupations, (wherein some of them, to my knowledge, have beene brought up) then for the Profession of this so curious an Art.[19]

Billingsley's reservation of the title "Professor" for those of qualified merit brings his use of the word close to the modern definition.[20] Yet the proper conferral of "Professor"

illustrates in miniature the writing masters' preoccupying concern with upholding standards, both of the professors, who have become too numerous and too base, and of the profession, which is rapidly losing its claim to artistry.

For Billingsley, writing tutor to Prince Charles, and Browne, scribe of King James and author of The New Invention, intitvled, Calligraphia: or, The Arte of Faire writing (1622), the beauty of a hand signals in metaphorical fashion the virtue of the writer. "Hee that as *Davies* would as fairely write,/ Must *of necessitie* haue *Davies'* spright," goes Nicholas Deeble's illustrative commendation for Davies of Hereford:

> Who knows not that this wondrous Facultie
> Is not conceiu'd by coorse Capacitie,
> But maketh there her only Habitation
> Where shee doth finde a strong Imagination!
> For none *habitually* can her possesse
> That is not made of *fire* and *liuelynesse*.[21]

The offensive appearance of unqualified writing masters' (and their students') hands, in fitting contrast to that of Davies, will mirror an inherent moral deficiency. Billingsley claims that one look at such masters' scripts will reveal their gross mediocrity:

> [I]f a man take a view of any of their workes or writings, he shall finde therein no appearance eyther of Truth, Reason, or Art: but on the contrary, such weake stuffe as he would rather imagine it to be the scratching of a Hen, then the worke of a profest Pen-man.[22]

At stake here for Billingsley is the moral rectitude of the writer, his ability to convey the righteousness of his person through the appearance of his hand. For both Billingsley and Browne, a virtuous hand can only be produced by following the painstaking rules of

letter-formation; the carefulness of a script reveals the writer's diligence in learning to write properly. The writer's scrupulous attention to this task thus reflects a sober and morally admirable temperament.

While the writing masters offer prescriptions for hands in terms of propriety, copy-books never advise adopting the techniques of a skillful penman as a way to solidify an upper-class ranking. Like the location of one's residence or the clothing on one's body, skilled penmanship semiotically conveys an elite status, a materialized "state-of-grace." "Literacy as a state of grace," as Walter Mignolo reflects,

> is perhaps one of the most lasting legacies of the European Renaissance and one of the most powerful ideologies in the process of colonization, [since] literacy as a state of grace erases its links with economic structures and with literacy as power.[23]

Even in the act of writing, the properly-positioned pen in a writer's hand signifies much more than one's technological prowess. In many copy-books, detailed descriptions and illustrations of the correct way to hold a pen accompany pages of various hands for copying:[24]

> Hold your head so straight up and evenly, as that Book or Paper whereon you write, may be right before your Face; . . .the middle part of your Book or Paper so directly against the midst of your body, and so equally near at both ends, to that side or part of the Table next you, as the straight holding forth of your Arms will permit.
>
> Hold your pen lightly on the point of your Thumb, almost touching the Nail thereof, the Forefinger on top, and the Middle-finger longest, at the upper part of the mouth; as also your Thumb, and all your fingers extended to their full length. . . .[25]

Directions for proper writing posture extend and elaborate upon the masters' prescriptions for letter-formation. As the literacy of the educated, proper handwriting technique "was almost impossible to acquire. . . without also absorbing the values and social attitudes of polite metropolitan culture."[26] Billingsley and Browne adopt the positions of cultural gatekeepers in the face of sweeping economic transition, even as that unacknowledged economic change chiefly makes it profitable for them to enter the world of commercial publication.

Being able to produce a well-formed script, while conferring moral and social virtue, did not sufficiently qualify a writer to teach others according to Billingsley and Browne.[27] It was not enough to model a proper script if the writing master could not explain exactly how the letters should be formed and further provide a justification for following that particular series of strokes:

> If thou wilt take any Line of [the inferior masters'] owne writ, and aske wherefore such a Letter is fashioned, measured, conjoyned, &c, that way rather as another way (which if thou canst, thou may prooue to be better) they will not only cease from their discourse, but become so stupefact and dumme, that they cannot render one Rule of right reason, nor answere a word to that Question.[28]

Minimally-skilled masters could not reproduce the procedures they followed to result in a particular hand, let alone offer grounds for their process. Browne's book, in contrast, offers the reader a primer in graphemics, "describing so manie [Letters] as have bodies, heads, and tayles, and howe manie want them. . . And then, the double Letters severallie, shewing their combination; that is, how they are made double, and united."[29] Browne

appeals to a calligrapher's concern for precision rather than to a technician's need for ease of use. The battle of the Professors of the Pen against the swelling tide of "scribblers" entailed methodological preferences, expressed in terms of professional integrity.

The conscientious writing master would not be content to found his art on the arbitrary notion of custom, but would seek to teach penmanship as a scientific matter of study, worthy of the moral virtue it merited. Billingsley, as a respectable master, explains the various advantages and hazards of each hand, noting to which purposes each is best suited and identifying its idiosyncrasies: the Italian hand demands that the pen never be "taken off in coniunction of the letters," else it appear "detestable," while the Secretary, as its name denotes, "imports some things in it that are not easily to be found out . . . [such as] many secret and subtill passages of the hand."[30] Teaching these hands without explicating their uniquely derived properties constituted either ignorance or negligence. A master who attempted to explain to a pupil that the letter-strokes are based purely on custom exposed himself, according to Browne, as a fraud. As Browne maintains, the better part of any instruction is in providing information rather than in demonstrating the task, a "do-as-I-say" approach to handwriting:

> Even so though anie Master of the Arte of Writing could doe never so well with his Hand, if hee cannot defende the same with his Tongue also by Rules of Arte, he may well bee meete to write concerning common [ ], but to instruct others hee cannot; because the most part of all instructions doe consist both as well and as much in Information as Demonstration that is, in speaking as in doing; and it may be seene afterwards in this Booke, that there requireth manie other wordes to bee spoken, than the former word *Custome*; and though it should bee repreated a thousande times, it still remaineth but one and the same; who then can learne or profite thereby?[31]

The missing ingredient in plain demonstration is a justification for writing in a particular manner. Yet Browne concentrates on establishing and explaining the scientific rules of the Arte rather than on articulating the economically self-enhancing incentives for practicing these scripts. Such financial incentives remain unacknowledged.

The ability to offer a "defense" for one's process functioned as a crucial criterion for the qualified writing master. Browne takes to task even the victims of incompetent masters for hiring an unqualified teacher, one who cannot "define" or "defend" his work:

> Well then, it is hard to knowe, whether such Artistes, (if so they may be called) who can scarcelie define, let bee to defende, the Arte whereby they live: bee more ignorant, and intemperate, or they more blinde, and negligent, (in that point) who employ them.[32]

To prove one's methods required being able to provide the proper sort of evidence in support: in the language of both Billingsley and Browne, the "Rules of right Reason." The writing masters treat "right Rules" as commonly-assumed principles, a meaning derived from Aristotle's "right rule" in *Ethica Nicomachea*.[33] Yet Aristotle specifically calls attention to the socially-constructed nature of reason: "now the right rule is that

which is in accordance with practical wisdom."[34] The practical wisdom Billingsley and Browne tacitly assume demands explication.

Billingsley and Browne use the rhetorically-authoritative phrase, "Rules of right Reason," in order to reinforce and uphold traditional ideologies. "Reason" in the texts of Billingsley and Browne represents "logic, authority, tradition, correspondences and analogies. . . and suspicion of novelty," a meaning firmly grounded in sixteenth-century Renaissance thought. The terms of "reason" in the early seventeenth century came under scrutiny, however, from two camps, Puritans and advocates of the new Science, who mutually advocated "common sense, the senses, evidence, experience, [and] experiment."[35] Billingsley and Browne thus fought a twin-headed monster: the degradation of artistic penmanship and a gradual transformation of the traditional meaning of "reason" itself. In these texts, the castigated writing masters seem complicit with a threatening, new epistemology, one which may only be resisted by adhering to the "right Rule(s)."

The "right"-ness of this framework denotes its moral claim, a signal of the acknowledged virtue of literacy. As I have suggested, staking out high moral ground proved useful for writing masters in their role as cultural gate-keepers; the virtuous nature of the activity appealed to learners seeking to attain a "state-of-grace," whether that be spiritual or (in actuality) material. The "good" and the "profitable" are at one point brought together conceptually by Browne when he writes that according to Lucian and

Ramus, "Arte" is defined as "a collection of good Precepts, tending to some profitable use of the life."[36] Yet Browne only elaborates upon the moral righteousness of "Faire Writing," the "excellencie" of the Pen, by remarking that any qualified master will not only be able to defend his teaching principles but will "likewise have some regarde of Modestie, Temperancie, and good behavior."[37] The producer of an attentive script thus betrays him- or herself as a person of moral virtue; his/her economic or social standing remains implied.

Browne legitimates penmanship and simultaneously invokes the necessity for "Rules" in its practice by advancing Aristotle's definition of moral virtue. Although the Aristotelian text compares moral virtue with art because both are acquired through the exercise of habit,[38] Browne turns the method of art into its very essence: "we define Arte with *Aristotle*, the Prince of Philosophers, to bee *an habite of doing, or working, according to the Rule of right Reason*."[39] Browne has already established penmanship as a worthy form of art, and thus justifies through the accentuation of "habit" his proposal to reform and standardize all handwriting. Browne emphasizes the immense significance his guide will possess for future composers:

> And thus I, (at the pleasure of *God*) being stirred up, by due consideration of all the former motives, doe my meane endevour to supplie all defects, & to reform all absurdities, and that by downe-setting of an infallible patterne or right Touch-stone, of Fayre and perfect Writing, and of a soveraigne Remedie, or Recipie, for wrong and incorrect writing, both in one following heereafter: whereby hencefoorth all right writing may not onelie bee knowne, and accordinglie framed; all wrong writing usuelie disceamed, and altogether eschewed, and all erroures, which seeme indifferent, exactlie corrected: but likewise all contentions for whatsoever Writing so decided, as that the decision may, by Rule of right Reason, be warranted: and the worke wherein anie fault shall happen to be, eyther perfectlie renewed, or fullie rejected.[40]

Browne's book will function as a comprehensive guide to penmanship. The emphasis on "perfection" in this passage ("infallible," "right," "exactlie") betrays Browne's penchant for scientific precision. He wishes his book to serve writers as a "Touch-stone" of reference, which can only be achieved through complete adherence to his rules.

Right Rules serve the purpose of enhancing the status of a precarious practice with no disciplinary tradition. Penmanship, in order to earn its proper place as a respected field, should be guided by laws as well-defined as Latin Grammar rules, according to Browne:

> [Good writing masters] can cast up infallible Rules, guarded with forcible Reasons, both of their Practices, and Instructions, even as soone as a fine Grammarian can defende anie Latine phrase, by declaring and demonstrating the right Grammar Rule or authoritie of anie thing, which shall happen to bee impugned therein. . . . And howsoever Writing may bee done, without Rules of right Reason, yet fayre and perfect Writing, must bee accomplished by these Rules.[41]

The accomplishment of a well-defined system of rules, interestingly, seems to signal for Browne a potential change in penmanship's status. He continues after the previous

passage, "and since therefore, it hath all the properties due unto an Arte, who can denie it to bee justlie intituled by the name of an Arte? yea, of a Science, (if I had choosed) rather than Printing." In his effort to uphold the dignity and worthiness of writing technology, Browne gestures frantically at its similarity to both the arts and science.

It is no accident that Browne includes early in his book a verse praising the "Royaltie" of "*Writers*, who liue by the Penne." This image is uniquely suited to convey both a moral righteousness (in fact, a derived divinity) and an attending material wealth which would seem entirely fitting.[42] The unremarkable association of moral virtue with material wealth provides professional sanction to Billingsley and Browne as publishing writing masters and simultaneously makes it possible for them to teach an economically significant literacy as morally (innocuously) virtuous. Aristocratic readers of these texts would find such assumptions reassuring, but shrewd students of the "middling" sort surely understood that practicing a fair hand could bring worldly as well as spiritual rewards.

2. AN EARLY MODERN "HOW-TO" GUIDE AND THE ECONOMIC VIRTUE OF INFORMATION LITERACY

Unlike the Professors of the Pen, who straightforwardly offer their readers/students a guidebook to technology literacy, Thomas Powell seizes upon the popularity of such "how-to" books for satirical purposes in Tom of All Trades. Or The Plaine Path-way to Preferment (1631). Powell's satire and his own public existence as a

professional advice writer verify the early modern expansion and privileging of information literacy.[43] In a growing commercial marketplace, new books and pamphlets accessible to practitioners of an adult literacy increasingly multiplied. Writers like Hugh Plat, Gervase Markham, John Taylor and Hannah Woolley (later in the century) were among the most prolific publishers of guides, manuals and almanacs, writing dozens of books to advise prospective travelers, aspiring servants and tradesmen, thrifty husbandmen and ladies seeking attractive homes and appearances. No longer limited to the formerly-stable canon of classical knowledge, information literacy came to involve a respect for the changing status of human knowledge and an acknowledgment of ever-expanding areas of occupational expertise.[44] A plethora of "how-to" texts invited readers to teach themselves practical skills and revealed to a general audience subject matter previously reserved for oral transmission through formal or informal apprenticing.

Powell's book stands at a fascinating intersection of early modern culture: positioned as advice for the landed gentry, the book satirizes informational guides to surviving and thriving in a market economy. His text mocks the genre and its writers by calling attention to the economic realities which underpin both readers' and writers' involvement with literacy texts. Where the handwriting manuals explicitly address a reader's concern with moral righteousness, Powell's book explicitly speaks to a reader's desire for financial security and familial economic stability. Appeals to literacy's moral rewards are singled out here as thinly-veiled hypocrisy. Powell trades on an authorial style common to advice texts and oriented to readers' general sense of propriety: polite,

formal language and an orderly, expository structure. Yet his opening narrative interrogates the effect of the book's main body by deviating drastically from the elevated tone of the writing masters and their associates. Despite its superficial appearance as educational material, this book aims to entertain, drawing in the reader through an extended anecdote.

Powell weaves a subtle and powerful context for his guide to "Preferment" by indicating through his opening narrative how the economic structure of London is maintained. "Tom" is a citizen of London living a working-class, hand-to-mouth existence "amongst the rest" -- the "Scriveners at *Temple-barre*," the "Vintners of *Fleetstreet*," and the "Ostlers of *Holborne*." These workers take up the secondary business of London; their livelihood is based upon the generation of work by the professional class, primarily the barristers and the provincial officials of state who visit London in order to transact business. The professional class, meanwhile, exists in a symbiotic relationship with the country gentles, into whose unique circumstances Tom prepares to delve.

In the holiday atmosphere during the first days after Trinity Term, Tom finds himself on a road leading out of town, and meets by chance with an old acquaintance:

> [In London on that day,] Every one that had wherewith to discharge his Horse out of the stable, strove who should first be gone. And amongst the rest, my selfe made shift for so much money as wherewith to abate the fury of Mistresse *Overcount* mine hostesse, and so I departed likewise.

> At the top of *Highgate* hill I overtooke a Gentleman of *Northamptonshire*, riding homeward, whom I knew well; Him I saluted cheerfully, and he received me lovingly.[45]

Tom's companion is lacking his usual, "mirthfull disposition," an absence duly noted. By way of explanation, the Gentleman describes the typical bureaucratic hassles of the landed gentry. The character of his speech lends the story a genuine and comical tone:

> Sir, I come from *London*, (It is true) from the Terme (It is certaine true) from *London* and terme. True and certaine in nothing but expences in all things, yet I would have you know, that it is neither the Thunderclap of dissolving an *Injunction*, nor the Doomesday of a *Decree*, nor Counsaylors *Fees*, nor Attornies *Bylls* in a language able to fright a man out of his wits, can proscribe me my wonted mirth.[46]

The Gentleman here acknowledges the parasitic relationship of London's legal professionals to the gentry, whose needs and wishes keep lawyers fully employed. The legal system likewise keeps scriveners' pens flowing freely, so that Tom and his cohorts depend for their livelihood on the activities of the legal professionals, just as the lawyers depend upon the gentry.

The ordinary woes of the gentry have been superseded by a new anxiety, as articulated by the Gentleman. "It is something nearer and dearer (my deare friend)," he continues, "that robs me of that cheere which used to lift me up into the very Sphere, where *Jove* himselfe sits to bid all his guests welcome right heartily."[47] Business-as-usual cannot account for the Gentleman's marked sadness:

> I remember mee of Children, sixe Soones, and three daughters, of whom I am the unhappy Father. In that, besides the scars which my unthriftines hath dinted upon their fortunes, the wounds of unequall times, and a tempestuous age approaching are like to take away from them all hope of outliving the low water ebbe of the evill day all means of thriving by honest paynes, study or industrie are bereft them.[48]

"In this case (Sir)," concludes the unhappy Gentleman, "what can be advisd[?]".[49] And thus Tom departs on a long discourse in which he lampoons the greed of inheriting sons, solves the problem of basic fund-raising for subsequent children, and establishes the warrant for the remainder of his advice book: children must be guided into professions for which they have natural inclinations in order to live happily and live well.

Living "upon the revenew of lands," although socially prestigious, demanded careful management skills; the numerous husbandry advice books published by Gervase Markham testify to the wide-ranging concerns of a gentle husbandman. Tom's account of the life of the landed gentry explains the Gentleman's gloomy spirits, although his finely-tuned wit keeps the reader smiling at misfortune. Despite conditions that often leave the husbandman barely able to maintain his lease, in Tom's version, the gentry children are easily disposed to greediness: "When you dye," he commiserates with the Gentleman,

> the eldest Sonne claims the inheritance of what you leave, thanke God, and nature for it, your selfe least of all, and your fatherly providence never a whit. [. . .] And they on the other side [the remaining children], presume so much upon the hope thereof, that no profession will fit them. To bee a Minister (with them) is to be but a *Pedant*. A *Lawyer*, a *mercenarie* fellow. A Shop-keeper, a man most subject to the most wonderfull Cracke, and a creature whose welfare depends much upon his Wives well bearing, and faire carriage.[50]

Tom paints a bleak, if humorous, portrait of the Gentleman's situation. His eldest son is thankless and his others sons and daughters hold in low regard those professions that require some personal effort.

Tom's immediate solution to such a predicament is calculatingly outrageous. In order to preserve the Gentleman's land lease intact (since to apportion it would leave none of the children with enough), he proposes that the Gentleman marry off his inheriting son and divide the dowry of his new daughter-in-law among the rest:

> [M]atch up your eldest sonne, when your credit is cryed up to the highest, while your heire is yet in your power to dispose, and will bend to your will, before his blood begin to feel the heate of any affections kindling about him, or before he can tell what the difference is betwixt a blacke wrought Wastcoate, with a white apron & a loose bodied gowne without an apron. Put him in his best clothes (I meane) in the assurance of your lands, sell him [at the] highest rate. Then dicotomize the whole portion of his wife into severall shares betwixt your other children. Not share and share alike, but to every one the more according to their defects: Let impotencie, decreptnes, ilfavourdnes and incapacitie, rob the other of so much money as they have done them of comlinesse, activitie, beautie, and wit.[51]

The jocular language of Tom's advice betrays his satirical intent. But the substantive content of The Plaine Path-way suggests that this book addresses very genuine economic

issues. Pursuing a respectable livelihood was no joking matter, and self-help authors stood to profit from publishing even commonplace advice.

The anecdotal story of the anxious Gentleman and his set of common problems ends early in the text, breaking off after Tom proposes the means to get the Gentleman's children some seed money. Tom advises that the Gentleman steer each son or daughter into an occupational path,

> according to their inclination and addition, seeing that every one by instinct of nature, delighteth in that wherein he is like to bee most excellent. And delight, and pride in any thing undertaken, makes all obstacles in the way of attaining to perfection of no difficulty.[52]

Powell presents an early modern version of occupational counsel, only recently having been made necessary by England's slow shift to a market economy. Yet his subject had in fact been approached fifteen years earlier by John Taylor in Faire and fowle weather: or a Sea and Land Storme, between two Calmes, with An Apologie in defense of the painfull life, and needfull use of Sailers (1615), a text which perhaps gives rise to Powell's pun on the present "stormynesse of the sea of state forraigne or domestick" regarding a gentleman's prospects.[53] Powell's direction of the reader through the presumably new world of occupational guidance functions like a joke repeated unknowingly, funny at the teller's expense.

Like a clearing of his throat, a single line divides the preface from the sections which follow, indicating a mock-sober movement into the intricacies of occupational guidance. Powell's divider-line leaves the earlier, narrative structure for

exposition. "In the first place take your direction for the SCHOLLER. His Education. His Maintenance. His Advancement," he begins. In an introduction to the "Free-Schooles," which "generally afford the best breeding in good letters," Powell explains how such schools and their pupils are financed, and he records the various colleges of Oxford and Cambridge to which the Free-Schools elect an annual scholar: "From Eaton, to Kings Colledge Cambridge. From Westminster, to Trinity College Cambridge, or Christchurch Oxon," and so forth.[54] While the very detail of his guide suggests a comprehensiveness, Powell pointedly guides his reader to further sources of information, listing the locations of documents which will disclose more about the governance of the Free-Schools. "And sometimes you shall finde such things," he adds, "both in the *Tower* [of London], and the *Prerogative* [of the Court], and in the [Chapel of] *Rolls*, and *Prerogative* respectively."[55] That such documents were freely accessible to a curious public was unlikely, making this line of inquiry suggested with tongue-in-cheek by Powell.

Powell's advice is not limited to the concrete. The Scholar's "maintenance" and "advancement," for example, involve gaining access to the wealthy and powerful for patronage. Powell offers clues to recognizing potential patrons, a semiotics of wealth: the "best reputed Vestrie. . . carry their gloves in their hands, not on their hands."[56] Distinctions are made between obtaining a scholar's pension through private sponsorship or through the support of an organization. For the ambitious

solicitor, Powell goes so far as to suggest possible phrases and word choices (in this case, for approaching a Trademen's Company):

> Amongst an Assistance of many, onely two or three strike the stroke, and hold the rest in a wonderfull admiration of their extraordinary endowments. And how to speake sensibly to these two or three is no Mysterie. You know they are faithfull fiduciaries in the election. And therefore, you must not presume to offer any thing by any meanes. Onely you may desire them to accept this poore peece of plate, with your name and Arms upon it, and binde you unto their love, in keeping the memory of you hereafter. Doe but try them in this kinde, and attend the successe. I tell you, this with a Bucke at the Renter Wardens feast, may come somewhat neere to the matter.[57]

Playing upon the "extraordinary endowments" of the wealthiest members of the Company, Powell conveys here the utility of both flattery and bribery. The punch line to this monologue offers the adage that the way to a man's heart lies through his stomach.

Concluding his direction for the Scholar, Powell "hasten[s] to send your son out of the Cloyster into the Common-wealth, and to shew you how many wayes of Advancement are open unto him abroad, with the meanes to discover, and attaine."[58] Explanations of how to enter law, medicine, ministry, trade (including sea navigation), soldiery and husbandry are peppered with coarse hints for succeeding financially in the respective fields. Powell offers this tip for aspiring physicians: "It is not amisse, to make way of acquaintance with Gallants given to deepe drinking, and surfeyting: For they are patients at all times of the yeare."[59] Prospective lawyers are advised that the more expensive and "painefull" educational preparation necessary to practice civil law may be worthwhile, since "after that the Civill Lawyer is once growne to Maturity [and] his way

of Advancement is more beneficiall, more certaine, and more easie to attaine, than is the Common Lawyers. . . so that the fee comes to them immediately, and with the more advantage."[60] And hopeful husbandmen are counseled to seek a "young unthrift" for a landlord or one of the "good old conscionable Landlords that hold it a deadly sinne to raise the rents of their Grandfathers, or hope to be delivered out of Purgatorie by their Tenants prayers."[61] "These professions before mentioned," he concludes,

> be (as it were) the orbs to receive all fixed starrs, and such dispositions as may be put into any certaine frame. But for a more libertine disposition, Fit it with the profession of a *Courtier*. For an overflowing, and Ranker disposition, make him a *Souldier*. But beyond this he is a lost man, not worthy a fathers remembrance, or providence.[62]

By way of the most general counsel, Powell ends his guide for the preferment of sons by stressing the uses of basic reading and writing skills: "Bee sure," he writes, "that they all have *Grammar* learning at the least. So shall they bee able to receive and reteyne the impression of any of the said Professions."[63] The technologies of the written word are promoted as primarily practical tools, rather than high-flown arts or sciences.

"Private Gentlemans Daughters" require less-detailed guidance than do sons. For daughters' general education, Powell unsurprisingly recommends a practical training:

> Let them learne plaine workes of all kind, so they take heed of too open seaming. Instead of Song and Musicke, let them learne Cookery and Laundrie. And instead of reading Sir *Philip Sidneys Arcadia*, let them read the grounds of good huswifery. I like not a female Poetresse at any hand.[64]

The implied goal for daughters here concerns economic maintenance rather than social aspiration. Powell advises the careful placement of daughters according to the desired occupation of a future son-in-law. While a "good Huswife, and Religiously disposed" mother may be trusted to raise one of her daughters, any subsequent girls should be sent out to serve in other good homes "before they can judge of a good manly leg." Restricting a daughter's availability to men is of utmost concern; although work at a merchant's provides "a pretty way of breeding young Maides," the occupational practice of carrying a bandbox under one's apron there can lead to trouble, so that "in the end it is hard to distinguish whether it be their belly or the bandbox makes such a goodly show."[65] If the Gentleman practices a "little patience" in seeking suitors for his daughters, he may be able to profit: a young attorney may be willing to provide free services in return for her favor, the parson of the parish may waive the annual tithe.[66]

Powell mockingly chafes at his inability to provide complete information for his readers at certain junctures in the book. The Church could certainly be of greater assistance to aspiring clergy by compiling a "true Catalogue of all Benefices within their severall Diocesse":

> For I know that many sit downe in their wants, having good meanes to many private Patrons, onely for lacke of knowledge of the same. [. . .]
>
> My selfe intended heretofore to collect all such benefices with their Patron, into a certaine Callender for such direction (as aforesayd) and made some passage into it. But the farther I went, the more impossible I found it. And I am now resolved that without the Bishops assistance it cannot be done.[67]

Powell feigns surprise and indignation that the bishops would refuse to index the church's most wealthy members for the solicitation of other needy parishioners. Obstacles to information in the world of trade, Powell laments, are even greater. Companies of Tradesmen often solicited and maintained funds for the specific purpose of "enabling and setting up of young beginners," a point of fact which would prove very useful for the aspiring apprentice.[68] Yet these funds were often mismanaged or misappropriated by the Company Masters, who easily concealed their dealings. Powell bemoans the situation, wishing

> That some paines were taken in the *Prerogative* Office, for the collating of all guifts of this nature, to be publisht in print, that the meanest might thereby be able to call their Grand Masters to account, if they abuse the trust in them reposited in this behalfe.[69]

Arguing baldly for the rights of the poor and the ignorant to information, Powell offers his own services in the matter. Taking up such work, of course, requires the support of a patron, and Tom snatches the moment to solicit potential sponsors:

> I acknowledge the youth of mine age to be determined. And (God knowes) how poore a remaine of life is left in my Glasse, yet if it may please those in whom the power resteth, to give me leave to search (*Gratis*) for all Grants and guifts of pious use in all kindes whatsoever.[70]

This plea for patronage couches within an exaggeratedly humble and deprecating self-portrait Tom's demand for free access to pertinent information.

Powell lampoons both the "flair for self-promotion" evinced by other guidebook writers and the protestations of moral righteousness often simultaneously

present in such texts.[71] Billingsley and Browne provide ample measures of self-promotion and self-proclaimed righteousness, particularly in their frequent recourse to the "rules of Right Reason." Powell plays on this questionable combination for full comic effect:

> I could willingly bestow that little of my Lampe, in collection of these things, and publish them to posterity. Provided alwayes, that I and mine may have the priviledge of imprinting that same for some fitting number of years to come.[72]

By alluding to Scripture (the bestowing of his "Lampe") and referring earlier to the "pious" use of funds sought, Powell softens his reader just in time to deliver the expected blow: self-appointed purveyors of information literacy seek profits, not holiness. Whatever their more refined print personae, professional writers were under tremendous pressure to make a living by the pen, and some were not above publicity stunts, such as the heavily-promoted, serialized "walks to Scotland" undertaken by both Gervase Markham and John Taylor. Powell cynically targets the guidebook industry as a fundamentally commercial enterprise.

