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# Composition Under Review: A Genre Analysis Of Book Reviews In Composition, 1939-2007

Sandra Wald Valensky  
*Wayne State University*

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**COMPOSITION UNDER REVIEW: A GENRE ANALYSIS OF BOOK REVIEWS  
IN COMPOSITION, 1939-2007**

by

**SANDRA W. VALENSKY**

**DISSERTATION**

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

Detroit, Michigan

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

2010

MAJOR: ENGLISH (Composition Studies)

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Advisor

Date

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## DEDICATION

*I dedicate this dissertation to the men in my life:*

*Carl, my loyal and understanding husband, who has stood by me all these years;*

*Josh, my oldest son, who enjoys people and knows how to have fun in life;*

*Zakk, my youngest son, whose life music inspires and challenges.*

*I also dedicate this dissertation in loving memory of my family members who passed away during the years of my research and writing:*

*My mom, Kathryn, who would have been proud even though she couldn't tell me;*

*My youngest brother, Tim, who told me not to let his death ruin my life;*

*My younger sister, Valerie, who taught me much about the pain and joy of living;*

*My nephew, Brent, who followed his childhood dream to become a veterinarian;*

*My great nephew, Matt, and my great niece, Lindsey, who lived their short lives with no regrets.*

*Lastly, I dedicate this dissertation to all my friends and family who have supported me unfailingly throughout this lifelong journey of learning.*

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## CHAPTER 1: DISCIPLINARITY, LITERATURE, AND REVIEWS

### Introduction

Since its pedagogical initiation into the academy in 1874, at Harvard, composition has struggled to define itself as a legitimate academic discipline or a field, with a constantly redefined object of study, a continual development of theoretical and pedagogical frameworks, and an additive set of multiple methodologies. Questions about the nature of composition as a discipline permeate much of the historical and theoretical literature, as composition constantly problematizes itself and reflects upon itself while seeking disciplinary legitimacy.

Disciplinarity is a complex and contested term, which may be defined in a variety of ways. Messer-Davidow, Shumway, and Sylvan define disciplinarity as a “coherence of a set of otherwise disparate elements: objects of study, methods of analysis, scholars, students, journals, and grants;...from Foucault, we could say that disciplinarity is the means by which ensembles of diverse parts are brought into particular types of knowledge relations with each other” (3). Tony Becher and Paul Trowler use the metaphor of tribes and territories to describe academic professional culture and the disciplinarity knowledge which is produced and engaged in by the professionals. They note that disciplines are defined by, among other features, departments, international currency, academic credibility, intellectual substance, and appropriate subject matter (19). Disciplinarity, then, involves various particular essentials that contribute to knowledge production and distribution by knowledge makers and disseminators.

Disciplinarity was adopted by the American university from the German research model, which placed a high value on the scientific method of inquiry, theoretical and

methodological approaches to the creation of knowledge, and disciplinary organization of knowledge (Brereton). With composition studies starting within the university as primarily a service course to meet the perceived writing deficiencies of the students at the time, its beginnings and subsequent evolution perpetuated a continual aspiration to be recognized by the academy's disciplinary standards. In addition to the struggle composition has had establishing its disciplinary, composition has also been viewed by some as interdisciplinary, particularly in regard to its methodologies, which it borrows from various fields including linguistics, anthropology, psychology, and others (Klein; Lauer and Asher; Kirsch and Sullivan). Since the German scientific research model stressed the importance of strict methodological approaches inherent in the particular discipline, composition, which borrowed and adapted methods from other disciplines, was often perceived as a service discipline rather than an academic discipline.