As a companion piece to the texts of the writing masters, Tom of All Trades demonstrates savvy readership in operation. Powell's parody shows that the omission in such texts of economic rationales for acquiring various literacies was duly noted, an unspoken premise floating just beneath the surface of self-help guidebooks. Powell singles out moral virtue as a particularly contemptible justification for seeking or promoting information literacy, since the economic utility in performing such practices

was plain. His cynical attitude, of course, is representative of only one voice in the genre's cultural conversation, for undoubtedly many readers took the platitudes of self-help guides to heart. As a burgeoning genre of print, "how-to" manuals speak to England's expanding marketplace culture; the range of self-help topics map out areas of commercial awareness, while intertextual troping within the genre signals its emerging discourse conventions. Titling conventions show a mix of serious and satirical imitation; Powell's guide mocks the more grand promises made by contemporary publications with its subtitle, while John Taylor's The Needles Excellency (1629) pays genuine tribute in its title to Billingsley's successful copy-book. Tom of All Trades traffics in the discourse of early modern guidebooks, betraying through its satirical treatment the entire notion of literacy-as-state-of-moral-Grace and repeatedly revealing instead the link between literacy and economic power structures.

3. MODERN-DAY LITERACY INSTRUCTION: RECONCILING THE TWIN VIRTUES OF COLLEGE LITERACY

First-year composition courses resemble early modern writing instruction in their promotion of rigorous aesthetic conventions: instructors delineate the specifications for the general layout of a graded assignment, "double-spaced, one-inch margins on all sides," etc., as well as meticulous requirements, "MLA style," for documentation of source materials. Instructors are relied upon to police the use of these codes in student writing:

> Writing programs undertake a massive labor of surveillance, with tremendous curricular and social consequences. Most curricula, [Sharon] Crowley argues, "maintain and promulgate a definition and ideology of writing instruction that is quite narrow, configuring it as a series of exercises in formal fluency plus instruction in usage, grammar, spelling, and punctuation."[73]

Demands to conform to appearance conventions are most often obeyed by students, although why they should or do matter to anyone is not often addressed by instructors. The transparency of penmanship as a writing technology, and in rapid fashion, the transparency of computer word-processing as a writing technology (although we sometimes still offer basic computer lab instruction for composition students) leaves the modern writing instructor vulnerable to the same charge made of inferior writing masters: that we can neither define nor defend our art. The appearance of a text will continue to matter, but we must not repeat Browne's practice of emphasizing rules without disclosing the "right Reason" at stake.

Only in the last decade of this century, as compositionists have acknowledged the changing demographics of the college classroom, have the rhetorical conventions of "Reason" (both the mechanics of academic writing and its governing logic) been recognized as literacy material that must be unpacked for students who are entering the academy unfamiliar with its valued ways of reading and writing.[74] The rhetorical contexts of modern composition instruction -- the "Rules of right Reason" valued by the academy and/or society at large -- are still very commonly unarticulated in the classroom. Patricia Bizzell rehearses these conventions:

> Some of the conventions that enable academic discourse to generate and test knowledge through consensus and debate are: agreement on a standard language, Standard English, as the medium of discourse; familiarity with "common knowledge," or a standard range of literary and historical allusions, terms that have transcended their disciplines, and so on; employment of specialized vocabulary specific to the kind of problem addressed (disciplinary vocabulary); employment of a method for defining the problem to be addressed, a method predetermined by disciplinary practice; employment of a predetermined method for generating and applying evidence; employment of a predetermined method for judging the plausibility of the argument advanced.[75]

Composition instructors compel students to adopt academic conventions, most often the specific conventions of literary criticism (the home discourse of English teachers), even as the value of such discourse is considered self-evident. Because aesthetically-pleasing and right-reasoned "faire writing" still constitutes "good writing," composition instructors must call attention to the political and ideological conditions which govern such designations.

Student writing is always an apprentice writing, governed by a different set of expectations from the sanctioned writing of accredited professionals. The tasks students are assigned, writes Charles Bazerman,

> are student tasks, not the tasks of professionals, even when the assignments consciously attempt to model professional practice. The students write student papers, even when those papers look like corporate reports. The freshman writing course is precisely an introduction into the literacy practices of being a university student.[76]

Proving one's ability to perform student literacy practices is considered a necessary first step before engaging in the literacy practices of professionals. The student's position as

writing apprentice, then, is grounded in self-enhancement. Adult (self-enhancing) literacy practices embody college literacy, despite the university's institutional existence: valued ways of reading, writing, and reasoning are taught to promote individual and therefore societal improvement.

Given that composition courses are overwhelmingly devoted to enabling first-year students to adequately perform this student-apprentice literacy, writing students often suffer from impatience. As Bazerman so succinctly expresses, "The problem has always been to bring some compelling sense of reality to the writing classroom"[77] While writing-across-the-curriculum (WAC) programs address this problem by effectively spreading the responsibility for writing instruction among the various college disciplines, thus apprenticing students "directly" within disciplinary discourse, general composition courses lack a mandate for specific disciplinary content-matter. English faculty have traditionally filled the void of writing courses by using literary texts as the basis for course content. More recently, cultural studies has emerged to fill the need for relevant, "real" material in the writing classroom.

The cultural studies curriculum in composition has garnered support by invoking the promise of literacy's moral-philosophical virtue.[78] In a typical cultural studies-driven curriculum, the critical study of print advertising and popular narrative in television and film facilitates students' recognition of their own agency and/or complicity in contemporary social and political discourses. James Berlin, a forceful proponent of

cultural studies in the composition classroom, argues for the importance of the writing course in promoting students' personal well-being. Drawing on the work of Ira Shor, Berlin summarizes an agenda for vital critique within composition classrooms:[79]

> Among the most important forces preventing work toward a social order supporting the student's 'full humanity' are forms of false consciousness – reification, pre-scientific thought, acceleration, mystification – and the absence of democratic practices in all areas of experience.[80]

The explicit reward for students practicing the adult literacy of college composition in Berlin's scheme appears to be a heightened consciousness, enabling them to abandon states of delusion about the ways the world works. This secular salvation echoes the moral-philosophical reward of early modern literacy. Such grace affects the greater good, as Berlin describes:

> In short, education exists to provide intelligent, articulate, and responsible citizens who understand their obligation and their right to insist that economic, social and political power be exerted in the best interests of the community. If pursuing this objective somehow renders our students less acceptable to employers, then the flaw can hardly be located in the students or their schools. To use the terms proffered by Henry Giroux (1988), the work of education in a democratic society is to provide "critical literacy."[81]

Berlin's advocacy of a politically-aware composition curriculum rests on the virtue of promoting a democratic system of government; critical literacy is virtuous literacy. In positing a moral-philosophical grace for college literacy, Berlin attempts to distance composition's value from a crudely material reward, which must be refuted insofar as it

works to promote a (distasteful) economic self-enhancement. "Employers" rather than students appear interested in a literacy education that recognizes economic concerns.

If Berlin and other cultural studies advocates partially succeed in addressing the issue of relevance (Bazerman's "reality") in the general composition classroom by focusing on contemporary social and political conditions, the curriculum falls short in appealing one-sidedly to literacy's moral-philosophical virtue. Students pointedly seek to master "writing," insofar as they understand writing to be a marketable, transferable skill which will be necessary for success -- an economic virtue -- at both the university and afterwards. As long as a baccalaureate degree continues to function as an economic discriminator, colleges and universities (and therefore writing programs) will find themselves inextricably tied to preparing students for future professional employment. Composition courses titled "Professional Writing" or "Technical Communication" offered at many colleges and universities stand in the place of Thomas Powell's critique in their essential recognition of the economic utility of literacy.

Berlin's pronouncement that "Colleges ought to offer a curriculum that places preparation for work within a comprehensive range of democratic educational concerns" belies the complicated relationship between the academy and the marketplace.[82] Berlin himself makes clear that capitulating to corporate wishes can threaten to co-opt institutions of higher learning, inhibiting their valuable performance of cultural critique. Moreover, the sheer complexity and quickly-changing conditions of the

workplace make the task of student preparation challenging for university faculty to address. Although preparing students for the marketplace remains a functional goal for contemporary college literacy education, modern conditions leave composition instructors questionably prepared to provide occupational guidance or workplace-specific competencies.

Workplace discourses are increasingly specialized, creating a need for narrowly-devoted writing courses which address not only the mechanical conventions adopted by a particular field, but the field's specialized ways of thinking and reasoning. Accordingly, strategies for attempting to teach global marketplace literacies usually involve vague objectives, a reflection of the difficulty of the problem. Berlin's recommendation is telling:

> Regardless of whether students are headed for the highest or lowest levels of the job market, we ought to provide them with at least an understanding of the operation of the workforce as a whole. This will require preparation in dealing with the abstract and systemic thinking needed for the dispersed conditions of postmodern economic and cultural developments, in distinct contrast to the atomistic, linear, and narrowly empirical mode often encouraged by modern conditions. Students need a conception of the abstract organizational patterns that influence all of their experiences.[83]

Whatever "abstract organizational patterns" may influence all of our lives, this not - entirely-clear concept of marketplace literacy may elude many composition instructors as well as their students. It appears to involve a syllabus more appropriate to a macro-economics course. Even when he purports to address the most economics-driven subject

matter for college literacy instruction, Berlin reemphasizes the primacy of moral-philosophical concerns over such knowledge.

In fairly seeking the economic virtue of literacy, students and universities alike mistake mechanical proficiency (technology literacy) as composition's sole transferable practice. Student-apprentice literacy demands an adequate performance of standard English, but even from classroom to classroom, students must adapt to disciplinary preferences.[84] The increasingly specialized nature of discourses calls into question the transferable value of prescriptive composition teaching. Technology literacy has become effectively impossible to practice without the rhetorical awareness (information literacy) necessary to discern when and where certain writing conventions should be employed. Rather than conveying an elusive body of universal writing rules, composition courses can point students down the "Path-way to Preferment" by calling attention to various writing conventions, mechanical, structural or otherwise and the differing situations in which these conventions are practiced.

Students are able to produce "faire writing," insofar as that represents a literacy of writing technology and of conventional reasoning frameworks, only when they possess a rhetorical awareness of the discourse in which they seek to participate. The information literacy which composition courses can offer as transferable (and hence, economically valuable) consists in enabling students to be rhetorically-savvy information seekers and consumers. "The answer," suggests Bazerman, "is to make visible and real

over the period of a student's education a variety of discourses, so that students can reorient to and evaluate [using rhetorical tools of analysis] new discourses as they become visible and relevant."[85] So while a first-year composition course will not prescribe the proper format for writing a social science case study, it can teach a student how to examine the rhetorical conventions of various professional and disciplinary discourses so that he or she will be capable of producing an appropriate text. While this curriculum is not incompatible with the use of popular culture texts, its emphasis remains on rhetorical analysis of language rather than on ideological awareness.

Composition's heated contests over a preferred curriculum, similar to that methodological battle revealed in the texts of Billingsley and Browne, signifies its aspiration to full-fledged disciplinarity. Contemporary instructors of writing continue to struggle for respect and for a sense of self-definition for the field. Like our early-modern counterparts, we labor under high public demand for our expertise, but this demand for a practical literacy of writing technology does not solve our identity crisis as professionals within the disciplinary culture of the academy. Disciplinarity and professionalism are two discrete entities at the root of composition's self-definition:

> Nobody disputes that composition is a profession, but the university does not recognize all professions as disciplines. And even when they have been recognized as academic departments, professions can be marginalized as disciplines -- any of us could be consoled for our precarious status by talking to our colleagues in social work, accounting, physical education, or risk management.[86]

If disciplinarity emphasizes the production of knowledge, and professionalism, the "delivery, evaluation and control of services," composition inhabits a space somewhere in-between the two.[87] A universal curriculum, like Browne's "infallible" guide, has proven troublesome as a way to establish disciplinary credibility for composition specialists.

Careful scrutiny of teaching practices and delicate negotiation of curricular choices are necessary to accommodate the shifting and often competing virtues of literacy. In the chapters of this project to follow, I shall examine early modern practices of literacy in hopes of shedding historical light on contemporary composition practices. By looking carefully at past writing practices, I hope to bring a broad rhetorical awareness to the contemporary teaching of writing. I seek to raise these questions for readers through my readings of early modern texts: what purpose(s) do we, as teachers, envision writing to serve, and how might we be encouraging (or thwarting) writers in their pursuit of composing purposeful texts?

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

[1] As Sylvia Scribner elucidates the modern metaphor, reading and writing curriculae are thought to promote valuable reasoning skills ("critical thinking"), thereby earning the pursuer of literacy special social virtue and the right to be considered a "cultured" person. See Scribner, "Literacy in Three Metaphors," Journal of American Education 93.1 (November 1984) 15.

[2] Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, From Humanism to the Humanities: education and the liberal arts in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986) 22-28.

[3] Many, if not a majority, of early modern writers learned to write in non-school settings (the home, the workplace) which accounts for the considerable number of copy-books published for use by individuals. Ambrose Heal notes the existence of Christ's Hospital Writing School (also known as Dame Mary Ramsey's Free-Writing-School), first established in London in 1577, which maintained "many of the most eminent writing-masters of the day." The notoriety of the Writing School does suggest, in Heal's words, "that the Court considered the teaching of writing to be of first-class importance," yet its existence as a school primarily devoted to teaching writing appears to be rare. See Heal, The English Writing-Masters and Their Copybooks, 1570-1800 (1931; Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1962) 201-2.

[4] Peter Burke takes up the problem of ascertaining the reading practices of the early modern working class. Burke contends that "printed matter was accessible to a good many craftsmen and peasants in this period," and that the relatively simple language of many chapbooks, the sensational titles used to attract buyers, and the consistency of the books' formats and genres suggest chapbook authors aspired to large numbers of readers. See Burke, Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe (New York University Press, 1978) 254. F.J. Levy echoes Burke's conclusion in his study of English printers and booksellers, arguing that the landed gentry were well-informed and had good access to recent publications. See Levy, "How information spread among the gentry, 1550-1640," The Journal of British Studies xxi (1982) 11-34. The effect of imaginative (fictional) texts on working-class, Restoration-era English readers is taken up by Margaret Spufford. Spufford describes her inquiry as a look into "the possible nature of the mental furniture of the English peasantry and the printed influences at work on the non-gentle reader before 1700." See Spufford, Small books and pleasant histories: popular fiction and its readership in seventeenth century England (1981; Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1982) xviii.

[5] Grafton and Jardine 11.

[6] For an example of modern literacy categorization based on ranking of skill, see Michael Stubbs, Language and Literacy: the sociolinguistics of reading and writing (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980) 11-14.

[7] Eugene Kintgen, Reading in Tudor England (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1996) 181, 194. David Cressy notes that Protestant emphasis on unmediated Bible access made reading a chiefly-prized skill. The ability to write, he suggests, was considered "above and beyond" a Christian call to duty. See Cressy, Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England (Cambridge University Press, 1980) 8-9.

[8] Walter Darell, A short discourse of the life of seruingmen (1578) 79, 86.

[9] Darell 94.

[10] Martin Billingsley, The pen's excellency or The secretaries delighte (1618) "2 Part."

[11] Burke 257.

[12] Alfred Fairbank, A Book of Scripts (1949; Harmondsworth, Middlesex: King Penguin, 1960) 33.

[13] Oxford English Dictionary

[14] Heal 36.

[15] Fairbank 18-19.

[16] Heal xxxiii, qtd. in Keith Thomas, "The Meaning of Literacy in Early Modern England," The Written Word: Literacy in Transition, ed. Gerd Baumann (Oxford University Press, 1985) 111.

[17] Alexander B. Grosart, ed., The Complete Works of John Davies of Hereford, 2 vols. (1878; New York: AMS Press, 1967) 1:lxiii.

[18] "Too often," observes David Cressy, "we find invalids, paupers and others in reduced circumstances warding off total destitution by casual subsistence teaching" (37), although he specifies little on this subject of impoverished teachers. Cressy's judgment seems to reflect Billingsley's perspective.

[19] Billingsley "1. Abuse."

[20] The OED cites Pettie's 1586 translation of Guazzo's *Civile Conversatione* as the first to use "Professor" to mean, "One who makes a profession of any art or science; a professional man"(II.5.), referring to Pettie's phrase, "schoolemaisters and other professors of learning." This definition is differentiated from the modern, specialized

meaning, "A public teacher or instructor of the highest rank in a specific faculty or branch of learning" (II.4.).

[21] Grosart 1:103.

[22] Billingsley "2. Abuse."

[23] Walter Mignolo, The Darker Side of the Renaissance: literacy, territoriality, and colonization (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995) 322. Mignolo is reflecting here on Sylvia Scribner's work: see footnote 2.

[24] Jonathan Goldberg reads penmanship lessons as effects of power wielded by and over the writer as a subject of political ideology: "In the Elizabethan period, that value [educationally-produced status] cannot be separated from hierarchies of class and power; pedagogy represents and reproduces the state in its differentiated and bureaucratized forms, and attempts to secure for itself a sphere of power as the place from which and within which the state is reproduced." See Goldberg, Writing Matter: from the hands of the English Renaissance (Stanford University Press, 1990) 45.

[25] Grosart 1:lxii.

[26] Thomas 121.

[27] "Hand-writing" and "writing" are elided by the writing masters in a way that is more readily apparent to the modern eye, thoroughly accustomed to viewing the "hand" as a transparent technology (in fact, not even usually recognized as a technology at all). For a theoretical look at the technology of writing, see Christina Haas, Writing Technology: studies on the materiality of literacy (Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1996).

[28] David Browne, The New Invention, intitvled, Calligraphia: or, The Arte of Faire writing (1622) "Probations."

[29] Browne, Calligraphia "Sub-Divisions."

[30] Billingsley C3, C2.

[31] Browne, Calligraphia "Probations."

[32] Browne, Calligraphia "Probations."

[33] Aristotle, *Ethica Nichomachea*, Introduction to Aristotle, ed. Richard McKeon (1947; London and Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973) II.2, VI.13.

[34] Aristotle VI.13, I.23.

[35] Christopher Hill, Change and Continuity in Seventeenth Century England (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991) 111.

[36] Browne, Calligraphia "Probations."

[37] Browne, Calligraphia "Probations."

[38] Aristotle II.1.

[39] Browne, Calligraphia "Probations."

[40] Browne, Calligraphia "The Argument, Comprehending the Prerogatives of Faire Writing."

[41] Browne, Calligraphia "Probations."

[42] According to the OED, "royalty" in the seventeenth century might denote "a royal prerogative and right, especially in respect of jurisdiction, granted by the sovereign to an individual or corporation," but the modern use of the word to mean a payment made to an author or composer, particularly suggestive here, did not come into use until the nineteenth century.

[43] Powell had already published three reference guides, Direction for search of records. . .For the clearing of all such titles (1622), The attourneys academy (1623) and The attornies almanacke (1627). He would follow Tom of All Trades (1631) with The art of thriving (1635). For a detailed description of the climate for emerging professional writers in Jacobean London, see Bernard Capp, The World of John Taylor the Water-Poet 1578-1653 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) 55-78.

[44] Paul J. Voss notes that "The concept of expertise became a valuable commodity itself, a commodity that one could promote and sell to others. The disclosure of such knowledge. . . became more common, and more necessary, as the printing revolution developed. Books emerged as the most efficient form of such disclosure." See Voss, "Books for Sale: Advertising and Patronage in Late Elizabethan England," The Sixteenth Century Journal XXIX, no.3 (Fall 1998) 747. On this subject, see also Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, The printing press as an agent of change: Communications and cultural transformations in early-modern Europe, vols. I and II (1979; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 240-50.

[45] Thomas Powell, Tom of all Trades: Or The Plaine Path-way to preferment (1631) 2.

[46] Powell 2.

[47] Powell 2.

[48] Powell 2-3.

[49] Powell 3.

[50] Powell 4.

[51] Powell 5.

[52] Powell 6.

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[53] Powell 3.

[54] Powell 6-8.

[55] Powell 9.

[56] Powell 11.

[57] Powell 11.

[58] Powell 14.

[59] Powell 30.

[60] Powell 21-2.

[61] Powell 39.

[62] Powell 39.

[63] Powell 44.

[64] Powell 45.

[65] Powell 46.

[66] Powell 47.

[67] Powell 20-1.

[68] Powell 36.

[69] Powell 37.

[70] Powell 37.

[71] Capp 59.

[72] Powell 37.

[73] Francis J. Sullivan, Arabella Lyon, Dennis Lebofsky, Susan Wells, and Eli Goldblatt, "Student Needs and Strong Composition," CCCC 48.3 (October 1997) 373. See Sharon Crowley, "Composition's Ethic of Service, the Universal Requirement, and the Discourse of Student Need," JAC 15 (1995) 231.

[74] For one of the first and most influential essays to address the initiation function of college composition, see David Bartholomae, "Inventing the University," When a writer can't write: studies in writer's block and other composing-process problems, ed. Mike Rose (New York: Guilford Press, 1985) 134-65.

[75] Patricia Bizzell, Academic Discourse and Critical Consciousness (Pittsburgh and London: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992) 140.

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[76] Charles Bazerman, "Response: Curricular Responsibilities and Professional Definition," Reconceiving writing, rethinking writing instruction, ed. Joseph Petraglia (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates, Inc., 1995) 254.

[77] Bazerman 253.

[78] "Moral" virtue connotes a religious orientation not appropriate for modern secular society, hence my changing of the term to "moral-philosophical."

[79] See Ira Shor, Critical Teaching and Everyday Life (University of Chicago Press, 1987) 48.

[80] James A. Berlin, "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class," College English 50.5 (September 1988) 490.

[81] James A. Berlin, Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures: Refiguring College English Studies (Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1996) 52. See Henry Giroux, Schooling and the Struggle for Public Life: Critical Pedagogy in the Modern Age (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

[82] Berlin Rhetorics 51.

[83] Berlin Rhetorics 51-2.

[84] For two studies of students' perceptions of various classroom writing expectations, see Lucille Parkinson McCarthy, "A Stranger in Strange Lands: A College Student Writing Across the Curriculum," Research in the Teaching of English 21.3 (October 1987) 233-265 and Barbara E. Walvoord, Thinking and Writing in College: A Naturalistic Study of Students in Four Disciplines (Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1991).

[85] Bazerman 257.

[86] Sullivan, et al. 387.

[87] Sullivan, et al. 385.

CHAPTER II: LITERACY AS AUDACITY: THE VOICES OF MOTHERS' LEGACIES

The virtues of literacy, in any self-enhancing sense, were less apparent for early modern women. While an ability to read and write granted women access to textual spheres of knowledge, and therefore certain power, such power was perceived as threatening or dangerous in women's hands. A woman might enjoy the privileges of literacy but she must also exercise great discretion in her practices of it. "Literacy accrues value," writes Frances E. Dolan, "when it facilitates legal and spiritual surveillance and discipline." Early modern women experienced literacy as a mixed blessing:

> Divided from their own accomplishments and thus against themselves, literate women at every social level encountered in the written word not just a tool for self-expression and self-assertion, not just access to knowledge and work, but also a means to incriminate and expose themselves.[1]

In the next two chapters, I shall explore the risks for early modern women of literacy display, that is, the public exhibition of one's knowledge and one's ability to write.[2] The case of Lady Mary Wroth (Chapter 3) shows how delicate transgressions of discourse conventions led to Wroth's own social incrimination. The present chapter will examine the strategies employed by writers of mothers' legacies to avoid similar punishment. The risks of literacy display for women argue for a reading of the legacy as manuscript genre despite the wild popularity such texts eventually enjoyed in print. In addition to

questioning the feminist assumption that legacy writers exploited the genre to engage in print publication, I raise the possibility here that the pressures of religious reform affected the nature of legacies as the Stuart era progressed. Finally, I suggest commonalities between the circumstances of early modern women writers and contemporary student writers, both engaged in precarious practices of literacy.

Printed advice manuals gesture at a wide range of related literacy practices in early seventeenth century England. Three of the mothers' legacies I examine here mention "admonishing" children orally as the normal means of offering parental advice. Middle- and upper-class parents may have commonly offered formal, spoken moral instructions to their children and adolescents, perhaps on occasions of foreign travel (like Hamlet's Polonius) or leave-taking of other kinds (entering school or training, visiting distant relatives). Erasmus' sixteenth-century colloquy in The New Mother, studied in Humanist classrooms and translated and printed in English by 1606, "recruited mothers in the ideological maintenance of their children through 'vigilant admonition.'"[3] The availability of Erasmus' teachings, which increased in cultural value for Protestants after his works were banned by the Catholic church, may have piqued women's interest in enacting proper maternal roles. Princess Elizabeth Stuart, proclaimed a "nursing mother of the Protestant church" at her coronation as the Queen of Bohemia in 1619, likewise propelled popular interest in motherhood.[4]

Once "admonition" as a motherly practice took cultural root in England, the legacy emerged as a textual phenomenon, particularly as practiced by educated mothers fearing death in childbirth (and therefore potentially robbed of the opportunity to orally advise their children). Three published mothers' legacies are identified by Suzanne Hull in her bibliographic compilation of published works written for women from 1474 to 1640; all three were printed in multiple editions: Elizabeth Grymeston's Miscelanea. Meditations. Memoratives. (1604), Dorothy Leigh's The mothers blessing (1616) and Elizabeth Jocelin's The mothers legacie, to her unborne childe (1624).[5] Elizabeth Richardson, Baroness Cramond, began A ladies legacie to her daughters (1645) in 1625; this book received only a single imprint. These four texts are mentioned together elsewhere.[6] Published legacies bear witness to a larger body of manuscript advice texts, but the recovery of such manuscripts has not received scholarly priority.

The print publication of three of the legacies examined here, I submit, was emphatically not intended by their writers (Grymeston, Jocelin, and Richardson) at the time of composition. Publication served only as a necessary method of preservation for Leigh. Published "admonitions" including the mothers' legacies, therefore, may be read as the most limited indications of an unrecovered body of advice manuscripts. As Arthur Marotti argues in his study of the Renaissance lyric,

> Were literary histories more attentive to manuscript evidence and less dependent on the products of print culture, women's activities as authors, compilers, and owners of literary texts would be more visible.[7]

A legacy written by Elizabeth Cary, Lady Falkland, to provide one example, is dated by her daughter around 1615, but this manuscript has not surfaced.[8] Existent mothers' legacies also include among their contemporaries published texts such as Elizabeth Clinton's The Countess of Lincolnes Nurserie (1622), an exhortation to all women to breast-feed their babies, and a number of fathers' advice tracts.[9] Later in the century, admonitions by dying fathers, mothers, and adolescent sons all enjoyed popular success, an indication of the genre's cultural expansion.[10]

While lack of writing ability may have left many mothers limited to orally advising their children, the legacy writers took advantage of their capacity to cover at once a lifetime's worth of advice. Each woman reflects on the act of her writing in the opening sections of these legacies, which have attracted the bulk of my attention. The openings of the legacies include dedicatory epistles, tables of contents, family coats of arms and, in the case of Dorothy Leigh, a dedicatory verse, "Counsell to my Children." After the prefatory material, the legacy books are commonly sub-divided into sections according to subject. The writers attempt to address in the bodies of the texts important milestones in their children's lives, such as choosing an occupation and/or marrying, discussing as well the daily challenges of the faithful Christian man or woman in avoiding sin. An emphasis on prayer suffuses all of the texts, so that recourse to prayer becomes an appropriate response to matters large, like illness and death, and small, like dealing with servants.[11] Each of the legacies takes advantage of the written medium to

include many items of importance to the writer; the shortest of the four is 114 pages; the longest, 285.

By examining the legacy writers' respective reflections on their works, particularly in prefatory remarks and epistles, and by carefully noting the circumstances of the manuscripts' publication, we can broaden the simple categorization of these women as exceptional examples among a largely "illiterate" female population. Gender undeniably operates here as an important element in each writer's rhetorical positioning, but it should not overshadow the real differences among the writers' interactions with text. Women in this period who composed advice for their children do not approach writing with similar levels of eagerness. They differ in the nature of their expressed motivations to write and they anticipate varying degrees of hostility to their activity as writers. They rely on different sources of authority – secular, domestic, divine – to bolster their admonitions. Writing, as an open display of literacy, demanded delicate rhetorical negotiation.

Whether the writer remained alive and/or contributed to the printing of her manuscript becomes crucial in the rhetorical analysis of these legacies. For a seventeenth century writer (of either gender), appearing in print often invited social censure, particularly within certain circles.[12] The possibility of having one's words read by total strangers instead of being circulated in manuscript among one's acquaintances and peers became an issue of moral propriety, especially for women. Women "knew that as they

defied the canons of ideal behavior by publishing, they would be attacked."[13] On the whole, the number of publications by Englishwomen in the decades before the civil wars were very few; they accounted for an estimated average of only 0.5 percent of all English publications from 1600-1640. "Mother's advice" as a genre constituted about one-third of all women's publications from 1600-1640, but advice books were often re-issued, so that the writers of this genre comprise only one-eighth of the total number of women who published.[14] As reflected by these numbers, motherly advice constituted one of a limited number of formats in which women published, if they were rare enough to have been published at all; reprintings of advice books merely underscore the bind of literacy displays for women, since deceased authors achieved the greatest marketplace success.

Advice-book writing has received little attention from literary critics and has been dismissed outright by some historians as legitimate evidence of political conditions. Yet the genre of conduct-books written <u>for</u> women contains important historical documentation of the social construction of "natural" desire, inscribing both the ideal female object of desire as well as the ideal desires of the male subject. Studying advice texts written for female conduct leads to fascinating new accounts of the history of the feminine ideal. Renaissance texts, for example, manifest tensions between old and new discourses of femininity as they compete for social dominance: the aristocratic (medieval) woman is a "living icon," desirable because of her blood lines; the domestic (Protestant) woman is man's moral complement/supplement, desirable because of her scrupulous restraint.[15] New issues arise when we consider advice texts written <u>by</u> women

rather than for them. How does a woman's perspective distinguish itself in advice texts? When can we consider a woman to be writing from a position of resistance to dominant ideologies? Such questions loom large in recent treatments of mothers' legacies.

While the legacies have caught the attention of feminist scholars as significant contributions to the relatively small body of existent works by women before the civil wars, the urge to read them as representative of a "feminine" writing has proven irresistible. Texts by women writers are so rare in this period that it becomes tempting to highlight their implied similarities, especially within a single genre.[16] A typical summary of the legacy writers generalizes,

> These women were of impeccable social background: they were all gentlewomen. One was a countess, another a bishop's grand-daughter and another the wife of a Chief Justice. They took their maternity seriously and expected others to do the same. Their advice was conventional.[17]

If the legacy writers share a common social background, reading these texts as interchangeable examples of women's writing obscures the rhetorical practice of the individual woman writer. The differing circumstances of legacies' publication, moreover, have not been carefully scrutinized, since the fact of female publication has served as a jumping-off point for other scholars of these texts.

Feminist readings that presume a legacy writer's desire for the notoriety of print demonstrate an anachronistic impulse.[18] Such readings foreground the ways that women "legitimate" or "enable" the printing of their texts by "exploiting" the genre of motherly advice. I call attention to the use of this language and point out that such

readings are predicated upon ironic readings of the writers' apologies or expressions of self-consciousness. Such readings must also understate the significance of posthumous publication by assuming that the author "facilitated" the printing of her own text. Wendy Wall has argued that the specter of death provided legacy writers with the necessary legitimation to publish; Kristen Poole has suggested that the genre of mothers' advice itself provided women with a socially sanctioned, private-yet-public space within which to write. Yet few if any literate women contemplating an untimely death "take advantage" of the situation to publish other kinds of writing, and even if this uniquely acceptable print genre allowed a woman to write "freely" within the "liminal authorial space which is neither private nor fully public,"[19] it was inexplicably chosen by almost no one. The potential unwillingness of a woman writer to be published, to cite a different kind of example, has also been inadvertently obscured by feminist critics:

> Not surprisingly, women of aristocratic and gentry origin published out of proportion to their numbers in society. . . . The poems of aristocratic women might circulate in manuscript until they were published, perhaps by an admiring male relative.[20]

Whether such publication was undertaken with the consent of the author remains unclear. The feminist inclination to champion the courage of publishing women has resulted in a curious assumption that every writer seeks the notoriety of print. Published legacies, however, attest to a much more common practice of manuscript writing, signaling that this public display of literacy represented an audacious rhetorical act in which few were willing to engage.

Manuscript-writing differed sharply in rhetorical orientation from writing for print, but it was not necessarily a private enterprise.[21] Several of the legacy writers testify to the non-private nature of their texts, which should not be mistaken as "hinting" about intentions to publish in print. Individuals other than the child-recipients of manuscript legacies would be made aware of the existence of a text through restricted circulation or during the process of copy-making, providing an opportunity for social condemnation of the author even if the text was not closely read by critics. Coming to "the worlds eie," as Jocelin puts it, thus would not necessarily indicate print publication of a text. Moreover, legacy writers' references to their "books" cannot be interpreted as indications to publish in print, since according to the OED, "book" came only recently to refer to bound, printed material. For the early seventeenth century, a "book" was "A written or printed treatise or series of treatises, occupying several sheets of paper or other substance fastened together so as to compose a material whole," which might also include title pages, prefaces, and numbered pages. The "modern tendency to draw a clear distinction between public and private realms" concerning textual circulation must be carefully reconsidered in treating these texts.[22]

Whether or not the writer intended to have her manuscript published becomes of vital importance when we are studying the writer's rhetorical strategies; assumptions about publishing intentions can actually confuse the meaning of the text itself. The references a critic makes to "hints" about publishing require us to read the writer's proclamations of modesty, or her apologies for the text, as disingenuous. As

Jocelin's most recent editor notes, "When by the end of the Epistle she repeats her disavowals of literary skill, they may seem to protest too much, hinting at her real anticipation of a wider audience."[23] This speculation seems to make an unqualified leap. Considering the facts of posthumous publication, the recent critical recognition of the social significance attributed to entering public discourse through print, and the clearly-expressed anxiety of these women about publication, an early modern woman writer's intention to publish should never be assumed.

1. RELUCTANT EXPOSURE: THE LEGACIES OF DOROTHY LEIGH AND ELIZABETH RICHARDSON

Dorothy Leigh and Elizabeth Richardson are examples of women who admit self-consciousness as writers because of their gender, but who eventually undertake the printing of their texts nonetheless. Leigh's legacy was not printed until after her death, but she indicates in the text that she intends to have the manuscript made public. Leigh offers two reasons for choosing to publish: the first consists of the difficulty her three sons might encounter in sharing the manuscript; the second involves her fear that a manuscript may be lost or destroyed before her young sons could make use of it. Although such protests have been dismissed as "an unlikely excuse used to justify her publishing,"[24] Leigh's action seems fully warranted in light of cultural conditions. Leigh was already a widow when she wrote her legacy, and as she explains in the dedicatory

epistle, both preserving her manuscript and ensuring that such a text would merit the attention of grown sons in later years presented troublesome obstacles for her:

> So suddenly there arose a new care in my minde, how this scrole should bee kept for my childen: for they were too young to receive it, my selfe too old to keepe it, men too wise to direct it to, the world too wicked to endure it. Then in great grief I looked up to Heaven, from whence I knew commeth all comfort. . . . I adventured to make your Grace [Princess Elizabeth Stuart, daughter of James I] the Protectress of this my Booke, knowing that if you would but suffer your name to bee seene in it, Wisdome would allow of it, and all the wicked winde in the world could not blow it away.[25]

The dedication of her book to Princess Elizabeth demonstrates an effort by Leigh to provide some sanction for her act by invoking the name of a highly-regarded woman and mother. The careful rhetorical posture Leigh takes as a mother writing/writing mother suggests that this legacy is not being exploited as means to publish; Leigh has vital concerns about the fate of her young sons and she desires to preserve for them some record of their mother's wishes.

While previous critical readings maintain that Leigh, as well as Elizabeth Jocelin, "cit[ed] religious and social obligations to justify their texts, . . .creat[ing] a space in which they could write without incurring the censorship of men,"[26] religion provides these writers with more than a necessary pretense to publish. Rather, the legacies offer religion as the impetus, the *raison d'être*, for writing at all: these mothers were overwhelmed by their concern for the salvation of their children's souls. Reading the legacy as a pretense to notoriety requires a suspicious view not only of Leigh's

womanly humility but of her piety as well. Questioning the earnestness of early modern religious devotion again suggests anachronistic problems in modern critical treatments of the legacies.

Leigh intended publication only as a dangerous but necessary preservation tool, confessing that her action is very unusual in its deviation from "the usuall custome of women" to admonish in speech. She makes clear that she is taking significant risks in composing a legacy: the likelihood of social censure and the chance that her sons will ignore her advice or find it too tiresome despite her pains. Leigh considers these risks worth taking if her writing will have any small effect on the spiritual well-being of her sons:

> But lest you should marvell, my children, why I doe not, according to the usuall custome of women, exhort you by words & admonitions, rather than by writing: a thing so unusuall among us, . . .know therefore that it was the motherly affection that I bare unto you all, which made me now (as it often hath done heretofore) forget my selfe in regard of you, neither care I what you or any shall think of me, if among many words I may write but one sentence which may make you labour for the spiritual food of the soule.[27]

Leigh refers here to a public audience ("any"), but her address throughout remains centered on her children as the primary readers of the text. She acknowledges that the act of a woman writing advice (printed or not) may provoke criticism, but Leigh stops short of apologizing for the content of her writing.

Leigh devotes several opening chapters of her book to the role of literacy in spiritual development. Chapter two, from which the above passage is taken, is entitled,

"The I (sic) cause of writing, is a motherly affectio.," while chapter four proceeds, "The second cause is, to stirre them up to write." In this chapter, Leigh defends the writing of parental advice as a supremely meaningful practice which she hopes her sons will continue. "I thought it fit to give you a good example," she states,

> and by writing to entreat you, that when it shall please God to give both vertue and grace with your learning, hee having made you men, that you may write and speake the Word of God, without offending any, that then you would remember to write a book unto your Children of the right and true way to happinesse, which may remaine with them and theirs for ever.[28]

Fortunate in their birth, Leigh's sons will have an easier time providing their own children with a written guide that will not risk offense, but will be assured of proper respect. Literacy's "vertue and grace" embrace sons more freely. Leigh encourages them to participate in a literacy practice with a highly purposeful, ultimately significant end, bequeathing the "right and true way to happiness."

Elizabeth Richardson actively prepared A ladies legacie to her daughters for publication, writing new introductions to the chapters and composing an opening epistle some twenty years after she had begun the manuscript. The book was printed for sale while she was still living, making her the only writer of the early seventeenth century whose legacy was not published posthumously. Yet Richardson's book appeared during a women's publishing "boom" during the 1640's, and we may deduce from the sharply increased number of female-authored publications that the stigma of print had somewhat lifted during the two decades (1625-45) Richardson was at work on her prayer collection.

We might hesitate to categorize Richardson's book as a true mother's legacy considering that this text is "Composed of Prayers and Meditations, fitted for severall times, and upon several occasions" (title page), but the designation is justified by Richardson's opening epistles and interspersed commentary on the occasions of her writing. She clearly places herself in the company of her daughters' present and future teachers:

> I know you may have many better instructors than my self, yet can you have no true mother but me, who not only with great paine brought you into the world, but do now still travell [sic] in care for the birth of your soules; to bring you eternall life, which is my cheifest desire, and the height of my hopes.[29]

Richardson scatters instructional material throughout the body of the book, such as "An Exhortation concerning Prayer" which precedes the prayers of Book II: "Before thou goest to pray: consider seriously of these three things, which are very necessary to fit and prepare thee the better for that holy and blessed exercise: First, ponder. . . ."[30] Richardson's imperative language argues for the consistency of the text as mothers' advice. In addition, the publication history of this legacy supports my notion of legacy-writing as primarily a manuscript phenomenon.

The more favorable climate for female publishing did not eliminate the need for Richardson to issue a defense and disavowal of her printed book. Here she calls attention to the subject matter of her writing in order to argue that her spiritual devotions surely excuse the "boldnesse" of a publishing woman writer:

> I Had no purpose at all when I writ these books, for the use of my selfe, and my children, to make them publicke; but have beene lately over perswaded by some that much desired to have them. Therefore I have adventured to beare all censures, and desire their patience and pardon, whose exquisite judgements may finde many blameworthy faults, justly to condemne my boldnesse; which I thus excuse, the matter is but devotions or prayers, which surely concernes and belongs to women, as well as to the best learned men: And therefore I hope herein, I neither wrong nor give offence to any, which I should be very loath to doe.[31]

Richardson emphasizes that she originally intended her writing strictly for private purposes; her readers were to have been only herself and her children (and not her husband), which kept her influence within the proper sphere of those inferior to her own social state. She also offers a typical apology for the "faults" of her text, but does not elaborate on the inadequacies of her education or skill.

Richardson includes in the opening of her legacy both a newly composed introductory epistle and an earlier letter, written sometime after her husband's death in 1634. The existence of such as letter indicates that Richardson presented her daughters with a manuscript version of her book years before the printed version was made possible. Comparisons between the two letters allow us to study the rhetorical strategies used by the same writer for texts that are and are not intended for publication. The earlier letter is addressed to "My deare Children," and Richardson notes (in 1645) that the epistle is actually "A Letter to my foure Daughters, Elizabeth, Frances, Anne, and Katherine Ashbournham, of whom three were then unmarried," explicitly excluding her sons.

Richardson's initial impulse for writing seems to have been modeled after a prayer collection produced by her own parents; she remarks on their example in the early (manuscript) letter: "These prayers I composed for the instructions of my children, [and] grandchildren, after the example of my dear parents."[32] Written "instructions" offered as a family tradition suggest the roots of legacy-writing in a previous generation and help to explain Richardson's confident writing persona. The early letter consistently reflects Richardson's opinion of her work as a manifestation of her commitment to good mothering. "I have not failed to give you the best breeding in my power, to bring you to vertue and piety, which I esteem the greatest treasure," she writes.[33] She offers her daughters the opportunity to honor their mother as a motivation for regular prayer:

> And here I send you a motherly remembrance, and commend this my labour into your loving acceptance; that in remembering your poor mother, you may be also put in minde to performe your humble duty and service to our heavenly Father.[34]

While Richardson herself may be "poor," her "labour" is not, and this lack of overt feminine modesty marks an important difference between the manuscript letter and the epistle composed for the printed version of the book.

Richardson produced the early letter as well as many prayers upon the occasion of her widowhood, including "A sorrowfull widowes prayer and petition" and "A Prayer to the God of mercy in time of affliction." Writing seems to have consoled her in her grief and comforted her in her anxiety about her well-being and that of her children in the wake of her husband's death. The early letter is full of references to the

family's diminished estate and Richardson's necessary trust in the mercy of God. She dedicates her book of prayers to her children as a work of "my carefull industrie," intending the girls to use the daily devotions she provides as a means of spiritual security and sustenance.[35] Like Leigh, Richardson acknowledges that her work is vulnerable to criticism, yet she never degrades her written product:

> And howsoever this my endeavor may be contemptible to many, (because a womans) which makes me not to joyne my sons with you, lest being men, they misconstrue my well-meaning: yet I presume that you my daughters will not refuse your Mothers teaching (which I wish may be your ornament, and a crowne of glory to you).[36]

Richardson expects that others will become aware of her writing, her "endeavor," an indication of the relative impossibility of keeping manuscripts private. This extraordinary passage suggests that presenting a manuscript to men, even to one's own male children, constituted a rhetorically public act. While the evidence of her activity will leave her open to criticism, Richardson nonetheless values her efforts as nothing less than an "ornament" and "crowne of glory" for her daughters' use.

The 1645 epistle, written for print, expresses a more modest tone. Addressed to "My dearly beloved Daughters (of which number, I account my two sons wives, my daughters in law, the Countesse of Marlborough, and Mrs. Francis Ashbournham, to be mine also)," the letter gives the impression of a matriarchal figure. Yet if she had grown in stature during the preceding decade as a widow, Richardson retains an affectionate rhetorical persona: "[A]ssuring my selfe of your loves and kinde

acceptance, I present this little Booke unto you all, which being mine, I hope you will carefully receive it."[37] This dedication contains an interesting turn; Richardson calls the work itself a "little Booke," correlating its size to its relative insignificance, yet she asks that the book receive careful attention from her daughters, based on a general respect for their mother's wishes. Twice more Richardson derogates her work, calling her efforts "poore labour" and the book "it selfe unworthy," estimations that appear intended to mollify a public audience.[38] In the manuscript letter, Richardson appealed to "motherly remembrance" as a motivation for her daughters to pray, but here Richardson invokes the more simple authority of her motherhood to "intreat and prevaile with you to esteem so well of [this book], as often to peruse, ponder, practice and make use of this Booke according to my intention."[39] The difference is subtle, yet as a rhetorical strategy, Richardson's second, public, approach deflects attention from her status as the book's author. She is admonishing her daughters to pray, rather than asking them specifically to honor her by using the book she has written, as she requested in the manuscript preface.

The legacies of Leigh and Richardson both evince anxiety about entering the realm of print. Displaying literacy in the most public of forums involved a certain audacity: a willingness to bear the brunt of social criticism. Leigh returns over and again to the moral significance of her task in order to remind herself and her readers that the salvation of her children's souls must override concern for her own reputation. Richardson's actions speak louder than her words; the publication of her text occurred fully twenty years after she had begun to write. When she finally did publish, the cultural

climate had changed significantly, reducing Richardson's personal risk. Both women refrain, however, from apologizing for the contents of their texts, which lends support to my contention that motherly admonition had become a culturally-established practice in seventeenth-century England. Leigh and Richardson could express confidence in their suitability as advice-givers.

2. "A PORTABLE COUNSELLOR": THE LEGACY OF ELIZABETH GRYMESTON

Elizabeth Grymeston's Miscelanea. Meditations. Memoratives. was first published in 1604, followed by three subsequent reprints in 1605, 1609, and 1618. Like Leigh, she passed away shortly before her manuscript was published,[40] but Grymeston's text bears no suggestion that she intended to publish her writing. The legacy is addressed to her "loving Sonne Bernye Grymeston"; the text differs remarkably from other mothers' legacies in its use of secular as well as spiritual material. Grymeston includes shaped prose, verses, a madrigal, Latin meditations, and many references to classical mythology in her diverse collection. While she does not attempt to conceal in any way her level of intellectual sophistication, Grymeston refers to her "resol[ution] to break the barren soile of my fruitlesse braine" in her dedicatory epistle. Such a phrase bears a strong resemblance to modesty tropes of the period, yet it must suggest here that Grymeston is embarking on a rhetorical maiden journey by formally presenting her text, not that she considers her mental capacities inferior. Treating the above phrase as an

indication of modesty is not warranted; all other rhetorical elements of Grymeston's legacy suggest she is a confident writer.

Her lack of a feminine modesty trope makes Grymeston's text similar to Richardson's manuscript letter. Grymeston acknowledges her inability to advise her son at length in person, the customary maternal practice. She makes plain that her own advanced age ("I am now a dead woman among the living") and the fragile health of her husband have given rise to her need to preserve her counsel.

> Thou seest my love hath carried me beyond the list I resolved on, and my aking head and trembling hand have rather a will to offer, than abilitie to affoord further discourse.[41]

The obvious effort required to write this legacy suggests Grymeston's urgent desire to produce such a text; she mentions that despite her husband's current illness, he has survived "eight several sinister assaults" on his well-being. We may conclude that Grymeston, in her late forties, possessed only a marginally stronger physical capability to write than her husband, but that she felt her own "trembling hand" better suited to do so.

Her reasons for compiling the legacy are clearly discussed in the introductory epistle. Grymeston argues that mother's advice-giving is not only a completely natural activity, but that the moral dangerousness of the time, "the libertie of this age," necessitates it:

> My dearest Sonne, there is nothing so strong as the force of love; there is no love so forcible as the love of an affectionate mother to hir naturall childe: there is no mother can either more affectionately shew hir nature, or more naturally manifest hir affection, than in advising hir children out of hir owne experience, to eschue evill, and encline them to do what is good.

Grymeston displays skill in the logical arts here, applying deductive reasoning in order to vindicate her text. Yet if her style betrays academic training, her motivation was far from academic; Grymeston's son Bernye was the sole survivor of her nine children. She articulates another emotional reason for her urgency in writing: "my mothers undeserved wrath [has been] so virulent, . . .that I have neither power to lift it, nor patience to endure it, but must yield to this languishing consumption to which it hath brought me."[42] Matters of unresolved property disputes may have constituted the trouble between Grymeston and her mother.[43]

A more tempting conjecture about the source of Grymeston's mother's wrath is that it had to do with the younger's Catholic sympathies. This speculation has been founded upon an extended passage in the legacy pertaining to martyrdom. Grymeston writes,

> Even so the martyrs of the Catholicke Church, first breake out of the dead sees of originall sinne by Baptisme: then, when by feeding on the Sacraments and leaves of Gods word, they are growne to more ripenesse. . . and leave moreover the silke of their vertues as an ornament to the Church. . . . So that though the ripe fruit of the Church bee gathered, yet their blood engendereth new supply, and it increaseth the more, when the disincrease therof is violently procured. It is like the bush that burned and was not consumed. Of the own ruins it riseth, and of the owne ashes it reviveth, and by that increaseth, by which the world decayeth.[44]

As textual critics note, the martyrs whom Grymeston specifically names in this passage are "those whom a Protestant would have called traitors" and she describes as part of her diatribe the typical capital punishment for treason, as her kinsman Robert Southwell, S.J., suffered in 1594/5.[45] Since Grymeston could have cited comparable punishments of Protestants at the hands of Mary, her choices reveal a distinct Catholic sympathy. Subsequent critics refer to Grymeston plainly as a Catholic.[46]

Grymeston shows a delight in displaying her knowledge, and this fact separates her distinctly from other legacy writers. Grymeston seems to have drawn from a richly compiled commonplace book which included quotations from many English poets as well as the Bible and patristic and classical writers; her many "borrowings" in the legacy lead to speculation that she also drew from Hugh Plat's 1572 commonplace book Flores Patrum.[47] Anticipating that her book will remain the private property of her son (or at most, circulate under his control), Grymeston confidently demonstrates her familiarity with and pleasure in religious and learned secular material.

Grymeston celebrates the breadth of her learning, secure in the intimate knowledge of her audience because the resulting manuscript would remain restricted from wider access. Her remarkable statement in the introductory epistle concerns the purpose she has in mind for her text:

> I leave thee this portable veni mecum for thy counsellor, in which thou maiest see the true portrature of thy mothers minde. . . hoping, that being my last speeches, they will be better kept in the conference of thy memorie; which I desire thou wilt make a Register of heavenly Meditations.[48]

Rather than exclusively emphasizing a concern for her son's salvation, Grymeston uses the legacy as an opportunity to share her personal tastes and wisdom. Wendy Wall cites the above passage from Grymeston's legacy as support for her argument that death provided an early modern woman with the license to publish:

> By evoking the horizon of death, the Renaissance woman writer had a chance to undertake what was considered an exceptional feat: to take control of the frighteningly precarious circumstances of her life, to articulate her beliefs and desires, to display her mastery of moral precepts and knowledge, and to claim the power to show publicly, in Grymeston's words, "the true portraiture of [her] mother's minde."[49]

Wall is precise about Grymeston's accomplishment in the Miscelanea, yet the matter of this text's composition as a manuscript must be acknowledged. Grymeston is bestowing upon her son an expanded, annotated copy of her commonplace book, not announcing her debut into the world of print. Grymeston's unique inclusion of secular material additionally suggests that she was operating under late sixteenth-century cultural expectations concerning a legacy's suitable subject-matter; these assumptions may have changed over the course of the next half-century.

3. CULTURAL CHANGE AND LEGACY-WRITING

According to critical commonplace (first established by women scholars in the 1920s), Humanist ideals about education for women began to recede even before the Elizabethan era ended. "The low estimate of learning, in the first half of the seventeenth century, as an appropriate pursuit for women" reflects a change that the first historians of women's education attribute to a swelling interest in religious reform.[50] The early years of the seventeenth century saw a return to domestic priorities in women's education, with emphasis on "strict home-training in housecraft and piety."[51] The extent to which a woman might express discomfiture about her education and her display of literacy, therefore, may be influenced by the year(s) during which she writes and by her own investment in religious reform.[52] That most texts produced by early modern women are religious unfortunately tends to obscure the differences among the texts and among the writers, especially for the modern reader.

Little attention has been paid to the effect of puritan/reformist ideologies on literacy practices. Studies generally assert that the Protestant emphasis on personal Bible-study provided an impetus toward popular basic literacy, but literacy for women remained a vexing issue.[53] Upper-class Elizabethan women had been lauded for applying themselves to the translation of classical literature, while Stuart-era women were praised for using reading and writing skills toward strictly spiritual ends, and even this practice ultimately garnered criticism. Elizabeth Jocelin, for example, was praised in 1624 for her ability to memorize and hand-copy a sermon:

> Among those her eminencies deserving our memory, was her owne most ready memory, enabling her upon the first rehearsall to repeat above forty lines in English or Latine: a gift the more happy by her imployment of it in carrying away an entire Sermon, so that shee could (almost following the steps of the words, or phrase) write it downe in her Chamber.[54]

Taking sermon notes became a "favorite schoolgirl exercise" during the generation following Jocelin; these habits, however, remained "highly unpopular with the average Englishman":

> Sir Ralph Verney . . .would not have his god-daughter Nancy Denton learn shorthand at school, for "the pride of taking Sermon-noates" had made "multitudes of women most unfortunate," and he believed it to be as much contrary to the Pauline injunction for them to write as to speak in Church.[55]

Classical education for women proved difficult to reconcile with reformist values. Women who may have been educated in the finest Humanist traditions -- conversant in several languages including Latin and knowledgeable in rhetoric, logic, classical literature, philosophy, history, mathematics, geography, or government -- may have found themselves under reformist pressure to renounce as vain or at least modestly conceal the very training they had received as children.[56]

The devout woman writer occupies a position of tremendous conflict, since chastity and humility are central values that must be negated in order to write, even when the subject matter is spiritual. If reformist ideologies gathered strength during the first half of the seventeenth century, this may account for differences in subject-matter among the legacies as time progressed: Grymeston defers to secular texts and authorities,

while Leigh and Elizabeth Jocelin remain focused on the realm of domestic and maternal authority, and Richardson restricts herself primarily to prayers. Grymeston's frequent recourse to Latin phrases and her expressed esteem of learning differ markedly from Jocelin's refusal to demonstrate any of her knowledge of foreign languages, history or poetry. These two women are separated by twenty years and by religious affiliation, but the impact of cultural change on their texts becomes difficult to substantiate without the evidence other legacies might provide. If "the phrase 'learned and virtuous' was both praise and limitation" for early modern women,[57] individual women writers like Grymeston demonstrate a belief in the "praise" of such as phrase, and Jocelin in its "limitation." The expanding influence of reformist ideologies in the Jacobean period and the rapid loss of esteem for women's classical education remains suggestive.

4. "SCORNE UPON MY GRAVE": THE LEGACY OF ELIZABETH JOCELIN

The salvation of her unborn child's soul, writes Elizabeth Jocelin, burdened her with an overpowering responsibility to write. She considers her legacy a work undertaken non-voluntarily, since the vital efforts of orally admonishing her child may soon be made impossible: "I could not chuse but manifest this desire [for a son to join the ministry] in writing, lest it should please God to deprive me of time to speake."[58] The vanity implied by a written legacy might be seen to rival her holy purpose, as she explains to her husband in the epistle dedicatory:

> [I]t came to my mind that death might deprive me of time [to admonish my child] if I should neglect the present. I knew not what to do. I thought of writing, but then mine own weakness appeared so manifestly that I was ashamed and durst not undertake it. But when I could find no other means to express my motherly zeal, I encouraged myself with these reasons:. . . .[59]

Jocelin carefully justifies her act by pointing out that her intentions are proper, her text is meant only for a child (a fit addressee for "but a woman" writer), and that her words will remain within the acceptable genre of advice-discourse and within the private confines of her domestic sphere. Kristen Poole invokes an earlier manuscript essay on education by Jocelin[60] and reads "hints" into the legacy to support her contention that Jocelin wished to publish: "Through her emphatic insistence on privacy and denial of agency, then, Jocelin facilitates the entrance of her text into the public sphere."[61] Yet heavy use of irony would seem highly inconsistent with the content of Jocelin's text. The emotionally charged nature of her legacy and her keen adherence to reformist principles make it improbable that she planned for her writing to reach public readers.

Like Leigh and Richardson, Jocelin anticipates that others outside of the family will become aware of her legacy, but this threat cannot "stay [her] hand" from fulfilling her duty as a Christian mother. Jocelin does not acknowledge other readers as addressees in her writing:

> Againe, I may perhaps bee wondred at for writing in this kinde, considering there are so many excellent bookes, whose least note is worth all my meditations. I confesse it, and thus excuse my selfe, I write not to the world, but to mine own childe.[62]

Although her manner of address is often indirect, the awkward tone stems from Jocelin's difficult task in writing to an unknown, unborn, future girl or boy child/adolescent. Immediately following the apology for her writing activity, Jocelin eloquently expresses her fears of the legacy being exposed to public view:

> These things considered, neither the true knowledge of mine owne weaknesse, nor the feare this may come to the worlds eie, & bring scorne upon my grave, can stay my hand from expressing how much I covet thy salvation. Therefore deare childe, reade here my love, and if God take mee from thee, be obedient to these instructions, as thou oughtest to bee unto mee, I have learnt them out of Gods Word, I beseech him that they may be profitable to thee.[63]

Her testimony conveys the sense that Jocelin faced with trepidation the possibility of earning "scorne upon [her] grave" through the act of composition; she may have imagined a conservative parson or other church leaders frowning with disapproval on this evidence of her vanity.

Jocelin's proclaimed modesty in the dedicatory epistle to her husband proves unfitting to her educational background, offering evidence that she worked diligently to conform to religious standards of feminine humility. She takes pains to point out the deficiency of her writing in case her husband's affection for her blinds him to the facts:

> I shall not need to tell thee I have written honest thoughts in a disordered fashion, not observing method. For thou knowest how short I am of learning and natural endowments to take such a course in writing. Or if that strong affection of thine have hid my weakness from thy sight, I now profess seriously mine own ignorance; and though I did not, this following treatise would betray it.[64]

Jocelin was in fact "from her tender yeeres carefully nurtured" by her grandfather, Cambridge Professor of Divinity the Lord Bishop of Lincoln, as Thomas Goad states in the Approbation to her legacy, "in those accomplishments of knowledge in Languages, History, and some Arts, so principally in studies of piety." Goad continues,

> Besides the domestique cares pertaining to a wife, the former part of those [married] yeeeres were imployed by her in the studies of morality and history, the better by the helpe of forreigne languages, not without a taste and facultie in Poetrie: Wherein some essay shee hath left, ingenious, but chaste and modest like the Authour. Of all which knowledge shee was very sparing in her discourses, as possessing it rather to hide, than to boast of.[65]

Goad proves his subject well worthy of academic esteem, but carefully saves his praise for her success in burying her training: "In the whole course of her pen, I observe her piety and humility: these her lines scarce shewing one sparke of the elementary fire of her secular learning: this her candle being rather lighted from the lampe of the Sanctuary."[66] Goad's position here is revealing: even as the publisher of Jocelin's work, he reserves his praise for her modesty rather than for her text, which he judges to "commeth forth imperfect from the pen." Knowing that even an ardent supporter like Goad would disapprove of a woman intentionally writing for a public audience, Jocelin seeks only her future child as reader. To believe that she suggests or "hints" otherwise requires us to throw Jocelin's religious devotion into question, and her text supplies other evidence to the contrary.

Jocelin's proposals for a future daughter's upbringing demonstrate an exaggerated concern with modesty. Given her own educational background, the restrictive curriculum she recommends for a daughter seems at least puzzling if not "extraordinary," as her recent editor states.[67] The wishes she expresses to her husband betray a palpable anxiety about the appropriate education for a woman:

> I desire her bringing up may be learning the Bible, as my sisters do, good housewifery, writing, and good work; other learning a woman needs not. Though I admire it in those whom God hath blessed with discretion, yet I desire it not much in my own, having seen that sometimes women have greater proportions of learning than wisdom, which is of no better use to them than a main-sail to a fly-boat, which runs it under water. But where learning and wisdom meet in a virtuous-disposed woman, she is the fittest closet for all goodness. She is like a well-balanced ship that may bear her sail. She is -- indeed I should shame myself if I should go about to praise her more.[68]

Jocelin's remarks here indicate her self-consciousness about her own status as an (over-) educated woman. It seems clear that the difficulties and challenges she has faced in attempting to be "a well-balanced ship" have convinced her that a daughter needn't struggle similarly; life would be easier for a woman who didn't continually face drowning by erudition. "Her choice of tropes," notes Valerie Wayne, "betrays her own ambivalence toward confinement when she shifts from the closet metaphor, an enclosed space, to a vehicle designed not to stay at home."[69] In striving to uphold the twin values of chastity and humility, the "inviolable" Jocelin (as she signs her dedicatory epistle) exposes the conflicted position of the educated woman. "[I]f thou beest a daughter," she writes to her child, "thou maist perhaps thinke I have lost my labour; but reade on, and

thou shalt see my love and care of thee and thy salvation is as great, as if thou wert a sonne, and my feare greater."[70] Secular education, because it predisposed one to the vice of pride, could only make a woman's journey toward salvation more harrowing than it inherently was.

Jocelin articulates, within a conventional genre of the period, the ways in which literacy brings a burden to its practitioner. The maudlin appeal of a dead mother's last words accounted for much of this text's success; A mothers legacie, to her unborne child was second in popularity only to Queen Elizabeth's writings as an original work by a Renaissance Englishwoman.[71] Yet as is also the case with Dorothy Leigh's popular legacy, these works speak to complicated issues of literacy. Displaying literacy represented an audacious rhetorical act for all of the female legacy writers; the few who intend publication attempt to lessen the affront by apologizing and offering justifications, while the rest simply limit access to their texts by shunning print. Good Christian mothers could not ignore their obligation to moral admonition, but the socially-preferred, spoken mode of advice-giving was often threatened by the realities of sickness and childbirth in women's lives. Composing a legacy thus represented a transgression of feminine norms even as it fulfilled a prerequisite for conscientious motherhood.

5. THE "MIXED BLESSINGS" OF STUDENT LITERACY

Student literacy, as a literacy of the institutionally unempowered, functions much like literacy for early modern women and non-elite men:

> On the one hand, the most fully literate persons also attained the freest access to privileges and opportunities from which they would otherwise have been excluded. . . .On the other hand, the acquisition of literacy often meant the disciplining as much as the empowerment of the dominated, their induction into an unaccommodating system of social and linguistic distinction which did not operate in their favor and which could use the written word as yet another mechanism of control.[72]

Any recipient of a poor grade on a written assignment will attest to the force of "social and linguistic distinction[s] which [do] not operate in [his/her] favor." As I suggested at the close of the last chapter, literacy for modern college students entails practicing apprentice discourses. Students must demonstrate an adequate fluency in the discourse of the freshman writing classroom before being granted the license to perform other apprentice discourses in the specialized writing environments of various academic disciplines. Student writing is policed and marked as transgressive (in every discipline) as a means of bringing the work within established disciplinary norms, or at least established disciplinary apprentice norms. Because professors occupy the role of discourse-masters within their disciplines, controlling and evaluating student performances, the attainment of literacy for students signals both sanction and submission.

Like the writers of mothers' legacies, students often seek ways to convey their moral beliefs and cherished ideas, especially at times when the academy (as represented by a professor) appears to challenge such ideas. Despite students' lack of power vis-à-vis the academy, they are required to assume an authorial position in producing academic texts. Composing an assignment to which they attach their names,

for purposes of evaluation, places students in what Foucault names the author-function: a "mode of existence, circulation, and functioning of certain discourses within a society. . . [in which] discourses are objects of appropriation."[73]. Because an academic text is understood as property belonging to its author/owner, the student producer of the text becomes both responsible and punishable for its expression. The unavoidable transgression of writing within and against other discourses, as Foucault theorizes, is the price paid for the author's "benefits of ownership."[74] The problematic position of the student as simultaneously powerless and a source of his/her own textual authority, then, seems to constitute a fundamental precondition of student writing. The remarkable similarity between writing conditions for college students and for early modern women emphasizes the troubling set of obstacles students face.

The situation outlined above represents the first of two literacy obstacles in the writing classroom. Compositionists recognize that academic literacy encompasses not only an ability to mimic the discourse of a particular discipline or field, but a capacity to participate in the knowledge-production of that field by introducing new ideas to its members. College literacy entails working both "within" and "against" established discourses:

> We work within [academic discourse] to the extent that our subjects are brought in to existence by the discourse, and we work against it by the necessity of carving some intellectual space in which to say something meaningful about the subject.[75]

New ideas are "brought into existence" by articulating them in conventional disciplinary discourse; that is, ideas are not recognized or acknowledged unless they are expressed by a writer who practices the appropriate literacy. Submission to academic discourse conventions becomes a prerequisite to challenging the very practices upon which it is based. "The goal for both students and ourselves," as Joseph Harris suggests, "must be to speak from within a discourse and yet remain in some ways outside of it, to be able not only to execute but to argue against its claims and practices."[76] Accomplishing the contradictory objectives of submission and resistance in writing requires offering students a space in which they can operate both as apprentices and resistors to academic discourse.

Social constructivist composition theorists have acknowledged the existence of and necessity for safe spaces in the development of student writing and thinking. Social constructivist theory emphasizes the recognition of competing social discourses from which writers appropriate various speaking positions; a crucial pedagogical enterprise for the social constructivist classroom involves leading students to this recognition. Pedagogical tools which foster and exploit safe spaces for student writing and thinking include innovative use of classroom time, class assignments and institutionally-supported writing centers. Experimental writing assignments, collaborative writing groups and peer tutoring in writing centers all aim to preserve student resistance to academic discourse, to "interrogate the academy and its power structures and simultaneously enjoy the experience of becoming a creator, a thinker."[77] Such practices may be performed within traditional classroom settings and require no

special preparation on the part of students in order to participate. They do require the intellectual commitment of instructors to the notion of the safe space and demand institutional resources to support the development of writing centers.

Experimental writing assignments constitute perhaps the most low-level pedagogical accommodation of the safe space. Students are invited to produce texts which purposely break all conventions of standard expository prose, incorporating poetry or poetic forms (including drama) and manipulating the texts or voices of others from sources both within and outside of the academy. Experimental writing requires no closure, no specified format or limitations, and takes as its starting point "discontinuity and tension, exclusion and rupture."[78] Because such assignments ask students, for example, to "produce a text that interrupts or interrogates itself,"[79] they extend social constructivist pedagogy to admit that the act of discourse/identity construction "begins where it is needed."[80] Experimental assignments promote a sense of authority for students as they fashion texts of their own and by others into individual expressions. As personal expressions, such texts elude evaluation, remaining focused (at least temporarily) on student-centered authority in the classroom.

More resource-intensive than the classroom technique described above is the application of computer technologies to provide safe spaces through networked classrooms and electronic mail. Testimonials to the efficacy of electronic forums as safe

spaces attest to their particular usefulness for students as they transition into academic culture:

> The mail forum served as a protected, trusted, safe house where [students] could express their frustrations, display resistance, and seek emotional sustenance and solidarity. . . . Safe houses [function] as an experimental site where students can interrogate, negotiate, and appropriate new rhetorical and discursive forms without fear of institutional penalties.[81]

Although much emphasis is placed here on the space for resistance and sharing of power that electronic forums can achieve, computer technologies offer compelling advantages in fostering students' academic literacies. The use of computer technology itself, the acts of logging on and creating computer hypertext, represent skills valued within and outside of the academy. Students can gain an awareness of "the politics of talking in class" through increased participation under pseudonymous networked discussions.[82] And the commonly-enacted parody of academic authority facilitated by protected electronic discussion ironically demands an increased attentiveness to academic discourse: "Paradoxically, the safe house instilled a yet keener awareness of classroom concerns."[83]

Safe spaces, while principally oriented around discourse practices, are both solitary in nature and existent as communal sites, as in the case of electronic forums. The special circumstances of Jacobean mothers, as I have shown, resulted in the creation of manuscript legacies as personal safe spaces to work both within and against social discourses. As compliant mothers, these women performed the requisite admonishment of their children; as subversive women, they admonished in written form rather than oral,

a combination made uniquely possible through the medium of manuscript text. Interpersonal safe spaces are not an invention of composition theorists or electronic technologies; study groups and classmate coffee klatches have always served as places for engaging safely with new discourses and new ideas. Yet the recognition of all such spaces as immensely promising pedagogical tools represents an important development for writing instruction. Safe spaces, solitary or communal, benefit academia by contributing to the vitality of intellectual discourses, ensuring "the survival and growth of alternate forms of knowledge that can challenge and redefine dominant discourses in the academy."[84] Writing within and against dominant discourses necessitates a safe site to establish authorial credibility; the crossing of discourse boundaries, as I show in the next chapter, can be an activity fraught with peril.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

[1] Frances E. Dolan, "Reading, writing, and other crimes," Feminist readings of early modern culture: emerging subjects, eds. Valerie Traub, M. Lindsay Kaplan and Dympna Callaghan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 159.

[2] For a complementary argument about the circumstances of women readers, see Jacqueline Pearson, "Women reading, reading women," Women and literature in Britain, 1500-1700, ed. Helen Wilcox (Cambridge University Press, 1996) 80-99. Pearson writes that "women's reading was almost equally [to writing] a site for conflict and anxiety," but that the ambiguity involved in acts of reading afforded women more opportunity to utilize literacy for their own purposes (80).

[3] Valerie Wayne, "Advice for women from mothers and patriarchs," Women and literature in Britain, 1500-1700, ed. Helen Wilcox (Cambridge University Press, 1996) 61.

[4] Wayne 62.

[5] Patricia Crawford, "Women's Published Writings 1600-1700," Women in English Society, 1500-1800, ed. Mary Prior (1985; London: Methuen, 1996) 278. Another mother's legacy text from the English Short Title Catalog is M.R.'s The mothers counsell, or live within compasse (1623). The text is inscribed "To her Daughter," and pertains to moral and spiritual guidance, but no remarks are made upon the occasion of the writing or the inclinations of the writer, who may have been male. If the popularity of published mothers' legacies argues for the existence of many others in manuscript, "M.R" was conceivably a man trying to capitalize on this popular genre. On the subject of Frenchwoman Charlotte Arbaleste, who wrote a manuscript family history for her son, see Natalie Zemon Davis, "Gender and Genre: Women As Historical Writers, 1400-1820," Beyond Their Sex: Learned Women of the European Past, ed. Patricia H. Labalme (New York: NYU Press, 1980) 162-3. Arbaleste discontinued her manuscript when her son died in battle in 1605; it was published posthumously in 1624.

[6] Crawford 122; Wayne 56; Wendy Wall, The Imprint of Gender: authorship and publication in the English Renaissance (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993) 293.

[7] Arthur F. Marotti, Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995) 61.

[8] Margaret Ferguson and Barry Weller, eds., The Lady Falkland, Her Life (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) 192-3.

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[9] See Louis B. Wright, ed., Advice to a Son: Precepts of Lord Burghley, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Frances Osborne (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1962).

[10] Margaret Spufford, Small books and pleasant histories: popular fiction and its readership in seventeenth century England (1981; Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1982) 201-3.

[11] For brief summaries of each of these texts, see Elaine V. Beilin, Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) 247-85.

[12]See Crawford 216-217; Wendy Wall; Martin Elsky, Authorizing Words: Speech, Writing and Print in the English Renaissance (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); Suzanne Hull, Chaste, Silent and Obedient (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1982); Harold Love, Scribal Publication in Seventeenth Century England (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); J.W. Saunders, "The Stigma of Print: a Note on the Social Bases of Tudor Poetry," Essays in Criticism 1-2 (1951/2) 139-64.

[13] Crawford 217-8.

[14] Crawford 266. Crawford categorizes first editions by women from 1600-1640 as translations (9), formal documents such as speeches of queens (8), literature (6), mother's advice (5), political pamphlets and petitions (4), prayers (3), prophesy (2), lives (1) and prose (1) (Tables 7.3 and 7.4) 268-69.

[15] Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse, The Ideology of Conduct: essays on literature and the history of sexuality (London and New York: Methuen, 1987) 7-8.

[16] Kristen Poole carries this tendency to align the legacy writers to the extreme, speculating at length that two of the women writers may have been relatives. While her genealogical research does lend support to this claim, Poole uses the possible connection to argue that "[Elizabeth] Jocelin may have emulated -- consciously or not -- [Dorothy] Leigh's precedent and strategy of addressing her children as a means to write freely." See Poole, "'The fittest closet for all goodness': Authorial Strategies of Jacobean Mothers' Manuals," Studies in English Literature 35 (1995) 84. My reading of these legacies suggests that Jocelin did not take up a pen "freely," that is, easily, with pleasure, or without fear of reprisal.

[17] Crawford 222.

[18] Barbara Newman warns feminist critics against a temptation to idealize our precursors through what she calls a "hermeneutics of sympathy" in approaching women's texts, which names more precisely the problem I am addressing regarding other readings of the mothers' legacies. See Newman, "On the Ethics of a Feminist Historiography," Exemplaria: A Journal of Theory in Medieval and Renaissance Studies 2 (1990) 702-3.

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[19] Poole 72.

[20] Crawford 214.

[21] Harold Love argues that different conventions governed the production of manuscripts and print texts, since each was oriented toward a different kind of audience. I return to this point regarding the texts of Lady Mary Wroth in Chapter 3. See Love 141-230.

[22] Margaret W. Ferguson, "Renaissance concepts of the 'woman writer,'" Women and literature in Britain, 1500-1700, ed. Helen Wilcox (Cambridge University Press, 1996) 161. For more on women's participation in manuscript production, see Margaret J.M. Ezell, The Patriarch's Wife: Literary Evidence and the History of the Family (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987).

[23] Randall Martin, Introduction, The mothers legacie, to her unborne childe, by Elizabeth Jocelin (1624), Women Writers in Renaissance England, ed. Randall Martin, (New York: Addison, Wesley, Longman, 1997) 35.

[24] Poole 73.

[25] Dorothy Leigh, The mothers blessing (1616) A3 - A5.

[26] Poole 82.

[27] Leigh 3-5.

[28] Leigh 14-16.

[29] Elizabeth Richardson, Baroness Cramond, A ladies legacie to her daughters (1645) 6.

[30] Richardson 53.

[31] Richardson 3.

[32] Richardson 52.

[33] Richardson 6.

[34] Richardson 5.

[35] Richardson 6.

[36] Richardson 6.

[37] Richardson 1.

[38] Richardson 1, 2.

[39] Richardson 2.

[40] Although an official record of Grymeston's death has never been found, the introductory verses in the book's 1604 edition indicate that she was not living at that time: "Though

th' authors selfe triumph in heavenly glore,/ Thou sacred worke giv'st mortall life againe" [Elizabeth Grymeston, Miscelanea. Meditations. Memoratives (1604) A5, ll. 5-6]. Ruth Hughey and Philip Hereford conclude that she must have died in "1602 or 1603." See Hughey and Hereford, "Elizabeth Grymeston and Her Miscellanea," The Library 15, 4th Series (1934) 75.

[41] Grymeston A5.

[42] Grymeston A2.

[43] Hughey and Hereford 76.

[44] Grymeston E-E2.

[45] Hughey and Hereford 78.

[46] Wayne 65.

[47] Hughey and Hereford 90.

[48] Grymeston A3.

[49] Wall 293.

[50] Myra Reynolds, The Learned Lady in England 1650-1760 (1920; Gloucester, MA.: Peter Smith, 1964) 28; Dorothy Gardiner, English girlhood at school: a study of women's education through twelve centuries (London: Oxford University Press, 1929) 185.

[51] Gardiner 235.

[52] Kristen Poole argues that Dorothy Leigh's "puritan leanings" serve to exacerbate her conflicted feelings about publishing her legacy (74-76).

[53] Frances Dolan suggests, in her reading of literacy's role in women's crime and punishment accounts, that such texts "complicate any simple association of Catholicism with illiteracy and Protestantism with literacy. . . .Perhaps Catholic women were not less likely to be able to read and/or write, but more likely to recognize that they might be incriminated by demonstrating their skills" (158). Dolan's speculation is at odds with my own readings of mothers' legacies, recommending more critical attention to this issue.

[54] Thomas Goad, "The Approbation," The mothers legacie, to her unborne childe, by Elizabeth Jocelin (1624) A7.

[55] Gardiner 269-70.

[56] Ann Rosalind Jones acknowledges that Puritanism played a role in propelling feminine ideals toward chastity and humility (*ipso facto* silence), but she places the burgeoning

middle-classes at the center of this change. "Aristocratic vanity," she writes, "is banished, to be replaced with practical education and genuine Protestant values." By the time Gervase Markham's The English Huswife appears in 1615 (contemporary with the mothers' legacies), Jones sees a "consolidation of Protestant and rising-class ideology." See Jones, "Nets and Bridles: Early Modern Conduct Books and Sixteenth Century Women's Lyrics," The Ideology of Conduct, eds. Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse (London and New York: Methuen, 1987) 57, 61.

[57] Beilin xxi.

[58] Elizabeth Jocelin, The mothers legacie, to her unborne childe (1624) 8.

[59] Elizabeth Jocelin, Epistle Dedicatory, The mothers legacie, to her unborne childe (1624), Women Writers in Renaissance England, ed. Randall Martin (New York: Addison, Wesley, Longman, 1997) 37, ll.15-19.

[60] Poole 86.

[61] Poole 81.

[62] Jocelin, The mothers legacie 10.

[63] Jocelin, The mothers legacie 11-12.

[64] Jocelin, Epistle Dedicatory 40-1, ll.103-8.

[65] Goad A5.

[66] Goad A6.

[67] Martin 35.

[68] Jocelin, Epistle Dedicatory 39, ll.47-56.

[69] Wayne 64.

[70] Jocelin, The mothers legacie 8-9.

[71] Martin 34.

[72] Dolan 151.

[73] Michel Foucault, "What is an author?," Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader, ed. David Lodge (New York: Longman, 1988) 202.

[74] Foucault 202.

[75] Lil Brannon, "Is a critical pedgogy possible?," Journal of Education 172.1 (1990) 17.

[76] Joseph Harris, Introduction, "Writing within and against the academy: what do we really want our students to do? A Symposium," Journal of Education 172.1 (1990) 16.

[77] Elizabeth Anne Leonard, "Assignment #9: A Text which Engages the Socially Constructed Identity of Its Writer," College Composition and Communication 48.2 (May 1997) 222.

[78] Leonard 224.

[79] Leonard 227.

[80] Kurt Spellmeyer qtd. in Leonard 224. See Spellmeyer, "On Conventions and Collaboration: The Open Road and the Iron Cage," Writing Theory and Critical Theory, eds. John Clifford and John Schilb (New York: MLA, 1994) 73-95.

[81] A. Suresh Canagarajah, "Coping Strategies of African-American Students," College Composition and Communication 48.2 (May 1997) 179, 191.

[82] Lester Faigley, Fragments of Rationality: Postmodernity and the Subject of Composition (1992; Pittsburgh and London: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1994) 198.

[83] Canagarajah 179.

[84] Canagarajah 191-2.

CHAPTER III: LITERACY AS PERFORMANCE OF IDENTITY: THE EXCOMMUNICATION OF LADY MARY WROTH

It will be my project in this chapter to frame the writing of Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth, in a sociolinguistic context, to argue for her practices of literacy as displays of membership vis-à-vis a particular social group. I will argue that the Jacobean court society may be conceptualized as a discourse community, or a body of members who exercise certain linguistic behaviors and share a distinct ideological orientation.[1] Although Wroth's writing served to legitimate her identity within the Jacobean court discourse community, her eventual rhetorical and ideological transgression of the community's boundaries functioned to banish her from the group and from literary/literacy activity itself. The role Wroth played in her own excommunication is difficult to discern, perhaps involving naiveté or rebellion or some complex combination of these factors; her story, however, brings to mind the position of first-year students vis-à-vis university discourse communities and the role first-year writing programs play in policing such boundaries. A discussion of that issue will close the chapter.

Wroth is represented in most contemporary literary anthologies as a paradigmatic "minor" early modern writer: niece of Sir Philip Sidney and of Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, she was born into a family possessing both nobility and literary eminence. Through her father, Robert Sidney, Queen Anne's Lord High Chamberlain, she enjoyed access to intimate court circles. Not only well-

connected, Wroth has merited literary interest for pursuing a salacious affair with her cousin William Herbert and for ostensibly making their relationship, as the pseudonymous Pamphilia and Amphilanthus, a subject of her literary efforts. Unlike the mothers' legacies, Wroth's writing suggests a distinctly unanxious attitude about literacy display. Ignoring social restrictions on women's writing, she seems to have blithely adopted the sentiments of her uncle's famous sonneteer, Astrophil, who begins his lyrical quest for the pity and love of Stella by legitimating his emotions as poetic material: "'Fool,' said my Muse to me, 'look into thy heart, and write!'"[2] Yet Wroth was cast out from her literary and social community largely as a result of publishing these poems and a long prose romance, The Countesse of Mountgomeries Urania. "She was apparently forced," writes Margaret Patterson Hannay, "to learn the womanly virtue of silence; if she did write more after her Urania, it has not survived."[3] Mary Wroth's literacy activities leave her occupying a position as both Renaissance poet première and Renaissance poet deviant as she is positioned both within and outside of the court discourse community.

The concept of the discourse community represents a theory-in-process within composition and rhetoric studies, so I will begin by carefully defining my use of this term and by demonstrating how the Jacobean court society can be seen to meet certain defining characteristics of discourse communities. The work of both linguist James Paul Gee and rhetorician Patricia Bizzell inform my definition of "discourse

community." Gee offers a valuable way to begin with the first half of this term. "Discourses," he writes,

> are ways of being in the world; they are forms of life which integrate words, acts, values, beliefs, attitudes, and social identities as well as gestures, glances, body positions and clothes. A Discourse is a sort of "identity kit" which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular role that others will recognize.[4]

Gee's "Discourse" as shared and practiced by a group of persons, then, establishes the basic meaning denoted in this paper by "discourse community." Bizzell elaborates on the concept:

> A "discourse community" is a group of people who share certain language-using practices. These practices can be seen as conventionalized in two ways. Stylistic conventions regulate social interactions both within the group and in its dealings with outsiders; to this extent "discourse community" borrows from the sociolinguistic concept of "speech community." Also, canonical knowledge regulates the world views of group members, how they interpret experience; to this extent "discourse community" borrows from the literary-critical concept of "interpretive community."[5]

Thus the vital elements comprising a discourse community are its shared language behaviors and its common ideological orientation, derived and maintained through social bonds including shared class status, ethnicity or geographical proximity.[6] Bizzell's discussion of discourse communities, however, extends this definition to include "the crucial function of a collective project in unifying the group," meaning that a discourse community must be shown to exist with some larger design or purpose as its inherent reason for being.[7] Nevertheless, as Bizzell clarifies her definition, even a very powerful,

culturally dominant discourse community cannot sustain discursive control, and contradictory practices will emerge. How the discourse community reads acts of resistance has been less satisfactorily addressed, and I will return to this issue in my consideration of Mary Wroth.

I posit the core members of the Jacobean discourse community as the immediate family of James I and those appointed to intimate royal service, although other members of the nobility could earn the designation of "courtier" by gaining the favor of core members. Courtiers by definition practiced a literacy, in Gee's framework, since they achieved "*the mastery of or fluent control over a secondary Discourse*," or the acquisition of a Discourse other than one's primary or original, home-based Discourse.[8] A courtier's literacy encompassed language practices and an equally important set of precise semiotic codes, including dress and gesture, for example, according to sex. In the female court circle surrounding Anne, verbal skill in playing witty parlor games called "News" and "Edicts" were important for success; inclusion in the Queen's masques signaled intimate acceptance into the community.[9] In Gee's terms, aspiring courtiers were "apprentices" to the Discourse, mastery of which was accomplished and recognized simultaneously with entrance into the community:

> Discourses are connected with plays of identity. . . . [A] lack of fluency marks you as a *non-member* of the group that controls this Discourse. That is, you don't have the identity or social role which is the basis for the existence of the Discourse in the first place.[10]

Gee does not recognize outsiders who are not apprentices, but who have rejected or been rejected by the community, an oversight which becomes apparent in the case of Wroth.[11]

Court literacy demanded an exacting and delicate balance between respecting the community's formal and behavioral conventions and taking part in subversive textual challenges to the court society's self-contained power. Amid an atmosphere of feigned busyness, in which courtiers "take meals, attend plays or worship, gamble for high stakes at Groom Porter's, conduct love affairs, call on the purveyors of an amazing range of products and services, and hear and generate gossip,"[12] the circulation of texts played a significant role:

> [A] way of combating the tedium of such occasions was through the composition and circulation of subversive writings, which must have presented a special piquancy when the victims were also present in the chamber. The circulation of written texts, then, was part of the everyday current of life in the palace. [...] Above all, scribally transmitted court writing was an insiders' writing, reflecting the values of an institution that was devoted to the manufacture and maintenance of an image in which it could hardly itself be expected to believe.[13]

The court demonstrated its force as a discourse community through the subversion and containment of ideological norms, the "reflecti[on] of values" to which Love refers. A tightly-controlled circulation of letters and manuscripts "serve[d] to define communities of the like-minded,"[14] even as the practice of manuscript circulation defined court behavior. It should come as no surprise that the roman à clef found great popularity among the community's members, since it satisfied the court's need for distraction and sanctioned disruption within a legitimately conventional context.[15] Textual evidence

points to the reading of Mary Wroth's Urania as roman à clef, but the text itself resists this designation, causing problems for Wroth which I will address.

Bizzell's requirement that a discourse community perform some collective project is satisfied here by the interest of court discourse community members in maintaining the social and economic status quo, as well as by pure English nationalism; the court discourse community worked for the sovereign and therefore intrinsically the sovereignty of England and its present system of rule. King James particularly insisted on marshalling efforts toward his own goals and he richly compensated his cooperative favorites.[16] The proper introduction of matters for the monarch's attention formed one of the community's long-established language practices. Mary Wroth's letters to Sir Edward Conway, for example, demonstrate the indirect method by which she must petition the king to attenuate her various debts: "I ame therfor now most ernestly to desire you to procure mee the kings hand once againe. . . I humbly beseech his Majesties protection."[17] My attention to Wroth's words in her letters and, no less, in her poetry will aim to examine her writing as it reveals the literacy practices of a discourse community. More precisely, I am looking to Mary Wroth's writing in order to determine the boundary lines of the discourse community, to account for her excommunication from the court society by speculating where she exceeded the community's linguistic, social and ideological limits.

1. POET PREMIÈRE: WROTH AS INSIDER

Wroth's work provides clear displays of her membership in the court discourse community. Her irreproachable qualifications as a member of the period's *literati* included familial connections, a proper classical education, and her participation in the discourse practices of the community. As several dedications to Wroth, in her role as literary patron, testify, she was identified even after marriage as a Sidney.[18] Josephine Roberts includes in her biographical narrative of Wroth the following passage from Henry Peacham's Compleat Gentleman (1622), which accompanies Wroth's Sidneian coat of arms:

> This forme of bearing, is tearmed a Lozenge, and is proper to women neuer marryed, or to such in courtesie as are borne Ladies; who though they be marryed to Knights, yet they are commonly stiled and called after the Sirname of their fathers, if he be an Earle; for the greater Honour must euer extinguish the lesse: for example, the bearer hereof is the Lady *Mary Sidney*, the late wife of Sir *Robert Wroth* Knight, and daughter of the right Honourable, *Robert* Lord *Sidney* of *Penshurst*, Viscount *Lisle*, Earle of *Leicester*, and companion of the most noble Order of the Garter, who seemeth by her late published *Urania* an inheritrix of the Divine wit of her immor-[19]

The social value of Wroth's entitlement to the Sidney name cannot be underestimated, since it gathered strength not only from her uncle Philip but from his two siblings, Wroth's aunt Mary Herbert, Countesse of Pembroke, and her own father Robert, mentioned in the passage above.

Wroth's intimate association with Queen Anne and her participation in two of Ben Jonson's court masques, the Masque of Blackness and the Masque of Beauty,

further solidify her identification with the court inner circle. Wroth has been noted for calling attention to her court affiliations:

> When her sonnets were published at the end of Urania in 1621, they would have reminded her readers of her history as a performer in two visual spectacles of James's court. . . . Her references to blackness and night intertwine her poetic structures with Jonson's script and Inigo Jones's designs. As a poetic parallel to their Neoplatonic architecture, Wroth's corona of sonnets to Love links her to the king and to his court artists.[20]

Wroth's sonnet "Like to the Indians" recalls her roles as an Ethiopian maiden and a "daughter of Niger" in its use of blackness as an outward sign:[21]

> Like to the Indians, scorched with the sunne,
> The sunn which they doe as theyr God adore
> Soe ame I us'd by love,
> ....
> Better are they who thus to blacknes runn,
> And soe can only whitenes want deplore
> Then I who pale, and white ame with griefs store,
> ....
> Then lett mee weare the marke of Cupids might
> In hart as they in skin of Phoebus light[22]

Here the poet envies the black-skinned "Indians" their outward marks of devotion to a sun-God, since the poet has no such sign or proof of her similar devotion to Love. Wroth's editor explicitly footnotes this poem as a reference to Jonson's masque; the correspondence noted, although persuasive, suggests that Wroth made no distinctions between dark-skinned Indians and Africans, nor did she accurately understand their theologies. Yet such a representation would seem to reflect the views of the "exotic" generally held by the discourse community.[23] The use of "night" imagery, however, a

more tenuous reminder of masque performances,[24] fulfills a very different function in Wroth's poetry, connoting images of sadness, isolation, and "dark" inner emotions.

Wroth's frequent embrace of "night" in the sonnets of Pamphilia to Amphilanthus serves to connect her with the court community in a less obvious way than does "blackness" in referring to masque performances. Night is "Most blessed" as "the happy time for love/ The shade for Lovers,/ and theyr loves delight";[25] for a distraught lover, Night is welcomed for its emotional resonance:

> Night, welcome art thou to my mind destrest
>   Darke, heavy, sad, yett nott more sad then I
>   Never could'st thou find fitter company
>   For thine owne humor then I thus oprest.
>
> ....
>
> Then now in friendship joine with haples mee,
>   Who ame as sad, and dark as thou canst bee
>   Hating all pleasure, or delight of lyfe;
>
> Silence, and griefe, with thee I best doe love
>   And from you three, I know I can nott move,
>   Then lett is live companions without strife.[26]

This sonnet not only alludes to a passage from Sidney's Astrophil and Stella which depicts Night, Silence and Grief as companions, but presses upon the reader Pamphilia's unvarying state of melancholy, Night's "owne humour."[27] While sadness comes to mind as a natural emotion for a spurned lover, Wroth's use of melancholia arguably "belongs to a prestigious Jacobean discourse: the theory and practice of melancholy."[28] Melancholy represented the temperament of the witty intellectual and manifested itself in

a marked disdain for social entertainment, an attitude typified by Wroth's sonnet "When everyone to pleasing pastime hies":

> When others hunt, my thoughts I have in chase;
> If hauke, my minde att wished end doth fly,
> Discourse, I with my spiritt tauke, and cry
> While others, musique choose as greatest grace.[29]

Pamphilia's tears signify her seriousness, facilitating Wroth's participation in the discourse of the high-minded as she simultaneously establishes the merit of her heroine.[30] The unrelenting tone of melancholy throughout Pamphilia to Amphilanthus, often a strain on the sonnets' narrative plausibility, thus becomes legible as Wroth's marker of privileged discourse, of her participation in the court discourse community.

Robert Burton's massive The Anatomy of Melancholy (1621) might well demonstrate the fevered interest in melancholic temperament during this period. Burton's manuscripts no longer exist, so little is known of the book's manuscript circulation history; its printing, however, was an immediate success and Burton followed the publication with four subsequent editions, each revised and appended.[31] The three volumes of The Anatomy lend a rich context to Wroth's sonnets, particularly the First Partition, which discusses "Causes," and the Third Partition, devoted almost entirely to "Love-Melancholy." [32] Burton provides more than enough reasons for a person like Mary Wroth to diagnose herself melancholic: at fault may be "Passions and Perturbations of the Mind," "The Force of the Imagination," "Sorrow," "Shame and Disgrace," or perhaps most assuredly for an educated woman writer, "Love of Learning, or overmuch

Study. With a Digression of the Miseries of Scholars, and why the Muses are Melancholy." "Witches and magicians" may be responsible, too, a plight Pamphilia appears to suffer: "Alas I ame possesst," she writes, in "Good now bee still, and doe nott mee torment."[33]

No shortage of melancholic language exists in Wroth's sonnets, reaching an apotheosis of misery in "Bee you all pleas'd?":

> Lett sad misfortune, haples mee destroy,
> Leave crosses to rule mee, and still rule free,
> While all delights theyr contrairies imploy
> To keepe good back, and I butt torments see,
> Joyes are beereav'd, harmes doe only tarry;
> Dispaire takes place, disdaine hath gott the hand;
> Yett firme love holds my sences in such band
> As since dispis'ed, I with sorrow marry;
> Then if with griefe I now must coupled bee
> Sorrow I'le wed: Dispaire thus governs mee.[34]

Wroth's language here glorifies suffering as she embraces "sad misfortune." Rather than remain a passive victim of her tormentor, Love, Pamphilia welcomes her sorrowful condition and takes on a dauntless quality in the process. "Heroical Love causing Melancholy," as Burton terms such a position, "is more eminent above the rest, and properly called love. [It is] called heroical, because commonly gallants, noblemen, and the most generous spirits are possessed with it."[35] Burton further notes that heroical melancholy affects the liver, causing paleness,[36] a state which Pamphilia describes in her "Indians" sonnet: " I who pale, and white ame with griefs store."[37] Rather than

rendering her pathetic, the discourse of melancholy speaks through Pamphila as a manifestation of both courage and nobility.

In establishing herself within the discourse community, Wroth did not rely exclusively on indirect references to her family or depend upon a fashionable melancholic image; her education prepared her to utilize literary conventions that would implicitly signify her status as a member of an elite community. Her brief poem, "Stay mine eyes, these floods of teares," from the first part of the Urania, takes as its central image the classical lament of Niobe:

> Stay mine eyes, these floods of teares
> Seeme but follies weakely growing,
> Babes nurse such wayling beares,
> Frowardnesse such drops bestowing:
> But *Niobe* must shew my fate,
> She wept and griev'd herself a state.
>
> My sorrowes like her Babes appeare
> Daily added by increasing;
> She lost them, I loose my Deare,
> Not one spar'd from woes ne're ceasing:
> She made a rock, heaven drops downe teares,
> Which pitie shewes, and on her weares.[38]

The speaker of this poem, Pamphilia's friend and rival Antissia, compares her self-righteous tears to the tears of Niobe, whose children were slain as a result of her own pride. Antissia's lament, unlike Pamphilia's, involves a recognition of her "follie," a pathetic and unworthy state of grief.

In selecting the image of Niobe, Wroth recycles a classroom exercise well-known to any pupil of humanist tutors. The Agricolan texts used almost universally by humanist teachers required students to reproduce familiar models of classical rhetoric, including the "highly emotionally-charged, imagined first-person speech (*ethopoeia* or *allocutio*) [of] Niobe's lament for her slaughtered children."[39] Rhetorical models like Niobe's lament thus become familiar tropes to writers of Renaissance poetry and literary prose:

> The idea of the exercises is to produce a total routineness of imaginative writing by reducing its variety systematically to a sequence of specified types of verbal composition, including both narrative forms and argument forms. Each type is expected to become second nature to the student.[40]

That Wroth considered the poem in Niobe's image "almost banal," as it came to be as a result of "intensive classroom-drilling,"[41] seems a strong possibility. The poem is spoken by Pamphilia's rival in love, does not fit the form of sonnet or even a carefully-constructed song, and is deemed afterward "unfashionable" by the narrator.[42] Despite the piece's dissatisfactory qualities from Wroth's standpoint, the casual use of Niobe's lament testifies to her familiarity and comfort in the discourse of the humanist schoolroom.

Wroth thoroughly displays her adeptness with the conventions of her literary predecessors, and hence her solid grasp of the materials of an elite literacy. Like Spenser and Sidney, she appropriates the pastoral with a distinctly aristocratic flair; in the song, "The spring now come att last" from Pamphilia to Amphilanthus, a shepherdess

prepares to compose poetry on the bark of a tree before succumbing to death, "Kil'd with unkind dispaire"[43] for her lost love. The speaker addresses the willow tree which will shelter her through her final days, taking on the tree's branches and neighboring flowers as her mourning attire so that she may, as she says, "weare/ My fortune":[44]

> This barck my booke shall bee
> Wher dayly I will wright
> This tale of haples mee
> True slave to fortunes spight[45]

The shepherdess clothes herself with a headdress (of branches), embroidery (of garlands) and the testimonial verses, three items certainly more familiar to an aristocratic body than to a real herder of sheep. Furthermore, the bark/book as a material sign of literacy plays an essential role in the poem's story; the lines of verse are to function as the speaker's epitaph, "If some such lover come/ Who may them right conseave,/ And place them on my tombe."[46] Wroth's pastoral takes its cues from the Renaissace literary tradition, employing a Petrarchan discourse to invoke the rhetorical position of the isolated, absented, noble lover.[47]

Wroth's compositions represent early modern intertextuality at its finest, taking every opportunity to incorporate well-known Renaissance *topos* and to display a knowledge of classical sources and forms. In titling her major works, the author inextricably inserts herself into the Sidneian canon, making it impossible for the reader to ignore the texts' literal and figurative kinship to her uncle's Astrophil and Stella and The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia. Wroth's imitation of her uncle's possibly

unintentional trademark in the Arcadia, an unfinished final line, indelibly impresses upon the reader her position as Sidney's "inheritrix." Both Pamphilia to Amphilanthus and The Countesse of Montgomeries Urania begin with poems alluding to classical literary influences: the sonnet sequence with a Petrarchan *inamoramento*; the romance with an Ovidian complaint. In "A Crowne of Sonetts dedicated to Love," Wroth engages in intertextual discourse through both form and content.[48] While the first sonnet of Wroth's "Crowne" indirectly pays tribute to Robert Sidney by suggesting the myth of Ariadne and the thread, which he had also chosen for his song Pastoral 9,[49] Wroth chooses a Petrarchan metaphor as a framework for the sequence:

> In this strang labourinth how shall I turne?
> Wayes are on all sids while the way I miss:[50]

Petrarch's Rime includes the labyrinth of love, an image which was subsequently popular with Elizabethan sonneteers.[51] Wroth's success with the *corona* thus places her in the company of the finest poets of the preceding generation, a position she reinscribes by integrating throughout her poetry intertextual references to Petrarch and to classical mythology, discourses well-recognized by the discourse community.

The final mark of Wroth's inclusion as a member of the court discourse community is her participation in the practice of manuscript circulation which constituted the community's most vital discursive forum. Most scholars of Wroth take for granted such circulation of her poetry (although not necessarily her romance): Margaret Patterson Hannay writes, "as was fashionable in the court, her other work [besides the first part of

the Urania] circulated in manuscript";[52] Josephine Roberts states, "As early as 1613, Lady Mary's poems were being read in manuscript by her friends".[53] Jeff Masten, however, interprets Pamphilia to Amphilanthus as an encoded refusal to circulate on Wroth's part, a withdrawal, he argues, from "the traffic in women."[54] Masten produces an impressive reading of this text and the Urania by linking Wroth's obsession with constancy and chastity (couched in Petrarchan imagery) to an emerging bourgeois humanist subjectivity, a position for women which entails both discreteness and discretion.

While Masten's reading of Pamphilia deepens our understanding of Wroth's fascinating position as an early modern woman, his argument demands that we accept Pamphilia to Amphilanthus as a private text: "That the [Folger] manuscript contains alterations in Wroth's hand and lacks a dedication and title-page suggests that it was a fair copy for her own use, not a presentation copy."[55] Masten approaches the 1621 publication of the Urania as a complex, necessary disclosure, an "assert[ion] in order to register submission," yet he maintains that the "almost inscrutabl[y] private language" of Pamphilia to Amphilanthus certifies its disconnection from other readers.[56] I appreciate Masten's careful attention to the publication history of the text, and this part of his argument is the only point I challenge. His own description of the Pamphilia to Amphilanthus Folger manuscript takes issue with a critical tendency to condense the differently-grouped sonnets into a single work. Yet the intriguing collection of the poems in one spot in fact suggests that they had been separately grouped before; Masten

suggests that lack of public markings in this text proves it didn't circulate, but it certainly does raise the possibility that several other separate texts which did circulate no longer exist.

Masten must maintain that the notably public form of the sonnet sequence was subverted by Wroth for her own ends, but the same textual grounds support the opposing position: Wroth's sequence functioned as a plea to the court for an end to her exclusion from the society.[57] "I should nott have bin made this stage of woe," Pamphilia protests,

> Wher sad disasters have theyr open showe
> O noe, more pitty hee had sure beestow'd.[58]

Here Wroth seems to refer to the unfortunate publicity her affair with William Herbert has received, claiming in effect that his blatant mistreatment necessitates her own form of defense. Like the Countess of Pembroke's circulation of her English Psalms, Wroth probably participated in what Harold Love calls "serial composition," or the polishing and personalizing of texts continually revised within the system of scribal publication. Much of Wroth's poetry aptly fits Love's similie likening serial composition to improvisational music: the writer is like a musician playing variations on a favorite tune.[59]

2. POET DEVIANT: WROTH AS OUTSIDER

Wroth's texts insurrect as often as they conform to discourse conventions. Her decisions to write sonnet sequences and romance reflect an odd affinity with the past, since both of these Elizabethan forms were out of fashion by 1620.[60] While these choices may suggest Wroth's heavy reliance on family traditions to bolster her own credibility, they may also signify a reluctance to let go of older forms because of the untapped potential for mutation and transformation. Pamphilia has been called "fundamentally an Elizabethan heroine":

> not only because she is modeled after Queen Elizabeth [does she earn this designation], but because through her Wroth evolved a feminine perspective on themes, images, and genres that defined the literature of the preceding era. Wroth's references to the past also indicate closure, the final evolution of the female hero whose poetic beginnings may be seen in the Countess of Pembroke's Clorinda and Elizabeth.[61]

The risk run by Wroth in choosing older themes may have been outweighed in her mind by the chance to make a meaningful and contiguous contribution to the forms developed and honed by her literary mentors. She chose to pursue these themes despite knowing that some would judge romance improper for a woman.[62] At worst, then, her work might be considered inferior to her predecessors, a risk undertaken by all aspiring writers.

According to available evidence, Wroth's participation in traditionally masculine, if old-fashioned, discursive forms won her more praise than censure. Ben Jonson pronounced her worthy to bear the name of Sidney in his Epigram 103, and

dedicated to her his play The Alchemist (1612). In "A Sonnet, to the noble Lady, the Lady MARY WROTH," Jonson writes,

> I that have beene a lover, and could shew it,
> Though not in these, in rithmes not wholly dumbe,
> Since I exscribe your Sonnets, am become
> A better lover, and much better Poet.[63]

William Drummond, George Chapman, John Davies of Hereford, George Wither, Joshua Sylvester and two unknown verse-writers each praised Wroth by name for her poetic talents and her "Noble mynde."[64] Wroth's supposed "cross-dressing as a male sonneteer"[65] may have intensified a general disapproval of her by some, but history shows she was not penalized by the discourse community strictly for writing as a woman. Her choice of traditional Elizabethan themes may in fact have mitigated the potential threat she posed to ambitious new male writers.

Wroth's genre selection posed a more serious threat for readers whose expectations were violated by her content. "Generic expectations are not easily foiled," writes Jennifer Lee Carrell:

> insofar as it is a roman à clef, the Urania is for the most part a distorted reflection of her own family affairs, not an accurate portrait of public scandals. [...] The response. . . to Wroth's fiction suggests that what Jacobean male readers looked for in a romance was not, in fact, fiction, but fact dressed up as fiction, and dressed up in such a way that it could be readily stripped of its costume, so that the reader could stare at the naked truth.[66]

Carrell makes an important observation about Wroth's literary reception. Despite its obvious linkage to Sidney's Arcadia, the Urania was not read by all as antiquated

Elizabethan romance, but as a particularly perplexing type of the newly-fashionable roman à clef. Unlike other examples of the genre, Wroth's work failed to provide a key for matching characters with their real-life counterparts and it maddeningly refused to operate as a transparent account of court intrigues.[67] The misreading of genre, perhaps on Wroth's part as much as on the part of her readers, thus functioned as an act of transgression against the norms of the discourse community.

The lone violation of genre expectations, a troubling matter for courtly readers, may not have been sufficient as grounds for Wroth's expulsion from the court community. Compounding the matter was Wroth's personal life. Although there is some suggestion that Wroth may have lost Queen Anne's favor before her widowhood due to jealously over their mutual interest in William Herbert,[68] the deaths of Wroth's husband and son over a two-year period left her in the most precarious of social and economic situations. As a widow with no children to inherit her husband's estate, Wroth left her family-of-marriage alienated from one-third of their land in tenancy, which she would take on as her dower; dispersed holdings, moreover, were not in the best interest of the Crown, the ultimate landlord.[69] Wroth represented an individual burden to the Crown, since she was left not only without means of support but with a huge pile of debt to bear. Through none of her own volition, Wroth revealed the tenuous power of a woman to disrupt the English inheritance system.

Her unintentional obstruction of the conventional flow of money and power through land holdings became reprehensible to the discourse community when Wroth further muddied the situation by bearing children out of wedlock. In a rare reference to her second son, William Herbert (named after his father), Wroth's father Robert Sidney writes in a letter to her mother, "You have don very well in putting Wil away, for it had bin to greate a shame he should have stayde in the hous."[70] William Herbert (Senior) had been imprisoned in 1601 for refusing to marry the mother of another child he had fathered; while the Jacobean court community certainly tolerated its share of scandal (Herbert regained his favor), Wroth ventures to remark on this dangerous topic in her poetry. Wroth's poetry has been described as devoid of blazon and noticeably lacking many references to the material world, calling attention to its own absences and the "violent omissions" of things which cannot be said.[71] But if motherhood is not featured among her recurrent themes, Wroth did poignantly compose one sonnet about the all-too-real consequences of romantic entanglements.

Much of Wroth's supposed silence about her circumstances may be explained by her melancholic preoccupations; the birth of illegitimate children would simply exacerbate her social "misfortune," a position she repeatedly embraces. Yet a reexamination of Wroth's Sonnet "Faulce hope" provides a singular instance of Wroth's reflection on the predicament of the unwed mother. Commonly thought to draw on the unusual image of miscarriage, the sonnet opens,

> Faulce hope which feeds butt to destroy, and spill
> What itt first breeds; unaturall to the birth
> Of thine owne wombe; conceaving butt to kill,
> And plenty gives to make the greater dearth.[72]

Recovery of the seventeenth-century meanings of Wroth's words "spill," "breed," and "unnatural" indicate that she is referring to the dashed hopes she had for marriage to the father of her children, now metaphorically dead due to their legal and social non-existence. "Spill," according to the OED, not only means "to destroy or put an end to (life)," as the miscarriage image must adopt, but could also mean, "To destroy, ruin or overthrow (a person); to bring to ruin or misery," "To injure in respect of character; to spoil morally," or "To spoil by injuring or damaging in some way; to render imperfect or useless; to destroy the good ness or value of (a thing)," definitions which were all in use at the time of Wroth's writing. "Breed," in turn, suggested "To produce," and "To educate, tutor, bring up," as it is used both in Thomas Powell's book ("a pretty way of breeding young Maides") and in the mothers' legacies (Elizabeth Richardson refers to giving her daughters "the best breeding in my power"). Wroth thus alludes here to a hope painfully unfulfilled because the child(ren) on which this hope is pinned are fed and nurtured by the mother and still denied paternal legitimacy. Having placed herself in the vulnerable position of being William Herbert's mistress, Wroth longs for the legitimacy and commitment children might have summoned in their relationship.

The image of the miscarriage, I submit, is significantly less dramatic than Wroth intends in this sonnet. "Unnatural," according to the OED, was used as late as

1570 to mean "Illegitimate; having no natural right or claim," and is noted from a Sidneian context in the Arcadia (Act I, scene one) to mean "At variance with what is natural, usual, or to be expected; unusual, strange." Wroth's hope/child is "unaturall to thine owne wombe," signifying the unusual relationship between mother and child even as it invokes the father as the expected or naturally-claimed correlate of the two. The stanza's final line then becomes comprehensible as a reference to Wroth's multiple births; "plenty" has no distictive meaning in the context of the miscarriage image. Wroth uses the second and third quatrains to play a variation on the theme of dashed hopes with the common metaphor of Love as Tyrant; hope becomes like a Machiavellian "tirant" who deceives with false appearance.[73] The sonnet's syntactically dense, concluding couplet emphatically expresses Pamphilia's chagrin and humiliation: "For hope deluding brings us to the pride/ Of our desires the farder downe to slide."[74] Thus couched in a few lines of a sonnet buried within the first sequence of Pamphilia to Amphilanthus lies Wroth's lamentation of the high-priced gamble she has played in an effort to win commitment from her lover. Such an admission presumably proved highly disruptive within the norms of the court discourse community.

3. VICTIM, REBEL OR UNWITTING ASSISTANT: WROTH'S OWN ROLE IN HER EXCOMMUNICATION

We do not know whether or not the 1621 printing of Wroth's works, complete with illustrated title-page, was commissioned by her or undertaken with her

consent. Financial necessity may have prompted Wroth to publish part one of the Urania,[75] and such a suspicion squares with Harold Love's contention that "much author publication was really a form of begging," since the source of revenue would involve new prospects for patronage rather than profits from the sale of the book.[76] That Wroth needed the money is indisputable. Her method of fundraising, if it was intended, would have been considered distasteful if not vulgar by members of the court discourse community. Regardless of the degree of her involvement in the book's publication, Wroth was held responsible for the indecorous action of publishing.

Adding literal insult to injury, the book was (mis)read by many courtiers as roman à clef, placing Wroth in the role of public gossip. Edward Denny led various nobles in an attack against her for presumably defaming his character, although Denny succeeded only in fingering himself for posterity, since no other presumed real-life counterparts for Urania's characters announced themselves in writing.[77] Calling Wroth an "Hermaphrodite in show, in deed a monster,"[78] Denny's slur rebukes Wroth for violating gender norms in writing. Denny makes clear that in publishing the book, Wroth oversteps a courtly line of propriety: "For my own part Madame," he wrote in a letter to Wroth, "I could have borne your trampling uppon me or any other disgrace that had not produced me as a scorn to the eyes of my dread and dear soveraigne and master."[79] Tattle-tale manuscripts may have been a naughty indulgence for courtiers, but exposing others before the king was serious business.

In a letter written some months after the book went on sale to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham and favorite of James I, Wroth defended herself from the social scandal, professing that

> the[se] strang constructions. . . are made of my booke contrary to my imagination, and as farr from my meaning as is possible for truth to bee from conjecture, my purpose noe way bent to give the least cause of offence. [...] ([The books] from the first were solde against my minde I never purposing to have had them published).[80]

Wroth insisted that her book was misread and she denied that she ever intended to publish it. If such excuses are true, then Wroth's excommunication from court society came through no little doing of her own; seduced and abandoned by the rakish William Herbert, her work was unjustly wrested from her control and then misconstrued by its readers. In this version of events, Mary Wroth falls victim to the discourse community as it polices its own boundary lines.

Yet perhaps the excuses Wroth offers to the Duke of Buckingham simply reflect her need to disown any wrongdoing in the face of growing opposition. She may have gravely underestimated the furor her stories would cause, feeling that the characters were sufficiently fictionalized, rashly entering print in anticipation of widespread fame and recognition. In this scenario, Wroth provokes her expulsion from the discourse community by adopting behaviors that exceed the current limits, perhaps naively disregarding these limits or perhaps purposely rejecting them. Dejected over her failed romance, Wroth may have chosen to flaunt her already-established position as a social

outsider, a former favorite now fallen out of royal graces. A sonnet from Pamphilia to Amphilanthus (three poems after "Faulce hope"), addresses Pamphilia's sense of alienation:

> What pleasure can a bannish'd creature have
> In all the pastimes that invented arr
> By witt or learning, absence making warr
> Against all peace that may a biding crave;
> Can wee delight butt in a wellcome grave
> Wher wee may bury paines, and soe bee farr
> From lothed company who allways jarr
> Upon the string of mirthe that pastime gave;
> The knowing part of joye is deem'd the hart;
> If that bee gon, what joy can joy impart
> When senceless is the feeler of our mirthe;
> Noe, I ame bannish'd and no good shall find
> Butt all my fortunes must with mischief bind
> Who butt for miserie did gaine a birth.[81]

The speaker in the poem takes on banishment as a form of identity, as both a descriptor ("a bannish'd creature") and a predicate of her existence ("I ame bannish'd"). Nowhere does Pamphilia specify the person(s) from whom she is exiled, but she assimilates and mirrors the behavior by rejecting other "lothed company," preferring to be dead. She is compelled to "mischief," reversing the blame for such a course of action. "Birth" here may be understood literally, indicating her illegitimate child(ren). If Wroth meant to expose such sentiments, thinly veiled, to a public audience, she may be contesting her membership in the discourse community. Rather than remaining outside as "a pretender or a beginner" to the discourse,[82] Wroth performs her own excommunication through a rejection of the community's practices. Such as a rejection occurs, I suggest, when a

member's ideological views develop in a direction at odds with the larger community; such an individual may no longer "participate comfortably in the community's work".[83] Wroth had grounds for ideological dissent, since her status as a courtier was presumably affected by her widowhood, her motherhood, and most unfairly, her poverty.

A third version of events suggests a less tidy picture than the former possibilities featuring Wroth as either victim or rebel. The traditions of the pastoral romance and the first-person sonnet sequence included authorial disclosures; Wroth's Pamphilia stands in good company with Sidney's Philisides and Spenser's Colin Clout. Personal disclosures were likewise expected from authors within the rhetorical context of scribal publication. "The ruling decorum of print," writes Harold Love,

> was essentially that which governed the public utterances of gentlemen. [...] Scribal publication, since it would not normally come to the eyes of inferiors and was in most cases anonymous, offered much more latitude.[84]

Love argues, reasonably, that authors scripted their texts to conform with the conventions of their intended medium. For Wroth, the nature of the romance would have virtually dictated that its medium remain the circulated manuscript. Yet the removal of such manuscripts from private control was not unheard-of:

> even the existence of Draconian punishments for involvement in the print-publishing of heterodox or treasonable books was not sufficient to prevent the production of dissident texts, either by courageous, ideologically committed printers and booksellers or for under-the-counter sale at a high mark-up by the trade at large.[85]

Although the Urania was not of overt political interest, Wroth's writing may have tempted printers into publishing an unauthorized edition for two reasons: it successfully captured the look and feel of revered Elizabethan pastorals, an image on which the printers capitalized through the title-page illustration; and as a reluctant roman à clef, the work promised potentially interesting revelations about the court community. Wroth may have felt flattered by the public interest, tacitly approving the publication, but the printing of her work ultimately served as a catalyst for her social expulsion from the court.[86]

Lady Mary Wroth and the texts she produced presented the court discourse community with a problematic case. Despite a natural and nurtured identity as a Jacobean courtier, Wroth rendered herself inadmissible when she exceeded the limits of the society's conventional practices of literacy. Wroth agitated the court community in three identifiable ways: she took social risks that left her vulnerable to authority, she wrote texts that both enticed and frustrated courtly readers, and she violated the standards of elite discretion by publishing. If little historical certainty about her intentions exists, the events of 1621 still testify to the power of social convention. Wroth's practice of literacy demonstrates that a writer can establish social solidarity and signify a social identity through text. Yet the act of producing text simultaneously threatens a writer with social betrayal, carrying within words and discourse structures the power to permanently disenfranchise, to impose a future sentence of silence.

4. POLICING THE BOUNDARIES OF UNIVERSITY DISCOURSE COMMUNITIES

As female courtiers during the reign of James I, the noblewomen surrounding Queen Anne, including Mary Wroth, were "under pressure constantly to flirt and yet to avoid scandal," a position which "involved many rounds of Hobson's choices, perils of non-functional self-imaging, and risks of being denounced for just what one was pressured from all sides to do."[87] The nearly universal manifestation of first-year composition as a required course places students in a similar, no-win situation: forced to assume an authorial writing position, students are then submitted to scrutiny for inadequacies in this performance. University discourse communities police the boundaries of academe by means of first-year composition, which effectively screens students, and by identifying students in need of special writing remediation even prior to composition class through placement processes (timed essay-writing and/or standardized test scores). Placement essays embody the initial college performance-of-identity literacy practice.

Placement arguably *produces* a population of "deficient" student writers.[88] Because school-directed placement assumes a skills model of literacy -- metaphorically, literacy-as-entity -- many students remain stuck in the track they have been assigned at a much earlier stage in their formal educations. Non-voluntarily placing students in remedial or basic composition courses often reproduces social inequities:

> The outcome of functional priorities is that students who enter school already practicing the uses of language sanctioned by schools move ahead, whereas those who happen to use less prestigious dialects of English or come from homes where the activities of reading and writing are not particularly valued are channelled [sic] into remedial or vocational programs. This sorting system is then rationalized by the testing industry. . . . In this fashion, schools maintain the status quo, albeit at the cost of leaving unfulfilled their extravagant promises of offering opportunity for all students to reach their intellectual potential.[89]

Students lack power and control over their positions vis-à-vis the academy, adopting a complex combination of roles as victim, rebel or unwitting assistant, depending on their performance in the placement setting. While such a bleak situation has resulted in some schools eliminating required composition altogether, thus rejecting the entire framework of composition-as-discourse-police, a less drastic solution involves returning some control over identity-formation to students.

"Directed self-placement" as described by its innovators in the September 1998 issue of College Composition and Communication, allows students to choose regular or accelerated first-year writing sequences based on their own evaluation of course demands and individual preparedness to meet these requirements. Giving students an opportunity to assess their own needs "fosters the disposition characteristic of genuine learning and offers an invitation to academic community as opposed to establishing from the get-go that teachers are going to take over control of student learning."[90] Crucial to the process is the provision of fair and accurate descriptions of course demands and a useful series of statements designed to assist students in self-assessment, examples of which include "'I read newspapers and magazines regularly'/

'Generally I don't read when I don't have to,'" and "'I have used computers for drafting and revising essays'/ 'I've used computers, but not often for writing and revising,'" plus generalized GPA and test-score gauges.[91] Participating in such an assessment process allows students to conceive of writing as a contextualized literacy practice. Rather than designating a minimum literacy "level" to which they will aspire, directed self-placement asks students to choose how much time they will spend working on their performance of academic discourse, with the acknowledgement that absolute standards of evaluation will be applied to this performance.

If the history of Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth, functions as a cautionary tale, directed self-placement offers an encouraging alternative for students working within a discourse-community system where standards will be enforced and where literacy practices will play out as performances of identity. "It pleases students to know that they are in charge of their own learning. It may be the most important message they receive at freshman orientation. It also puts some pressure on them -- pressure that rightly belongs to them," contend advocates of this method.[92] If ambitious students place themselves into writing courses for which they are inadequately prepared, the chance is theirs to affirm the potential they have declared. Required, self-directed composition permits the academy to extend its prerogative in policing discourse boundaries even as it offers students a role in determining their own relationship to this community.

Yet placement procedures constitute only the first of many challenges for student writers. As I discussed at the close of the second chapter, students are encouraged to (and often enthused about) writing within and against the dominant discourses of academic disciplines. One particularly vexing problem for student writers, especially in the absence of a safe space for experimentation and negotiation, is the management of personal expression. Writing practices are performances of identity, yet the most tangible aspects of identity, the most personal experiences and feelings, are those most often prohibited within formal discourse. Certainly Mary Wroth's most harmful indiscretions (literally, those things kept not-separated) were her admissions of the personal in her formal poetry: her experience of unwed motherhood, her feelings of unrequited love for a cousin, her experience of rejection by friends and acquaintances. Even when personal expression is requested by members of authority in a discourse community, for example, by expressivist composition instructors, it is often no less difficult to manage successfully:

> If the student. . . writes a rather clichéd and conventional essay on her parents' divorce, perhaps it has nothing to do with not knowing how to write a more creative, "better" essay -- perhaps she simply doesn't want to talk about this experience to her teacher and hoped the culturally available rote story of divorce which makes it sound like every other divorce would suffice for "autobiography."[93]

Requests for personal writing in academic settings are few, however. More frequent is the urge felt by a student to employ personal expression because these ideas feel

important and have made a valuable difference in the writer's processing of class material.

Students committed to joining academic discourse communities (as directed self-placement facilitates) can use communal safe spaces as sites for negotiating a writing practice that remains personally meaningful while adhering to discourse conventions. Collaborative writing groups, whether in the classroom setting or under the auspices of a writing center, offer students an opportunity to work within a critical community of readers and writers. Collaborative writing uses as its theoretical basis a combination of Lev Vygotsky's notion of language as the carrier of thought and Richard Rorty's notion of conversation as socially-produced knowledge.[94] By sharing ideas and sharing writing, students' ideas becomes more complicated, more focused, more refined, in short, more valuable in an academic sense. If language plays an instrumental role in thought, then conversation will produce and enable more thinking about ideas students express in texts. The implementation of collaborative learning, however, requires a clear understanding of its differences from cooperative learning, which emphasizes group accountability and cohesion.

Collaborative work not only respects group members' differences, it asks members to exploit such differences in order to produce richer work. Collaboration does not require closure of internal group disagreement. Because collaborative work is skilled, and differs from the cooperative work students may have done in the past, instructors

optimally provide a training period for groups. Students can be given a chance to practice and evaluate skills such as idea generation and constructive affirmation and critique; groups can then appraise their own internal operations. As collaborative group members negotiate working relationships within the group and within the classroom, the source of classroom authority is relocated (at least temporarily) from instructor to individual class members. Students assist each other in conforming to the conventions of the required discourse, which they are often able to read and recognize more easily than write, while preserving a notion of their ideas as intellectually valuable. Collaborative safe spaces help students to move into larger disciplinary communities of informed readership without destroying their personal sensibilities; Mary Wroth lost her membership in the court community as a result of her inability or refusal to negotiate such rhetorical limits.

Risking the personal can be deadly. I might not understand this so clearly had I not once fatally punished a student for this violation. In my first job as a college lecturer after completing my M.A. degree, I taught a composition class which met at the tedious hour of 8:20 a.m. One student in that class appeared to be utterly unaffected by the sleepy atmosphere: an African-American, first-generation college student, a young woman who participated so enthusiastically in every discussion that after the first few meetings I concluded it would be a major task to establish balanced participation in that class. The other, mostly traditional students (young, white, middle-class) seemed embarrassed by her intellectual excitement, since she clearly wasn't aware that a detached, bored demeanor was important for first-semester freshmen. Truthfully, I was

grateful for this student's refreshing enthusiasm and I hoped her presence in class would soften some other students' reserve (or wake them up, at any rate). But I was shocked when I received her first formal writing assignment. I had asked the class, after we read from Machiavelli's The Prince and Lao-Tzu's Tao Te Ching, to use these texts to reflect on the tensions between individual liberty and a stable social order. I had given the usual format stipulations: heading, title, length. Yet other than being type-written, this student's paper respected no conventional academic format. Barely more than a page, the text followed no logical pattern familiar to me and its syntactical structures were deviant at best. Most jarringly, though, the text shouted out personal revelations: punctuated by multiple exclamation points, the student cried out, in fragments and slogans, against the inhumanity of drive-by shootings and random violence in her neighborhood. "Stop the killing!!!," the paper screamed. I had no idea what to make of it. Although she had begun the paper with a reference to Lao-Tzu's epigraphs, the student's subsequent text appeared to be written in a cultural code to which I had no key.

Rather than proceed by penciling in numerous corrections and comments, as was my habit with student papers at the time, I wrote at the end of the text, "F. Please see me during office hours." But I never saw this student again. I was told by our department head that she paid him an irate visit over the matter, but that when she showed him the returned essay, he advised her to "work it out" with me. As a scholarship winner and an academic achiever at her former high school, she was probably just as shocked to read my response as I was to read her paper. I can't blame her for not

wanting to consult with me over the matter, since I had expressed my judgment in such final and unequivocal terms: "F." I failed three other students on that paper, all of whom continued to struggle through the semester. I have no way of knowing what other factors may have been operating in this student's decision to leave the college. But I am left with the realization that I effectively excommunicated a person for exposing too much of herself in the wrong context, with the wrong language, with the wrong punctuation. I acted as policewoman protecting the boundaries of my academic community from illegal discourse, with the sanction of my department and of the college.

The class reading obviously spoke to this student; she made relevant to her own experience the enigmatic ideas of an eastern Chinese philosopher in a way no one else had. So why did I essentially end her brief foray into higher education? I didn't know how to accommodate this highly personal text into the academic framework in which I had been so finely schooled myself. I would behave differently now, I hope. My exposure to composition theories concerning underprepared students and the initiation function of first-year writing courses has helped me to understand why and how such situations arise. I am more clearly able to see how my own cultural upbringing made my transition to academic life as a freshman relatively easy, and acknowledge the formerly invisible cultural practices which make that transition less simple for other students. I would recognize the importance of a safe space for such students; handed the same paper again, I would refrain from assigning any grade until I could establish a dependable safe

space for my student to begin negotiating her way through standard academic conventions.

And what about relating this personal experience in a doctoral dissertation? What are the risks for me as a graduate student writer, an apprentice Ph.D.? I am no longer a beginner in this discourse, but my experience at the moment is decidedly within and against, a submission and a resistance. I am adhering to English Studies discourse conventions and yet attempting to break the disciplinary barrier between literacy criticism and composition theory, making matters worse by incorporating a personal story into my formal performance of academic literacy. Would having a safe space to experiment with these risks make a difference? At what point is any writer adequately empowered within his/her discourse community?

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

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[1] Louise Schleiner's study of the court of James I theorizes an *ideologeme* placed in circulation by the king and examines how this ideological system is represented in literary texts of the period. While Schleiner's concerns differ from mine by remaining focused on the particular manifestations of the *ideologeme* in Wroth's writing (rather than on how she managed to fatally transgress discourse practices), her analysis is insightful and detailed and I will refer to it throughout this chapter. See Schleiner, Tudor and Stuart Women Writers (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994) chaps. 5-6.

[2] Sir Philip Sidney, Astrophil and Stella (1598) The Norton Anthology of English Literature Volume I, gen. ed. M.H. Abrams (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Co., 1979) 1.14

[3] Margaret Patterson Hannay, Introduction, "Mary Sidney: Lady Wroth," Women Writers of the Renaissance and Reformation, ed. Katharina M. Wilson (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1987) 552.

[4] James Paul Gee, "Literacy, Discourse and Linguistics: an Introduction," Journal of Education 171.1 (1989) 7.

[5] Patricia Bizzell, Academic Discourse and Critical Consciousness (Pittsburgh and London: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992) 222.

[6] Harold Love discusses "scribal communities," or reading circles in which manuscripts were regularly circulated, naming the court, the college, the county, or the extended family as general examples of such groups. Love provides a brief summary of previous studies on reading circles that center around particular individuals or places, such as the circles of antiquarian researcher William Dugdale, Cheshire squire William Davenport and educationalist Samuel Hartlib. See Love, Scribal Publication in Seventeenth Century England (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) 180-1.

[7] Bizzell 222.

[8] Gee 9.

[9] Schleiner 109, 130-4.

[10] Gee 9-10.

[11] Schleiner contends that James I sought narrower ideological control over his courtiers than did Elizabeth I: "Unlike Queen Elizabeth, who to some extent allowed factions to represent the competing ideologies and economic interests of her subjects and played

them off against each other, King James tried to minimize factions and have all his subjects live under his single fatherly rule, with lines of authority going down through no group powerful enough to challenge him" (150).

[12] Love 208.

[13] Love 209-10.

[14] Love 33.

[15] Josephine A. Roberts traces the popularity of the roman à clef to John Barclay's Latin romance, *Euphormionis Lusinini Satyricon*, dedicated to James I in 1605, and his subsequent *Argenis*, which was translated into English at the king's command and "became extremely popular in the Jacobean court." See Roberts, ed., The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth (Baton Rouge and London: Lousiana State University Press, 1983) 28.

[16] See Schleiner's discussion of "male self-imaging as government and self-propagation" 122-30.

[17] Wroth qtd. in Roberts, Poems 243.

[18] For more on Wroth's public identity as a poet and patron, see Roberts, Poems 14-22.

[19] Peacham qtd. in Roberts, Poems 11. Peacham's praise of Wroth's most notorious work serves to indicate that its reception varied widely; here a reader from outside the borders of the court discourse community noted its "Divine wit" rather than its violations of unwritten rules prohibiting disclosures of members' personal conduct in print.

[20] Ann Rosalind Jones, "Designing Women: The Self as Spectacle in Mary Wroth and Veronica Franco," Reading Mary Wroth: representing alternatives in early modern England, eds. Naomi J. Miller and Gary F. Waller (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991) 144.

[21] Poems are numbered according to Folger manuscript of Pamphilia to Amphilanthus as edited by Josephine A. Roberts .

[22] Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth, The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth, ed. Josephine A. Roberts (Baton Rouge and London: Lousiana State University Press, 1983) P25, ll.1-3, 5-7, 12-13.

[23] Kim F. Hall treats the Masque of Blackness as a text of Jacobean nationalism: "The twin concerns of patriarchy and imperialism meet as Jonson's masque dramatizes the collision of the dark lady tradition with the actual African difference encountered in the quest for empire," a quest which involved numerous other dark-skinned peoples. See Hall, Things of darkness: economies of race and gender in early modern England

(Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995) 129. Schleiner reads this masque and the Masque of Beauty as Queen Anne's attempt to "speak" within the Jacobean *ideologeme* (130-4).

[24] Jones, "Designing" 144.

[25] Wroth P65.

[26] Wroth P43, ll.1-4, 9-14.

[27] Roberts, Poems 109. Roberts refers readers to Astrophil and Stella 96.1-5.

[28] Jones, "Designing" 145. Jones refers readers to Roy Strong, The English Icon: Elizabethan and Jacobean Portraiture (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969) 352.

[29] Wroth P26, ll.9-12.

[30] Lawrence Babb argues that such conceptions of melancholy "appear continually in Elizabethan and early Stuart literature." He defines this melancholy as "a condition which endows one with intellectual acumen and profundity, with artistic ability, sometimes with divine inspiration." See Babb, The Elizabethan Malady: A Study of Melancholy in Elizabethan Literature from 1580-1642 (East Lansing: Michigan State Press, 1951) 175.

[31] Holbrook Jackson, Introduction, The Anatomy of Melancholy: what it is, with all the kinds, causes, symptomes, prognostickes & several cures of it, by Robert Burton (1621; New York: Vintage, 1977) vi, xi.

[32] Burton's book may or may not have influenced Wroth's particular expression. In its rhetorical framework as a Renaissance "Anatomy," we may infer that Burton the scholar compiled and logically ordered the book's content matter, being not himself the source, *sui generis*, of its ideas.

[33] Wroth P52, l.10. Wendy Wall discusses this particular sonnet and its witchcraft implications. See Wall, The Imprint of Gender: authorship and publication in the English Renaissance (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993) 330-38.

[34] Wroth P10, ll.5-14.

[35] Robert Burton, The Anatomy of Melancholy: what it is, with all the kinds, causes, symptomes, prognostickes & several cures of it (1621; New York: Vintage, 1977) Pt.3, 40.

[36] Burton Pt.3, 133.

[37] Wroth P25, l.7.

[38] Wroth U11.

[39] Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, From Humanism to the Humanities: education and the liberal arts in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986) 133.

[40] Grafton and Jardine 131-32.

[41] Grafton and Jardine 132.

[42] Wroth qtd. in Roberts, Poems 154.

[43] Wroth P7, l.47.

[44] Wroth P7, ll.23-4.

[45] Wroth P7, ll.33-6.

[46] Wroth P7, ll.42-4.

[47] For more on Wroth's uniquely feminine use of the pastoral and Petrarchan discourse, see Wall 330-38; Elaine V. Beilin, Redeeming Eve: Women Writers of the English Renaissance (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) ch. 8; Heather Dubrow, Echoes of Desire: English Petrarchism and Its Counterdiscourses (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995); Ann Rosalind Jones, The Currency of Eros: Women's Love Lyric in Europe, 1540-1621 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990); and Carolyn Ruth Swift, "Feminine Identity in Lady Mary Wroth's Urania," English Literary Renaissance 14 (1984) 328-46.

[48] Wroth P77-90. Other English writers of the poetic *corona* included Philip Sidney and Wroth's father, Robert, Samuel Daniel in Delia (1594), George Chapman in "A Coronet for his Mistress Philosophy" (1595) and John Donne in "La Corona," dated circa 1607 See Roberts, Poems 127.

[49] Roberts, Poems 128.

[50] Wroth P77, ll.1-2.

[51] Roberts, Poems 128.

[52] Hannay 551.

[53] Roberts, Poems 44. Roberts cites as evidence for Wroth's circulation practices the praise of her poetry by Joshua Sylvester and Ben Jonson around this time (Poems 18-19).

[54] Masten borrows the phrase from Gayle Rubin's landmark essay, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," Toward an Anthropology of Women, ed. Rayna Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975) 157-210.

[55] Jeff Masten, "'Shall I turne blabb?': Circulation, Gender and Subjectivity in Mary Wroth's Sonnets," Reading Mary Wroth: representing alternatives in early modern England, eds. Naomi J. Miller and Gary F. Waller (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991) 69.

[56] Masten 84, 67.

[57] Jones, "Designing" 137. On the public nature of the sonnet sequence, Masten cites Arthur F. Marotti, "'Love is not love': Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences and the Social Order," English Literary History 49 (1982) 399.

[58] Wroth P48, ll.12-14.

[59] Love 54.

[60] For more about the effects and consequences of Wroth's choosing "worn-out forms," see Beilin 213-14.

[61] Beilin 242-43.

[62] Schleiner suggests that Wroth's relationship with the politically influential Herbert provided her some license: "Presumably some aspects of her (for a woman) highly unusual motivation for belletristic writing came from her closeness -- emotional, physical, political -- to the head of the [Pembroke] faction" (156).

[63] Ben Jonson qtd. in Roberts, Poems 59, ll. 1-4.

[64] Roberts, Poems 17-19.

[65] Wall 338.

[66] Jennifer Lee Carrell, "'A pack of lies in a looking glass': Lady Mary Wroth's Urania and the magic mirror of romance," Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900 34.1 (Winter 1994) 88.

[67] The Urania still elicits readings as roman à clef. Schleiner attempts to gather evidence about William Herbert's "individual traits" through Wroth's tale, although the task is complicated by Wroth's "casting about for a position from which to speak" (156); the problem of perspective, I suggest, is not authorial but rather a function of the critic's hermeneutic.

[68] Carrell 93.

[69] For more on English Land Law and alienation of land, see Lisa Jardine, Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare (1983; New York: Columbia University Press, 1989) 68-102.

[70] Robert Sidney qtd. in Roberts, Poems 25.

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[71] Wall 335.

[72] Wroth P40, ll.1-4.

[73] Burton titles his subsection under "Heroical Love causing Melancholy," "How Love tyrannizeth over men. Love, or Heroical Melancholy, his definition, part affected." As he describes it, "this tyrant Love. . . subverts kingdoms, overthrows cities, towns, families, mars corrupts, and makes a massacre of men" (Pt.3, 49).

[74] Wroth P40, ll.13-14.

[75] Hannay 551.

[76] Love 59.

[77] Carrell 88.

[78] Edward Denny qtd. in Roberts, "An unpublished literary quarrel concerning the suppression of Mary Wroth's Urania," Notes and Queries 222 (1977) 532-35.

[79] Denny qtd. in Roberts, Poems 239.

[80] Wroth qtd. in Roberts, Poems 236.

[81] Wroth P44.

[82] Gee 10.

[83] Bizzell 227.

[84] Love 189.

[85] Love 187.

[86] Wroth's implied cooperation with printers in this scenario brings to mind the similarly harsh consequenses suffered by a modern noblewoman, Diana, Princess of Wales, for implicitly sanctioning a biography of herself which included information unsavory to the crown.

[87] Schleiner 146-7.

[88] Lil Brannon, "(Dis)missing Compulsory First-Year Composition," Reconceiving writing, rethinking writing instruction, ed. Joseph Petraglia (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates, Inc., 1995) 239.

[89] Brannon, "(Dis)missing" 243.

[90] Daniel J. Royer and Roger Gilles, "Directed Self-Placement: An Attitude of Orientation," College Composition and Communication 50.1 (September 1998) 69.

[91] Royer and Gilles 56-7.

[92] Royer and Gilles 65.

[93] Elizabeth Anne Leonard, "Assignment #9: A Text which Engages the Socially Constructed Identity of Its Writer," College Composition and Communication 48.2 (May 1997) 221.

[94] See Kenneth Bruffee, "Collaborative Learning and the 'Conversation of Mankind,'" College English 46 (1984) 635-52.

CHAPTER IV: LITERACY AS DISCLOSURE: GEORGE HERBERT'S CHRONICLE IN VERSE

In the following chapter, I address issues pertaining to the meaning and uses of literacy for George Herbert and the ways in which he grapples in his poetry with the proper employment of literacy in the service of Christian devotion. Herbert foregrounds issues of reading and writing in his work. His uses of reading and writing as metaphors show him to be the most rhetorically self-aware of any of the early modern writers I have discussed. My engagement with the poems of The Temple is designed to explore how Herbert's book constitutes a personal, private literacy narrative. More than just a conventional account of an individual's schooling and initiation into certain modes of discourse, this richer sense of "literacy narrative" denotes a story "that foreground[s] issues of language acquisition and literacy. . . both challeng[ing] and affirm[ing] culturally scripted ideas about literacy."[1] Herbert's private practice of composition offered a safe space for writing both within and against poetic discourses of the period, particularly as his engagement with Biblical discourse interrogated these privileged literacies.[2] The use of writing as a mode of contemplation, which Herbert ably demonstrates, offers all writers a model for expression as knowledge-transformation, which I address at the close of this chapter.

For Herbert, the writing of verse in the vernacular served a highly personal function; Herbert's apprehension of poetic conventions made possible a literacy practice

aiming to reveal his soul to the divine, to disclose both to himself and to God the nature of his innermost thoughts and feelings. Herbert rejects the worldly (or economic) value of literacy in favor of literacy's moral usefulness for holy contemplation, yet as an aristocratic intellectual, his debt to literacy's utility is obvious. Read within the context of Herbert's education, career and diverse other writings, The Temple becomes a remarkable collection of poetry due to its anomalous status as the most private and carefully protected writing Herbert ever did. The definitive hand-copying, printing and distributing of the collection was undertaken by Nicholas Ferrar, who, despite being Herbert's close friend of many years, was "unaware of the existence" of this poetry until it was delivered to him from Herbert's deathbed.[3]

For George Herbert, as a lifetime member of the literate elite, a person habituated to composing spoken or written verse in a second language for the most intimidating of audiences, to write and then secret away (for years) a body of sacred poetry constitutes at the very least an extraordinary act. Herbert appears to have neither titled his sacred poetry nor selected the epigraph that has subsequently appeared in all printed versions of the collection.[4] Our modern practice of referring to Herbert's "little book" as The Temple erases the text's original rhetorical situation, conferring on the body of poetry the marks of a public text which Herbert himself declined to supply. Lacking other markers of public discourse, the six-line verse that prefaces Herbert's book presents a peculiar face. Readers of the dedication have differently interpreted the intended referent(s) of its address:

> Lord, my first fruits present themselves to thee;
> Yet not mine neither: for from thee they came,
> And must return. Accept of them and me,
> And make us strive, who shall sing best thy name.
> Turn their eyes hither, who shall make a gain:
> Theirs, who shall hurt themselves or me, refrain.

Nicholas Ferrar opens "The Printers to the Reader" by stating that "The dedication of this work [has] been made by the Authour to the *Divine Majesty* onely," thus justifying his decision to present the printed version in its "naked simplicitie" to the world. More recently, Martin Elsky makes a contrasting parenthetical observation that, "Strangely, the dedication, with the same address and invitation to future readers, appears in the Williams [W] manuscript, which does not seem intended for publication."[5] This discrepancy over the dedication's addressee(s) leads us to question whether the reference to future readers is in fact an "address and invitation." Modern readers have failed to recognize the use of "refrain" as a transitive verb in the final line, a lapsed practice which the OED substantiates with Herbert's very dedication, among other period references. Thus the couplet should be read as a continuation of Herbert's address to God in the imperative mood, rather than as a separate address to readers. Misleadingly, then, the dedication has led some to assume that Herbert wrote with future readers in mind, and that he sought publication of the text from his deathbed.

Herbert's close familiarity with the conventions of culturally-privileged verse, his intimate relationship with Donne and other intellectual luminaries and his demonstrated professional competence in the arena of public discourse conceivably

provided any necessary enticement to circulate ("scribally publish," in Harold Love's terms) his English sacred poetry. As a first-year student at Trinity College, he wrote a (frequently-cited) letter to his mother saying that he intended to restrict his poetry-writing to devotional verse. We may deduce from this proclamation that the young Herbert composed poetry as a matter of habit, and that he considered it an important personal activity, worthy of discussing with his mother. As Herbert divulges on the occasion of her death, Magdalen Herbert's maternal legacy was teaching him to write:

> Ah, mother, forever will your mourning child
> Praise you; you taught me how to write,
> That skill owes you praise, that skill, unloosed,
> Floods the paper, having gathered labor's
> Finest fruit in honoring a mother[6]

A few years after his declaration to write only sacred poetry, the occasion of Herbert's brother Henry departing for France prompted Herbert to compose for him "The Church-Porch."[7] From this evidence, we may conclude that the Herbert family valued poetic expression and provided an hospitable environment for creative energies; Magdalen Herbert's long friendship with John Donne reaffirms the household's high estimation of literary pursuits. Although the record of Herbert's elite education testifies to his privileged status within his society, the literacy practices in which he engaged suggest an immediate family who encouraged and promoted the composition of verse, so that Herbert's private occupation as a poet must have seemed, to him, rather normal and unaffected.

Herbert's foray beyond the confines of an intimate familial or tutorial audience (at Trinity) for his poetry began with his appointment, at age twenty-five, to Praelector in Rhetoric at Cambridge. While he held this position, and for eight years afterward as University Orator, Herbert delivered speeches and wrote letters, mainly in Latin, on behalf of the University. He was ordained into the deaconry while continuing as Orator, composing during this time of overlap the Latin tribute to his mother, *Memoriae Matris Sacrum*. One early example of Herbert's professional discourse is his composition *Musae Responsoriae*. These poems represent Herbert's polemical response as "Defender of the Faith" to the Scottish Puritan writer Andrew Melville's *Anti-Tami-Cami-Categoriam*, in which Herbert champions the use of Latin and the singing of sacred music in the Anglican rite, as well as the moral rectitude of the "twin universities." Herbert dedicates the manuscript work in verses to James I, Prince Charles and the Bishop of Winchester, signaling his expectations for an esteemed readership, if not patronage.[8]

Although of the many texts Herbert produced, only *Memoriae*, certain Latin orations and a few Latin royal memorial poems were licensed for print, I submit that a significant amount of the formal writing Herbert did during the years after he finished his education may be considered "published" material.[9] The declamation of a speech had long constituted publication, meeting the essential requirement of public availability for consumption.[10] Furthermore, Herbert's official Cambridge correspondence (with the court, with scholars such as Francis Bacon, etc.) qualifies as

scribal publication under the "weak form" criteria established by Harold Love: the text voluntarily leaves the author's private possession, is written in a polished hand on paper of high quality and utilizes a public form of discourse or expresses the author's desire for its public status.[11]

Herbert's epistle to the reader of his prose manuscript, The Country Parson, written after his priestly ordination, expresses such a desire for public status. Making clear that he anticipates and welcomes the circulation of his text, Herbert writes in "The Authour to the Reader,"

> The Lord prosper the intention to my selfe, and others, who may not despise my poor labours, but add to these points, which I have observed, untill the Book grow to a compleat Pastorall.

The short and plain opening to Herbert's Country Parson clearly differs from the highly-ornamented prefatory discourse of his Latin poetry, yet its language indisputably calls for public circulation. The manuscript bears other markings of a rhetorically public document: a given title, the author's signature and his dating of the text, 1632.

Yet Herbert rejected both personal and professional ambition in the later years of his life.[12] His metamorphosis from aspiring parliamentarian to country parson has provided a basis for many readings of The Temple, and certainly Herbert's own agency in such a transformation presents a profitable lens for reading his poetry. The conjecture follows that Herbert reluctantly left public office (whether of his own accord or due to external circumstances) and worked diligently thereafter to tame his personal

ambitions, including repressing a desire to establish himself publicly as a poet, in striving to follow what he felt was God's will for his life. Herbert's previous success as a professional orator would have whetted his appetite for the positive response of an audience, so the supposition that he was tempted to circulate or print his work seems warranted. His final act to relinquish control of his sacred poetry, however, must be understood as equivocal at best, rather than as a clear statement of his aspiration for the body of work. According to the account of Nicolas Ferrar's brother,

> when M^r. Herbert dy'd, he recommended only of all his Papers, that of his Divine Poems, & willed it to be delivered into the hands of his Brother N.F. appointing him to be the Midwife, to bring that piece into the World, If he thought so good of it, else to [text leaves off].[13]

Herbert resigns his work to the judgment of a friend. Ferrar's decision to print the poetry, like the effect of posthumous publication on mothers' legacies, brought acclaim to Herbert's humble efforts and ushered in a new acceptance of religious lyric in print.[14]

The poetry of the "little book" suggests that Herbert experienced on-going ambivalence and uncertainty about both the proper poetic form in which to praise God and the proper material status, private or common, such praise should assume. Herbert's struggle with the issue of style, especially in the "Jordan" poems, is connected in my view to his qualms about publishing; both involve embracing a worldly system of value in which the best praise is not only elaborate, but widely proclaimed. The "Jordan" poems rightly claim an important place within the text, since they present a direct challenge to the privileged poetic conventions of the time, conventions that Herbert's

education fully prepared him to employ. Praising God in verses that exploit the resources of his own elite training and skill would seem logically appropriate, as would sharing these poems for others' inspiration; the New Testament often provided Herbert's contemporaries with justification for publishing activities.[15] Yet plain expression exemplifies Herbert's ideal of praise, as the Jordan poems and others attest. Moreover, his unwillingness to share his sacred poems during his lifetime, even with his closest friends, presents a significant, under-scrutinized angle from which to view Herbert's larger problem with ambition and personal display. The rhetorical issues of style and audience invoke, for Herbert, larger spiritual concerns. Of all the early modern writers I have so far approached, Herbert most self-consciously employs reading and writing as metaphors in his poetry. Herbert demonstrates, as a writer himself, a conspicuous awareness of literacy's metaphorical aspects.

1. "SEARCH[ING] FOR THE SWEETNESS OF DIVINE LOVE": HERBERT'S PRIVATE LITERACY NARRATIVE

My reading of Herbert's poetry, in light of its remarkably private status in the context of his life and writing, focuses on how the poems of The Church record Herbert's on-going reflections about writing sacred verse. The group of poems we call The Temple represent a unique example of a literacy practice which has not been studied as an artifact of private writing, but most often as literature-discourse.[16] Here I pay close attention to those poems that justify poetry-writing itself, as well as the poems which treat

the subject of the texts' potential usefulness to other readers. In taking this approach, I betray my indebtedness to earlier critical treatments of Herbert, such as the close reading of his poetry undertaken by formalist critics, and the contextualization of it with regard to early modern politics, religion or philosophy done by historically-minded critics.[17] My work can be considered complementary to these approaches, since I borrow similar methodologies in order to examine a different aspect of the poetry.

My approach cannot be reconciled, however, to criticism which takes as a starting point the text's effect on its readers, or on the didactic intent of Herbert's poems from The Church. Stanley Fish, for example, reads Herbert's entire collection as a "strategy rather than as an object" whose source may be derived from Reformation catechism:[18]

> [R]ather than being a sincere report of a mind in the act of changing, [each] poem is a sincere effort on the part of the poet-catechist to change his reader-pupil's mind. [. . .] [T]he goal is the involvement of the reader in his own edification. . . .[19]

Fish reaches his position by noting Herbert's enthusiasm in The Country Parson for a Socratic approach to religious education, a didactic method which Fish fastens to Herbert's poetry-writing by taking as a "central text" the final stanza of "Obedience" in which Herbert (in an aberration) mentions "some kinde man" as an hypothetical reader of his poem. The evidence for this critical framework, confesses Fish, "is still circumstantial," but must be proven through his demonstration of the poetry's reliance on catechetical structures.[20]

Yet as other critics demonstrate, the elision of God and other readers as addressees of the poetry can be accomplished even without Fish's logical exercise. "Herbert's poems are not 'private,'" writes Diana Benet: "the reader's awareness that Herbert means to instruct him alerts him to the devices the poet uses to achieve his aim. This utilization of his *charismata* must have seemed only appropriate."[21] Benet supplies as grounds for her position a quote from Joseph H. Summers, who states, "'Even without an obviously didactic aim on the part of the speaker, the relation of Christian experience inevitably functioned didactically."[22] While we may be persuaded that Herbert's poetry follows a catechetical structure and/or that readers have much to learn from his writing, neither of these arguments prove that the poetry was composed with the intention to circulate or print.

The formalist approach to Herbert often focuses on his poetry as a manifestation of an autobiographical self, and has moved from hagiographic characterizations (especially in comparison with Donne), to an insistence on the spiritual struggle the poet evinces. While these readings address the issues of private and public in Herbert's work, the emphasis has fallen on Herbert's private nature as a man, rather than on the material status of his text itself. My reading attempts to further illuminate Herbert's autobiographical narrative, but I reject Michael Schoenfeldt's characterization of the way such a project treats The Temple as merely "simple autobiography" or "disingenuous spiritual drama,"[23] since both phrases reveal an ignorance of autobiographical theory. Barbara Harman more appropriately refers to "the

autobiographical impulse" with regard to the early modern context of Herbert's work.[24] Yet the absence of a full-fledged autobiographical genre in the seventeenth century does not render irrelevant a theory of the first-person speaker, which Herbert employs.

Discourse, poetic or otherwise, represents the preeminent means of identity-formation: "persons only 'know' themselves after the fact of expression," according to language philosopher Anthony Paul Kerby.[25] Kerby, building on the work of Paul Ricoeur, argues that the temporality of experience supplies a writer with a pre-narrative structure (the quasi-narrative quality of experience) out of which he creates meaning via narrative. Emotion provides the incentive for narrative emplotment, while the act of composition provides the occasion. The imagination plays a double role in personal narrative, since the writer perpetually invents himself even as he invents a version of his history. Thus rather than representing "the memory of states of restlessness now securely overcome,"[26] Herbert's poems disclose his on-going mediation between experience and thought. In his personal verse, he occupies the role of "creative adequator," in Kerby's terms, so that his representation of experience adheres to acceptable epistemological parameters even as it goes about the invention of discourse. Herbert's on-going attendance to the larger narrative organization of the poems performs a broader function of self-representation, which (for Herbert) encompasses continuities and discontinuities alike.

Textual scholars have two pieces of evidence, the W (Williams) and the B (Bodleian) manuscripts of Herbert's collection, from which to conclude that Herbert not only revised certain of his poems through the years but gave careful thought to the order and arrangement of the final set he relinquished to Nicholas Ferrar (from which the fair copy B was presumably made). Chronology in particular has been ruled out as an organizing principle for either the W or the B manuscript.[27] No reliable way exists to date each poem's composition and/or revision, so attempting to reconstruct a chronological order remains impossible as well as only dubiously valuable from a literary standpoint. Stanley Fish remarks that "the failure of [formalist] models to explain every aspect of The Temple has led some to argue that the sequence of poems is random."[28] Yet the difficulty Fish presents as the source of such a position, the dissonance "between a structure that is firm, secure, and complete, and a structure that is precarious, shifting and unfinished,"[29] loses relevance in the proper framework of autobiographical narrative theory.

It seems appropriate, then, to formulate readings of the collection's structure based on what we must accept (counter-evidence notwithstanding) as Herbert's choice of order for the poems. Louis Martz suggests that the "narrative and dramatic movement" of the book follows "the story of the poet's search for the sweetness of divine love".[30] Martz breaks The Church into three sections; he marks the poems up to "H.Baptisme" as a guide to "the basic principles of Christianity in sacramental and liturgical terms," while the second set "plunges into the long body of conflicts that

constitute the drama of this inward church." The narrative changes direction a third and final time with "The Flower," in which Herbert "[attains] a region of greater assurance and joy."[31] My narrative does not contradict the scheme offered by Martz, but extends the readings of his second and third sections by calling attention to Herbert's particular struggle with the proper way to praise God through poetry and his resolution of this rhetorical conflict in the final poems.

2. "THE DRAMA OF THIS INWARD CHURCH": HERBERT'S REJECTION OF PERSONAL DISPLAY

The poetry provides ample evidence of Herbert's struggle to resolve the matter of its proper rhetorical position. "Content" and "The Quidditie" are two early selections from the collection that may be read as Herbert's resolution not to circulate his work, but to write as a pure form of personal prayer. "Content" presupposes the temptation to publicize. The poem's "prompt," to borrow from composition/rhetoric terminology, concerns the question of whether or not to air one's "mutt'ring thoughts," a phrase that aptly characterizes the private nature of several poems preceding this one, including "Affliction" (I) and (II). The poem begins:

> Peace mutt'ring thoughts, and do not grudge to keep
>   Within the walls of your own breast:
> Who cannot on his own bed sweetly sleep,
>   Can on anothers hardly rest.
>
> Gad not abroad at ev'ry quest and call
>   Of an untrained hope or passion.
> To court each place or fortune that doth fall,

Is wantonnesse in contemplation.

Mark how the fire in flints doth quiet lie,
Content and warm t' it self alone:
But when it would appear to others eye,
Without a knock it never shone.[32]

In the opening stanzas, Herbert reasons with his unspoken urge; he points out that his own anxieties can hardly offer comfort ("[sweet] rest") to someone else. The desire to openly ("abroad") express one's unresolved or unpolished thoughts at any opportunity leads to mental recklessness. Different than a shameful indiscretion, the "wantonnesse" involves disclosing one's personal cognitive ("contempla[tive]") process, unfinished by definition.

While an image of a verbal tête-à-tête comes naturally to mind here, this second stanza suggests through word choice that Herbert is referring to a circulation of his poems in manuscript. The initial metaphor, "gad[ding] abroad," connotes travel or movement, an image more suited to a circulating text than to a person speaking. "Quest," "call," and "court," furthermore, suggest the meaningful activities performed in Herbert's time by scribal publication, the primary means to social advancement or literary patronage.[33] While the third stanza implies that "a knock" might induce the poet to produce his work, the ideal remains to "quiet lie,/ Content." Herbert follows in stanza four with an allusion to Emperor Charles V as the model self who might capably fulfill a public role yet genuinely prefers a modest life of devotion:

Give me the pliant minde, whose gentle measure

> Complies and suits with all estates;
> Which can let loose to a crown, and yet with pleasure
> Take up within a cloisters gates.[34]

"Let loose" is glossed by Hutchinson as an archery metaphor connoting "to aim at."[35] The image therefore resonates with the poem's general theme of ambition and suggests that Herbert hopes for greater private satisfactions than public glory would provide.

The second half of "Content" addresses the hypothetical outcome of circulating one's written work. Even if publication should bring fame, "The brags of life are but a nine dayes wonder;"

> And after death the fumes that spring
> From private bodies make as big a thunder,
> As those which rise from a huge King.[36]

The comparison of commoners' bodily decay to the (literally) breath-taking decomposition of William the Conqueror leads the poet to speculate on his fate after death, should he privately retain his poetic labor:

> Onely thy Chronicle is lost; and yet
> Better by worms be all at once spent,
> Then to have hellish moths still gnaw and fret
> Thy name in books, which may not rent:[37]

Here the poet makes a crucial distinction between manuscript and print records. "Thy Chronicle" represents for Herbert not merely the conventional personal diary or register, but the most vital testimony of his journey of faith. The "Chronicle" refers metaphysically to the testament of his entire life, encompassed for Herbert in his sacred

poetry. Like a human body, the unbound manuscript will decay in due course, but once printed in a book, such writing may resist a natural process of degeneration.

By following to conclusion this possibility that a book will indefinitely outlast a human body's life span, Herbert contends that keeping his poetry private will be the wiser, more self-disciplined course of action. The final two stanzas of "Content" present an "if/then" logical formulation.

> When all thy deeds, whose brunt thou feel'st alone,
> Are chaw'd by others pens and tongue;
> And as their wit is, their digestion,
> Thy nourisht fame is weak or strong.
>
> Then cease discoursing soul, till thine own ground,
> Do not thy self or friends importune.
> He that by seeking hath himself once found,
> Hath ever found a happie fortune.[38]

"When," I suggest here, continues the grammatical and semantic motion of the previous passage, signified by the colon after "rent." Thus the complete sentence which comprises both stanzas might be paraphrased, "In death, I lose my bodily existence and the meaningful representation of it, my poetry, but better to have both lost at once than to have only the writing left for others to judge according to their own tastes, so that my reputation rests in others' hands." Having produced his proof, Herbert is able to conclude the poem with a logical theorem: the poetic contemplations he produces should remain private. If he succeeds at resolving some of his spiritual uncertainties, then he

will have attained a measure of peace without having had to trouble others during the process.

If Herbert convinces himself in "Content" that his sacred poetry best remains a secret, he uses "The Quidditie" to reaffirm the suitability of poetry as a medium of prayer. The three stanzas are neatly packaged into four lines each of iambic tetrameter, every line negating the worldly value of poetry:

> My God, a verse is not a crown,
> No point of honour, or gay suit,
> No hawk, or banquet, or renown,
> Nor a good sword, nor yet a lute:
> It cannot vault, or dance, or play;
> It never was in *France* or *Spain*,
> Nor can it entertain the day
> With my great stable or demain:
> It is no office, art, or news,
> Nor the Exchange, or busie Hall;
> But it is that which while I use
> I am with thee, and *most take all.*

The poem forms only one complete sentence, ending with the sentiment that being in God's presence provides the poet with a finer experience than does the substance of all these sensory pleasures.[39] "Content" and "The Quidditie," as a pair, thus function as a manifesto of sorts for Herbert as a writer of sacred poetry. He establishes that while it may be tempting to seek earthly glory through public exposure as a poet, his writing will serve a higher purpose by remaining the matter of personal prayer. Herbert rejects not only the fame that publication would provide, but the very use of worldly commodities as

material for praise. The essential subject matter for Herbert must be spiritual; the essential audience must be "My God."

Ten poems later in the series, the pair "Deniall" and "Christmas" serve as a reflection on Herbert's original declaration. "Deniall" chides God, the intended reader, for a period of inattentiveness, which the poet claims has impaired his faculties:

> When my devotions could not pierce
> Thy silent eares;
> Then was my heart broken, as was my verse:[40]

The poem recounts Herbert's plaintive cries for help from God. When answers appeared to be elusive, he explains, he became unable to write at all:

> Therefore my soul lay out of sight,
> Untun'd, unstrung:
> My feeble spirit, unable to look right,
> Like a nipt blossome, hung
> Discontented.[41]

The writer here holds God accountable for more than listening, but for indirectly hurting his ability to compose by withholding a response. Although he has resolved to write for private purposes alone, Herbert is encountering an obstacle: the desire for feedback. The poem's grammatical mood echoes its uneasy emotion; written in the indicative past tense, "Denial" oddly reaches its end without describing any shift to justify or explain the situation's resolution. But while the poem ends without a narrative solution, Herbert's verse stands as evidence that he has finally found some words, that he has come to the end of a dry spell. The final lines bear witness to the poet's rising sense of

empowerment; he switches to the imperative mood in demanding that his audience resume its proper role:

> O cheer and tune my heartlesse breast,
> Deferre no time;
> That so thy favours granting my request,
> They and my minde may chime,
> And mend my ryme.[42]

The couplet rhyme which ends the poem functions as concluding evidence that, even as the poet continues his plea, a solution is at hand. In the succeeding poem, "Christmas," Herbert finds a way out of his conflicting desires for prayer-dedicated verse and for engaged response.

"Christmas" opens with the image of a rider, "tir'd, bodie and minde,/ With full crie of affections, quite astray," immediately recalling Herbert's description in "Deniall" of his emotional condition and the way his "bent thoughts, like a brittle bow,/ Did flie asunder."[43] When the poem's rider enters "the next inne I could finde,"

> whom found I but my deare,
> My dearest Lord, expecting till the grief
> Of pleasures brought me to him, readie there
> To be all passengers most sweet relief?[44]

The poem's first half thus provides a neat settlement of "Deniall"'s problem; the rider/writer finds his Lord/audience in the form of a story-sonnet. Herbert solves his rhetorical difficulty by invoking the image of the Christ-child, an infant presence whose love is unconditional even as it remains incapable of responding to demands. Like the nativity shepherds of the poem's second half, the writer will praise his God's very

existence rather than coming to rely on his intervention: "The shepherds sing; and shall I silent be?/ My God, no hymne for thee?"[45] Herbert thus overcomes his desire for audience response by recognizing that his vital subject matter renders response immaterial. Submitting to the process of verse-writing permits Herbert, in later poems such as "The Collar" and "Love III" (the book's final poem), to find God's responsive voice within himself. At moments of high anxiety and discursive crisis, the poet is rescued by "a voice," "a friend," or "Love," but this gift of divine intervention appears only in poems following Herbert's resolution here to continue writing privately, despite the difficulties presented by that practice.

Herbert suspends further consideration of his work's cloistered status while he takes up the issue of praise's proper form. "Miserie" finds the poet despondent over his inadequacy as mere man to justly praise God; he argues that human sinfulness makes us unfit for such an important calling: "our clay hearts, ev'n when we crouch/ To sing thy praises, make them lesse divine."[46] In Jordan (II), which directly follows "Miserie," Herbert attempts to escape this impasse by defining an ideal for sacred poetry. As with Jordan (I), he writes for the most part about poetic conventions he will reject, deferring until the final lines an example of the simple, plain praise he prefers. The Jordan poems, like Jesus' baptism in the river of the title, signify a moment of grace that leaves its trace as a watermark for the spirit. The poet glimpses an ideal for his poetic praise that he is unable to sustain beyond "*My God, My King*" or the suggestion of "*a sweetnesse readie penn'd.*"

I suggest that in the Jordan poems, Herbert rejects the cultural signification of literacy, or the production of writing marked by signifiers of class and educational status, in favor of a functional literacy, or a practice of writing marked by its practical and singular intentionality. Praise which "deck[s] the sense, as if it were to sell"[47] indirectly calls attention to the poet himself, who is busy "Curling with metaphors a plain intention."[48] "Herbert remains deeply divided," writes Michael Schoenfeldt, "between the desire to devote to God the best of his abilities and the need to repudiate the self-display inherent in such an otherwise pious desire."[49] Schoenfeldt concludes that Herbert wants too much, "wish[es] to have it both ways,"[50] but if he succeeds in recognizing the functional kind of praise he aspires to produce, I maintain that he remains only temporarily unable to generate it.

3. "THE DRAMA OF THIS INWARD CHURCH" II: HERBERT'S EXPERIMENTATION WITH FORM AND HIS RECONSIDERATION OF READERSHIP

"Obedience" begins a long series of poems in the collection's mid-section that manifest Herbert's need to experiment with form. Unlike most of the earlier lyric poems addressed to God as forms of prayer, here we find meditation, exposition, dialogue and narrative poems in addition to prayer-discourse. Although praise has heretofore served as the poet's customary manner of supplication to God, the stumbling-block of proper form now forces him to try other types of conversation. "Obedience" in particular

demonstrates Herbert's careful consideration of his poem as a text of transaction. Departing from an indirect method of appeal through praise, the poet here presents his verse as a material sign that will obligate him to a spiritual contract.

My God, if writings may
Convey a Lordship any way
Whither the buyer and the seller please;
Let it not thee displease,
If this poore paper do as much as they.
On it my heart doth bleed As many lines, as there
doth need To passe itself and all it hath to thee.
To which I do agree,
And here present it as my speciall Deed.[51]

The poet self-consciously submits his offer to God, showing that he feels hesitant to begin such a deviant form of address. In stanza two, he refers to writing in blood, a symbol of the text's authenticity as well as its significance: "in the West inscriptions using the writer's blood for ink have always been afforded a highly privileged status, and were generally preferred over vocal attestation in such important matters as pacts with the devil and appointments to the crews of pirate ships."[52] The poem thus opens with an announcement of its formal difference from previous verses.

Stanzas three through seven perform the legal transaction itself, beginning with an exclusionary clause that "exclude[s] the wrangler from thy treasure"[53] should he not uphold his promise in the deed. While Herbert also provides his "Lordship" with logical reasoning meant to persuade him of the fairness of the offer, the actual contract consists of a single stanza:

O let thy sacred will
All thy delight in me fulfill!
Let me not think an action my own way,
But as thy love shall sway,
Resigning up the rudder to thy skill.[54]

"Obedience" here resounds with Herbert's most familiar sentiment, the desire to mesh his own will with God's. Insisting that his wish is not conditional, like a "gift or a donation" that comes with strings attached, Herbert elaborates on the terms of his agreement:

Where in the Deed there was an intimation
Of a gift or a donation,
Lord, let it now by way of purchase go.[55]

These lines attest that the power of writing in this period only overcame the power of speech "for contractual agreements under the law, including transactions relating to the ownership of property."[56] So Herbert's particular employment of literacy in poetry here reaches its ultimate functionality, a purpose he has seeking for verse: he has dictated, embodied, and ordained his spiritual aspiration through writing.

The remarkable closing stanzas of "Obedience" introduce a new consideration of audience by Herbert. Having succeeded so well in the poem at carrying out his spiritual aims, he gives himself license to ponder whether his work could do someone else good.

He that will passe his land,
As I have mine, may set his hand
And heart unto this Deed, when he hath read;
And make the purchase spread

To both our goods, if he to it will stand.

How happie were my part,
If some kinde man would thrust his heart
Into these lines; till in heav'ns Court of Rolls
They were by winged souls
Entred for both, farre above their desert![57]

Herbert's casual mention of a reader here should not obscure its significance; nowhere since "Content" has he addressed this subject. As with "Deniall," a shift in grammatical mood between the final stanzas provides an indication of the writer's posture. Emboldened by his successful experiment with form, Herbert forges ahead with the idea that his document will be of use to anyone willing to make the same commitment "when he hath read [the Deed]." The seeming inevitability of such a reading is immediately called into question, however, as Herbert switches to the subjunctive mood: "How happie *were* my part,/ *If* some kinde man *would* thrust his heart/ Into these lines." Not only does Herbert reconsider whether a hypothetical reader "will stand" to the agreement, but he quickly modifies his generic use of the pronoun "he" (like "any") to a particular "kinde man," a contemporary who might convey the two signatures together. The "Deed" which first seems appropriate for any faithful Christian to utilize suddenly looks like a long-shot candidate for heavenly reception. Herbert retreats from his initial, self-assured position, concluding with an assertion of the poem's general unworthiness.

"Obedience"'s peculiar treatment of a reader suggests the novelty of the idea for Herbert. Tentatively, he comes back to the subject in "Praise (III)," the last poem of the "Praise" sequence. The reemergence of an audience under this particular

title, I suggest, is not coincidental to my argument about Herbert's search for praise's proper rhetorical form. The final stanza of the poem both reiterates Herbert's self-consciousness about his poetry's unworthiness and his emerging willingness to consider sharing it with readers:

Wherefore I sing. Yet since my heart,
Though press'd, runnes thin;
O that I might some other hearts convert,
And so take up at use good store:
That to thy chest there might be coming in
Both all my praise, and more![58]

Here, seven poems from the break in the narrative proposed by Martz at "The Flower," Herbert concludes his praise by raising the possibility again that his poetry may be of some public good. The text indicates that he means to influence others through "sing[ing]," which invokes his lyric poetry, and that he entertains the idea of reaching other (plural) "heart*s*." Yet this conditional statement serves as the peak of Herbert's optimism for public readers of his sacred poetry.

4. "GREATER ASSURANCE AND JOY": HERBERT'S RESOLUTIONS OF STYLE AND AUDIENCE ISSUES

Both of the rhetorical elements I have been examining, style and audience, come to a resolution, albeit in Herbert-fashion, in the poems after "The Flower." Herbert's incessant prayers for God to "take up the rudder" of his human willpower arguably come to fruition. These poems find Herbert increasingly satisfied by the use of a litany as a method of simple praise. Likewise, his substitution of "A Wreath" in place of

"Perseverance," which was included only in the earlier W manuscript, suggests that he resolves his contemplation of publication. Mirroring his textual gesture (through revision) of abandoning the problem, Herbert's final relinquishing of the manuscript poetry, not even recopied for Ferrar in a polished hand, underscores his resignation to God of the final fate of his work.[59]

"A true Hymne" describes God leading the poet through his writing process; while only the simplest of phrases are required for sacred praise, God "doth supplie the want" of a searching poet.[60] Rather than wracking his brain for the perfect verse, Herbert confesses, he finds the proper words when he allows his heart and soul to write:

> My joy, my life, my crown!
> My heart was meaning all the day,
> Somewhat it fain would say:
> And still it runneth mutt'ring up and down
> With onely this, *My joy, my life, my crown.*
>
> Yet slight not these few words:
> If truly said, they may take part
> Among the best in art.
> The finenesse which a hymne or psalme affords,
> Is, when the soul unto the lines accords.[61]

The litany, "My joy, my life, my crown," provides Herbert here with precise simplicity he has been seeking. Although several of his earlier poems, including "Jordan (I)," make use of phrases like this one, "A true Hymne" marks the moment when Herbert fully recognizes the appropriateness and the adequacy of this type of praise. The strategy of

the litany leaves room for God to enter into the writing, as Herbert models in the poem's final lines: "As when th' heart says (sighing to be approved)/ *O, could I love!* and stops: God writeth, *Loved.*"[62] The poet can now aspire to produce worthy praise, since he recognizes God's willingness to become involved in the writing.

Although the technique of the litany has been used by Herbert before, here at last he accepts the form as fully satisfying and honors its inherent decorum. "The Forerunners" and "The Posie" continue Herbert's new appreciation for the litany, both arguing that a less ornate verse is no less pleasing to God. Even as he laments the dulling of his poetic skills with age, Herbert remains undisturbed: "Yet if you [beauteous words] go, I passe not; take your way:/ For, *Thou art still my God*, is all that ye/ Perhaps with more embellishment can say."[63] "The Posie" makes use of Herbert's "own Motto," with which, according to Ferrar in "The Printers to the Reader," "he used to conclude all things that might seem to tend any way to his own honour: *Lesse then the least of Gods mercies*":

> Invention rest,
> Comparisons go play, wit use thy will:
> *Lesse then the least*
> *Of all Gods mercies*, is my posie still.[64]

Thus Herbert reaches a satisfactory conclusion in his quest, begun with Jordan (I), to compose praise in a posie/poesie for God that both honors God's glory and captures man's fundamental humility. The use of the litany utterly apprehends Herbert's resolve to "let go."[65]

The disappearance of "Perseverance" from the B manuscript (and therefore from Ferrar's *1633*) indicates that Herbert likewise resolved his dilemma over the poetry's circulation status. Herbert tortures himself in this poem with a Calvinist's uncertainty of his salvation, expressing wrenching anxiety:

> Onely my soule hangs on thy promisses
> With face and hands clinging vnto thy brest,
> Clinging and crying, crying without cease,
> Thou art my rock, thou art my rest.[66]

The role to be played by his poetry-writing in the drama of salvation remains similarly shrouded. While he acknowledges that the motivation for his writing comes from a holy source, Herbert self-consciously questions the fitness of his own words:

> But what shall issue, whither these my words
> Shal help another, but my iudgment bee,
> As a burst fouling-peece doth save the birds
> But kill the man, is seald with thee.[67]

The image of a tragic hunting accident lends poignancy to Herbert's situation. Not only does he fear his own damnation, but he worries how his verse might affect others as well. "Perseverance," although suggestive of Herbert's intention to publish, finally leaves the fate of his poetry and his soul unknown. From this discarded poem emerges a sense of confusion and frustration, not the least of which involves the question of readership for Herbert's sacred work.

Replacing "Perseverance" (after "The Elixir" and before "Death") is the tranquil "A Wreath," which celebrates simplicity through its form and its content. "A

Wreath" does not acknowledge any reader besides God, signaling Herbert's release of this topic altogether:

> A Wreathed garland of deserved praise,
> Of praise deserved, unto thee I give,
> ------------------------------------
> Give me simplicitie, that I may live,
> So live and like, that I may know thy wayes,
> Know them and practise them: then I shall give
> For this poore wreath, give thee a crown of praise.[68]

As the preeminent mode of Herbert's prayer, praise in "A Wreath" is both obligatory and absent. The poet privileges simplicity as the most meaningful state of life and art, yet produces a verse that, although structurally lucid, fails to produce the desired effect. This "poore wreath" is not what the poet intends to give God at all, but something better. Like the modern student's five-paragraph theme or over-simplified narrative, the fixed structure of this poem avoids discursive crisis, with disappointing results. "A Wreath"'s failure as praise compels us to return to Herbert's litany as his ideal "crown of praise." The paradoxically passive nature of the litany, which allows God to enter the poet's speaking soul, becomes Herbert's model for addressing the question of readers as well. He finally chooses not to leave the poems to the worms, but to offer them up with minimal adornment to his closest friend, "letting go" the matter of its ultimate readership. As "A Wreath" and his dedication for the entire collection demonstrate, Herbert opts to concern himself most with his heavenly reader.

Herbert devoted much time and attention to his verse, as shown by the markings in the W manuscript, not because he anticipated critical readers, but because this body of his work represented his private offering to God. Concerned with presenting an accurate "picture of the many spiritual Conflicts that have past betwixt God and my Soul," as Herbert characterized his work in a note to Nicholas Ferrar,[69] the narrative structure of the poetry refuses to erase discontinuities or resolve every spiritual dilemma. Herbert's metaphorical concept of literacy, then, involves the act of disclosure even as that revelation means divulging an unfinished process. Herbert's poetry asks us to consider composition as thought-in-transformation. As he reflects in Chapter XXXIII of The Country Parson, "The Parson's Library,"

> Thus the Parson considering that repentance is the great vertue of the Gospel, and one of the first steps of pleasing God, having for his owne use examined the nature of it, is able to explaine it after to others. ... The like he doth in other Christian vertues, as of Faith, and Love, and the Cases of Conscience belonging thereto, wherein (as Saint *Paul* implyes that he ought, *Romans 2.*) hee first preacheth to himselfe, and then to others.[70]

Writing here becomes the means to understanding and the method through which ideas and feelings take shape, rather than a record of previously-processed thought. Private expression serves the purpose of aiding future discourse in matters no less significant than the salvation of one's soul.

5. DISCLOSURE AS KNOWLEDGE-TRANSFORMATION

Assigned writing in courses of every discipline can assist students in processing content material and in discovering which issues remain unclear. As Kerby posits that "persons only 'know' themselves after the fact of expression," writers often only 'know' the limits of their understanding after the fact of expression as well. Herbert's poetry ably demonstrates the usefulness of writing within a safe space for contemplation and for examining various answers to difficult questions; his work asserts itself against poetic discourse even as it submits to divine authority at moments of crisis. While assigned writing has long been used as a pedagogical tool, cognitive process research shows that different kinds of assignments will encourage different types of thinking and processing of material. Two such models of composition are "knowledge-telling" and "knowledge-transforming."[71] These models may predict the quality of a piece of writing, relating to each other in a developmental hierarchy, since the former limits a writer's ability to learn as s/he writes.

Many traditional teaching practices have fostered knowledge-telling as a mode of writing. Testing students on previously-covered course content only, "priming" students for written exams through outlines or referring to course content by temporal connections ("what we did last week") include some of the ways instructors privilege knowledge-telling as a mode of written discourse.[72] Narrative, as an expository genre, generally falls into the knowledge-telling model of writing; the storyteller is not dependent on prompts from readers/listeners, making this type of prose easier for student

writers but less likely to produce new insights. As I discussed at the close of chapter three, even personal narratives are vulnerable to clichéd renderings, evidence that these stories are easy to produce and may represent a preferred alternative to dealing with difficult subjects. A more sophisticated type of narrative may incorporate slippages or breaks in the narrative flow in order to preserve cognitive uncertainty or ambiguity, but the practice of knowledge-telling discourages writers from exposing such lapses.

Knowledge-transforming assignments demand that students learn how to prompt themselves, or conduct internal conversations, so that ideas continue to be generated as they write. Argument, as an expository prose genre, involves the acknowledgment of contradictory points-of-view, creating greater difficulty for writers but providing a better opportunity for reflection and the production of new ideas. In order to encourage knowledge-transforming as a mode of writing, instructors can incorporate argumentative writing into the curriculum and regularly specify problems to be solved in written assignments. Crucial to this process, however, is a student's sense that the course of discovery in writing is open-ended; conclusions are not foregone or already known by the instructor. Writing-to-learn works to facilitate the process of learning to write.[73] A protected (non-graded) practice of literacy becomes necessary for writers to explore the full range of possibilities in thought.

Herbert's poetry provides just such a model; by expressing the processes of his thought, incongruities and ambiguities included, Herbert was able to fully

contemplate the spiritual mysteries that most urgently occupied him. Herbert created his own safe space by refusing circulation (and hence critical evaluation) for his sacred poetry; his mode of composition was inherently knowledge-transforming as it attempted to solve conflicts Herbert experienced internally. Certain of his poems, notably "Deniall" among those discussed here, dramatize the moment of knowledge-transformation that comes when a writer reaches a point of crisis and manages to break through it as a result of submitting to the process of composition. The publication of Herbert's collection permits readers to witness the operation of the safe space, a posthumous act that has mislead critics about the manifest conditions of Herbert's composition. Just as the posthumous publication of mothers' legacies has obscured these writers' practices of literacy, The Temple's public status has worked to fashion Herbert's manuscript into an unintended "brother's legacy."

As I have discussed at the close of preceding chapters, student writers occupy a vexed position within the university. The most successful initiation into academic discourses requires both submission and resistance. Discursive safe spaces foster knowledge-transformation even as they help students counter the onerous institutional balance-of-power. Practices such as directed self-placement, experimental writing assignments, collaborative writing, networked classroom discussions and e-mail forums enable students to establish authorial credibility and to share in determining a relationship to the academic community. Students will continue, however, to be excluded from participating in curriculum development at the most philosophical level. The

virtues or blessings of student literacy are ours to consider and promote. Rather than positioning marketable knowledge and moral-philosophical development as mutually-exclusive goals for writing instruction, we can offer such rewards as reciprocal benefits of college literacy. We must remain conscious of our assumptions about the functions of student writing in order to foster literacy in the best spirit of empowered personal development.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

[1] Janet Carey Eldred and Peter Mortensen, "Reading Literacy Narratives," College English 54.5 (Sept. 1992) 513.

[2] Chana Bloch reads Herbert's poetry specifically in light of Biblical models of discourse, but Bloch emphasizes "how Herbert's poems teach" and she takes the position that distinctions between private and public in his poetry must be put aside: "It seems to me unprofitable, then, to inquire whether Herbert is addressing himself, other men, or God, for he speaks to all three." See Chana Bloch, Spelling the Word: George Herbert and the Bible (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985) 176, 172.

[3] Amy M. Charles, A Life of George Herbert (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1977) 78.

[4] Although Bloch argues that "Herbert is concerned here not with church government or architecture but with Biblical metaphor" (123), Amy Charles finds no manuscript authority for the title and epigraph; she argues convincingly that "The Temple" would have been an unlikely choice for Herbert, since the word "temple" carries a certain pretension and furthermore is of no special significance in the poems where it appears (185-6).

[5] Martin Elsky, Authorizing Words: Speech, Writing and Print in the English Renaissance (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989) 182.

[6] Herbert, Memoriae Matris Sacrum ll.61-65. Translated from the Latin in Mark McClosky and Paul R. Murphy, eds., The Latin Poetry of George Herbert: a bilingual edition (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1965) 129.

[7] Charles 84.

[8] Charles writes that although the royal dedication "could be construed as an attempt to gain royal or ecclesiastical favor, the work was not intended for the public eye and did not appear in print until many years after Herbert's death" (91). If Herbert anticipated a royal reading of the text, he would have refrained from print publication, yet the production and circulation of a polemical manuscript certainly constitutes a non-private act.

[9] Herbert's Memoriae accompanied Magdalen Herbert's funeral sermon by John Donne in the Stationer's Register of 1627.

[10] Harold Love, Scribal Publication in Seventeenth Century England (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993) 35.

[11] Love 36, 41-43.

[12] For more on Herbert's struggle with ambition, see Michael C. Schoenfeldt, Prayer and Power: George Herbert and Renaissance Courtship (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991) ch. 1.

[13] Ferrar qtd. in Charles 182.

[14] Arthur F. Marotti, Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995) 257.

[15]See Patricia Crawford, "Women's Published Writings 1600-1700," Women in English Society, 1500-1800, ed. Mary Prior (1985; London: Methuen, 1996) 221.

[16] I mean to use "private" here in the sense of "personal," or in the possession of the writer only. Jacques Revel, *et al*, have examined the historical development of the conceptual "private" and "public" so that I wish to be careful in avoiding an anachronistic meaning of the word. See Revel, O. Ranum, J. Flandrin, J. Gelis, M. Foisil, and J.M. Goulemot, "Forms of Privitization," A History of Private Life: Passions of the Renaissance, ed. Roger Chartier, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Cambridge, MA and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1989) 161-395.

[17] Of the formalist persuasion, I consider Rosamond Tuve, A Reading of George Herbert (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952) and Helen Vendler, The Poetry of George Herbert (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard Unversity Press, 1975) to be instructive. The latter category (historically-minded critics) covers a broader constituency; among the most recent are Schoenfeldt and Christopher Hodgkins, Authority, Church and Society in George Herbert: Return to the Middle Way (Columbia. MO: University of Missouri Press, 1993).

[18] Stanley Fish, The Living Temple: George Herbert and Catechizing (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1978) 171.

[19] Fish 26-27.

[20] Fish 52.

[21] Diana Benet, Secretary of Praise: The Poetic Vocation of George Herbert (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1984) 34.

[22] Joseph H. Summers qtd. in Benet 34. See Summers, George Herbert: His Religion and Art (1954; Binghampton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1981) 102-3.

[23] Michael Schoenfeldt 8.

[24] Barbara Harman, Costly Monuments: Representations of Self in George Herbert's Poetry (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1982) 105.

[25] Anthony Paul Kerby, Narrative and the self (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991) 5.

[26] Louis L. Martz qtd. in Fish 6.

[27] Charles 84.

[28] Fish 10.

[29] Fish 11.

[30] Louis L. Martz, ed., George Herbert (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) xv.

[31] Martz xv.

[32] George Herbert, "Content," The Works of George Herbert, ed. F.E. Hutchinson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941) ll.1-12.

[33] Harold Love, among others, maintains that in the early seventeenth century, preferment could be sought only through manuscript circulation. The stigma of print still prevented press publication from earning an author social advancement (50-1).

[34] Herbert, "Content" ll.13-16.

[35] F.E. Hutchinson, ed., The Works of George Herbert (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941) 500.

[36] Herbert, "Content" ll.21-24.

[37] Herbert, "Content" ll.25-28.

[38] Herbert, "Content" ll.29-36.

[39] Hutchinson's note about the meaning of "quidditie," "the school-men's term for the nature or essence of a thing, [which] came to be used for any over-subtle or captious distinction" (500) leads me to read "*most take all*" as signifying the superiority of writing spiritual poetry over these other experiences, rather than straightforwardly reading the line to mean that writing verse captures the essence of such fine things. It seems improbable that Herbert means to value a gay suit or the Exchange. "Take" as a verb, furthermore, connotes "win" or "seize."

[40] Herbert, "Deniall" ll.1-3.

[41] Herbert, "Deniall" ll.21-25.

[42] Herbert, "Deniall" ll.26-30.

[43] Herbert, "Christmas" ll.6-7.

[44] Herbert, "Christmas" ll.5-8.

[45] Herbert, "Christmas" ll.1-2.

[46] Herbert, "Miserie" ll.39-40.

[47] Herbert, "Jordan II" l.6.

[48] Herbert, "Jordan II" l.5.

[49] Schoenfeldt 171.

[50] Schoenfeldt 176.

[51] Herbert, "Obedience" ll.1-10.

[52] Love 145.

[53] Herbert, "Obedience" l.15.

[54] Herbert, "Obedience" ll.16-20.

[55] Herbert, "Obedience" ll.33-35.

[56] Love 159.

[57] Herbert, "Obedience" ll.36-45.

[58] Herbert, "Praise III" ll.37-42.

[59] As Martin Elsky writes, Herbert's final act "is as much a deliberate if posthumous gesture of authorial self-assertion as it is a gesture of humility" (182). Elsky's language focuses on Herbert's *activity* in the process of publication. While I agree that Herbert's action is profoundly ambiguous, I would add that it underscores his reliance on God's will for the fate of the book; my reading focuses on his relative *passivity* in the event.

[60] Herbert, "A true Hymne" l.18.

[61] Herbert, "A true Hymne" ll.1-10.

[62] Herbert, "A true Hymne" ll.19-20.

[63] Herbert, "The Forerunners" ll.31-33.

[64] Herbert, "The Posie" ll.9-12.

[65] Bloch maintains that The Temple takes the Psalms as a model of prayer which is both private and meant to be used by others (238). The device of the litany, I suggest, may have finally imparted a way for other readers of Herbert's poetry to make beneficial use of it, therefore making circulation an acceptable consideration for him.

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[66] Herbert, "Perseverance" ll.13-16.

[67] Herbert, "Perseverance" ll.5-8.

[68] Herbert, "A Wreath" ll.1-12.

[69] Hutchinson xxxvii.

[70] Herbert, The Country Parson, Chapter XXXIII, ll. 6-9, 33-36, emphasis mine.

[71] These terms are used by Carl Bereiter and Marlene Scardamalia in their cognitive process study. See Bereiter and Scardamalia, The Psychology of Written Composition., (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum and Associates, Inc., 1987).

[72] Bereiter and Scardamalia 188.

[73] See David R. Russell, Writing in the Academic Disciplines, 1870-1990: A Curricular History (Carbondale and Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991) 295. Russell traces the history of the writing-across-the-curriculum movement in composition studies, citing "writing-to-learn" as one of WAC's central tenets: "By its very nature, WAC research challenges the convenient notion that disciplines are static repositories of knowledge and replaces it with a model of disciplines as communities that are continually being reformed through their discursive practices, including those of students" (302).

CONCLUSION

In foregrounding the functions of literacy for early seventeenth century writers, I have moved in this paper from the most public kind of literacy practices to the most private. Martin Billingsley and David Browne, the handwriting masters, demonstrate the manipulation of written literacy as a social sign, connoting moral value as well as economic status. The latter of these two virtues remains implied, betraying its significance by its very omission, a fact pointedly raised by the satire of Thomas Powell. The writers of mothers' legacies, Dorothy Leigh, Elizabeth Richardson, Elizabeth Grymeston and Elizabeth Jocelin, demonstrate the uses of literacy in promoting moral and religious development in their children. These texts foster social cohesion as they creatively admonish children to conform to conventional religious beliefs and practices. Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth, performs a literacy that risks social acceptance, defying her discourse community and ultimately paying the price for that violation. Finally, George Herbert uses literacy to turn completely from worldly concerns toward his personal relationship with God. If the texts of the women writers register a submission moving toward assertion in the act of composing their manuscripts, Herbert's poetic assertions result in a movement toward submission: the simplicity of the litany and the resolve to "let God" write.

Revisiting the questions raised at the beginning of this project, I can now reflect on the usefulness of my early modern textual examples in addressing what

purpose(s) we, as teachers, envision writing to serve, and how we may be encouraging (or thwarting) writers in their pursuit of composing purposeful texts. The first question concerns what English department faculty view as our proper role within current cultural, political and economic structures. Early modern self-help guides like the manuals of the writing masters (and their satirical counterpart, Tom of All Trades) testify to the long-standing function of literacy as self-enhancement. From its early modern beginnings, commercial culture in the West has influenced literacy practices by endowing certain performances of literacy with economic value, a reality which seems destined to continue to compete with the notion of literacy as morally or philosophically valuable. Acknowledging the deep roots of literacy's competing virtues, we can now consider whether segregation of writing instruction in higher education is appropriate. Should "practical" writing courses exist separately? How does such a division mark "regular" writing courses? What is the proper subject of composition? These are difficult questions and their answers will be most significantly affected by the future development of composition as a scholarly discipline in its own right. Such a development calls for the addition of historical studies to composition's canon, which presently reflects an overwhelming preoccupation with the modern and postmodern eras. This dissertation thus stands as an important contribution to the field.

The second question above concerns pedagogical practices. Early modern women writers share a position of social disempowerment with contemporary students, male or female; George Herbert shares with them the desire for intellectual understanding

and a declared intention to pursue deeper knowledge. Through this comparison, the significance of the safe space becomes apparent as a means to articulate, to communicate, to speak within compromised circumstances. Yet all of the early modern writers occupy solitary safe spaces. Working within contexts vastly different from those enabled by modern writing education, these writers exhibit tremendous resourcefulness and self-discipline in their abilities to achieve safe spaces and to enact meaningful literacy practices. In failing to discover an early modern manifestation of the communal safe space, this study falls short. "Scribal communities" such as existed among recusant English Catholic families suggest promising sites for examination, but further study of these texts (the only existent secondary work dates from 1813) must be undertaken.[1]

Communal safe spaces, readily apparent as modern pedagogical tools if not as early modern developments, appear to promote solidarity and cohesion among writers, but the capacity for dysfunction remains. Lester Faigley reads into acts of networked writing less salutary aspects of Jean-Francois Lyotard's postmodern condition, in which "conversation is inherently agonistic and to speak is to fight":

> Implications of postmodern theory for the networked classroom do not stop with giving voice to difference, decentering the authority of the teacher, or with demonstrating the social construction of knowledge. We are in what Lyotard calls a "legitimation crisis," where there is no external authority to which we can appeal nor any way we can establish enduring values.[2]

Faigley does not relegate networked writing to a state of dys-utopia, since he sees in this practice the potential to affirm interpersonal connections as meaningful and necessary.[3]

But computer technologies should not be viewed as a pedagogical panacea. The most serious consequence of computer-assisted writing involves its potential to permanently unsettle traditional discursive practices. Hypertext constitutes an emergent rhetorical form, non-sequential in its logic and fundamentally ephemeral, meant for quick consumption and easy disposal.

In the sense that hypertext may ultimately transform discursive practices, its use in the English classroom appears mandatory. Yet the incorporation of computer technology, especially by humanistic disciplines, into classroom practice meets with both practical obstacles (namely, its cost) and with political resistance. Computer-assisted writing now exists as a legitimate sub-specialty in composition studies, but technological concerns have so far made less impact on literary studies. In his book on the convergence of critical theory and technology, George Landow writes,

> I do not expect to see dramatic changes in educational practice for some time to come, in large part because of the combination of technological conservatism and general lack of concern with pedagogy that characterize the faculty at most institutions of higher learning, particularly at those that have pretensions to prestige.[4]

Landow's observation is revealing here, both for its bold criticism and for its complete ignorance of technology's importance within composition studies. Like our embrace of pedagogy, compositionists' concern with technology constitutes another development easily ignored or devalued by our colleagues in English studies. Although it has presented me with a significant challenge in composing this dissertation, my attempt to

redress the split between literary studies and composition theory (pedagogy, computers and all) stands as another noteworthy contribution of this dissertation to the discipline on the whole.

If bridging the gap between seventeenth-century texts and modern literacy instruction represents this paper's most interesting contribution, my transhistorical focus also contains the project's most grave problems. Analogizing seventeenth-century figures to contemporary college students renders both parties inexactly; cultural specificities are erased and texts emerge as manifestations of universal conditions. Conceiving literacy practices through a metaphorical framework means reversing in some ways the very progress literacy theory has made away from essentialist paradigms. I am constructing the literacy practices of these early modern writers and creating the realities of their writing performances as my own prescription for social action, an effect of metaphorical thinking that Lakoff and Johnson predict. In choosing to read this way, I have dismissed the theoretical possibility that these writers are constructed more by their own language and by their own texts than by their presumed intentions or purposes in writing.

Such a dismissal of legitimate cultural specificities and a respect for the unique literacy practices performed within those conditions (performances which are theoretically never repeated, even by the same writers) is the price of searching for meaningful historical comparisons to student writing conditions. While my readings of

the early modern texts have demanded a careful attention to the actual conditions of writing, I have sought in these texts examples of literacy practices that can illuminate contemporary practices. The theoretical implausibilities of my analogies must be weighed against the new insights these analogies reveal. At the potential cost of historical misrepresentation, my choice to risk essentialism affords advances in the teaching of writing.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

[1] Arthur Clifford, ed., Tixall Poetry: With Notes and Illustrations (Edinburgh: James Ballantyne, 1813).

[2] Lester Faigley, Fragments of Rationality: Postmodernity and the Subject of Composition (1994; Pittsburgh and London: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992) 185, 190.

[3] Faigley 199.

[4] George P. Landow, Hypertext: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology (1993; Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) 160-1.

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Writing Center Experience

English Writing Center, University of Washington, 1996-7.

My responsibilities involved all phases of center operation: training, assisting, scheduling and observing the peer tutors. I also served as a tutor, facilitated the adoption of a new computer database, and initiated a report evaluating the worth of the center to the departmental writing program. Student patrons included a significant number of ESL learners.

English Computer Writing Lab, University of Alabama, 1990-1.

I assisted students in the process of composing classroom writing assignments exclusively on computer with Norton Textra software designed by the center's director, Myron C. Tuman.

References (available upon request)

George Dillon, Professor, Department of English, University of Washington. Box 354330, Seattle, WA 98195-4330

Malcolm Griffith, Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Washington. Box 354330, Seattle, WA 98195-4330

Earle Labor, Chair, Department of English, Centenary College of Louisiana. P.O. Box 41188, Shreveport, LA 71134-1188

Gail Stygall, Associate Professor, Department of English, University of Washington. Box 354330, Seattle, WA 98195-4330

Sara van den Berg, Associate Professor, Department of English, University of Washington. Box 354330, Seattle, WA 98195-4330

Grants and Awards

Hermoine and Louis Brown Graduate Prize for Best Article Accepted by a Journal in 1996, University of Washington, 1997
Graduate Council Fellowship, University of Alabama, 1989-90
Women Studies Research Paper Award, University of Alabama, 1990

Professional Activities

Conferences

Conference on College Composition and Communication, Chicago, IL, April 1-4, 1998: Chair, "Speech and Silencing: Boundary Lines within Military Discourse Communities; Presenter, "Coffee Talk: The Wives Club as Discourse Community"

Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, Atlanta, GA, October 23-26, 1997: Presenter, "The business of theater and characters who act"

Southern Comparative Literature Association, Athens, GA, September 25-27, 1997: Presenter, "Learning to Dissemble, 1588-1600"

South Atlantic Modern Language Association, Atlanta, GA, 1990: Presenter, "Critical Approaches to Sexual Difference"

Publications

"Laura (Riding) Jackson and the Performance of Truth," *Language and Style* (forthcoming)

Courses Taught

At the University of Washington, 1995-6:

Introduction to Expository Writing (two sections). In this course, grounded on the rhetorical nature of argument, students analyzed and produced academic arguments using popular culture "texts." I taught one section of this course exclusively for pre-Engineering majors; I also designed a new assignment for the class that asked students to compare arguments from various academic disciplines and professional fields.

English Language Study (tutorial for George Dillon's *English Language Study 370*, one section). As a recommended tutor of the professor, I met weekly with a non-traditional, returning undergraduate student to cover topics from class: pragmatics and syntax, speech acts, Gricean cooperative principles and conversation analysis.

At Centenary College of Louisiana, 1992-3:

Twentieth Century American Women Writers (one section). I designed this course as an historical survey, beginning with Chopin's *The Awakening* and including novels by Edith Wharton, Gertrude Stein, Flannery O'Connor and Joan Didion. American feminist literary theories provided thematic structure.

Rhetoric II (two sections). The second half of this first-year sequence functioned as an introduction to literature and literary theory. I incorporated six schools of contemporary criticism into a broad selection of poetry, drama and fiction to demonstrate the many and varied ways of reading literary texts. Students attended a poetry reading, a live play performance and a film version of the course's assigned novel.

Rhetoric I (two sections). In this initial first-year English course, reading and writing were based on a survey of ideas including selections from Lao-Tsu, Aristotle, Plato, Bacon, Douglass, Marx, Freud, Beauvoir and King.

At the University of Alabama, 1989-91:
Survey of British Literature I (three sections). From *Beowulf* to Pope. Promoted early to this sophomore teaching assignment, I emphasized historical contexts while experimenting among the student sections with chronological, generic and thematic structures. Period music and art helped me to convey a sense of the past.

Composition and Rhetoric (one section). In a current-traditional approach to rhetoric and composition, I chose texts and designed assignments to generate various formal structures (narrative, comparison/contrast, analysis).

Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

Composition
Classical and Contemporary Rhetoric
Literacy Theories
Poetry and Prose of the English Renaissance
Shakespeare
Applied Linguistics
Autobiography

Public Service

Tutor, Great Plains Literacy Council, Jackson County, Oklahoma, 1997-present.

Co-chair and founding member, Applied Language Theory Graduate Colloquium, University of Washington, 1995-6.