Disciplinary and disciplinary knowledge are complicated "social and historical constructions" (Shumway and Dionne 1) that are not easily defined, not easily described, and not easily attained. The disciplinary of composition and its disciplinary knowledge is even more complicated by its history and its beginnings in the academy. Composition scholars have often engaged in debate regarding their position in the institution and the costs versus the benefits of professionalization. As David Shumway and Craig Dionne assert, when composition questions its disciplinary, it is really questioning the "implication that English does not live up to the standards of 'real' disciplines," i.e. science, "an honorific, a rating attained only by some academic fields" (1). Looking at an alternative understanding of disciplinary, Shumway and Dionne define disciplines as "historically specific forms of knowledge production, having certain organizational

characteristics, making use of certain practices, and existing in a particular institutional environment” (2). Composition does meet all of these qualifications, even though it has spent a great deal of its history struggling to assert those qualifications and questioning its theories and practices. As Shumway and Dionne also point out, while “modern disciplines take research – the discovery and production of knowledge – as their goal..., [i]n the humanities...disciplinary practice is most strongly identified with the production of particular kinds of texts, academic books and articles” (5). Composition has engaged in both research and the production of texts, but not without controversy also, as to the types of research, the types of texts, and the continual debates over what constitutes knowledge building. Additional complication in composition’s disciplinary trajectory is the split of literature and writing, and as David Russell writes of the history of English, “Composition has always had the most students; literature has had the most prestige” (39). So, while composition’s disciplinarity is historically contested and debated, there have been various proclamations, from Robert Connors, Patricia Bizzell, and others, of its having reached disciplinary status.

This dissertation project investigates one genre that reflects the preoccupation with disciplinary legitimacy in composition -- reviews within the scholarly journal. As Hyland points out, “the book review seems to have largely escaped applied linguistic scrutiny,” and I would assert, the scrutiny of composition or other disciplines, as well (*Disciplinary* 43). Little formal study has been done of this genre, which is “[n]either strictly a ‘research-process’ genre, nor one of Swales’s (1996) ‘occluded’ genres of academic life” (Hyland, *Disciplinary* 43). Though reviews are often relegated to the anterior pages of scholarly journals, this study explores their “important role in

supporting both the manufacture of knowledge and the social cohesiveness of disciplinary communities” (Hyland, *Disciplinary* 43). This project contributes to the field of composition through this historical and textual investigation of reviews as they represent composition’s ambivalence about the significance of its disciplinarity. The audiences that benefit from this study include composition scholars, researchers, and practitioners.

### **Literature Review**

Three bodies of scholarly literature are particularly relevant for this investigation: the literature from composition on disciplinarity, the literature from discourse studies on the multiple functions of reviews in academic disciplines, and the literature from English for Academic Purposes (EAP) on genres. Tony Becher asserts that the “main currency for the academic is...reputation” (52), and this professional recognition is uniquely established “through the publication of one’s research findings,” (53) which provide credit and recognition for the scholar. Contributing to this publication and dissemination of research scholarship, Becher asserts the importance of reviews as “a common genre in the disciplines of the humanities” but atypical of pure and applied sciences (81). Becher argues that “the ways in which particular groups of academics organize their professional lives are intimately related to the intellectual tasks in which they are engaged” (1). The publication by academics within scholarly journals, including the publication of reviews that evaluate research published in books, is one way in which any academic group defines itself and legitimizes its position in the scholarly community.

Composition’s historical preoccupation with its academic legitimacy has been the focus of Berlin, Crowley, Connors, Olson, and others who seek to define, historicize, and

legitimize composition. In departments of English in the university as a whole, Berlin argues that curriculum “is always responsive to the changing economic, social, and political conditions of a society,” which would include composition’s ever-changing nature and redefineable characteristics (5). Berlin’s historical and theoretical studies of rhetoric and writing instruction in America chronicle the transformation of rhetoric and composition studies. From current traditional approaches that stress the pedagogical standards required of all college students through the pervasive requirement of freshman composition to the more theoretical and critical approaches taken in current composition studies, Berlin has consistently argued for the importance and legitimacy of composition studies as an academic discipline.

Crowley emphasizes the contradictions inherent in composition’s history and the universal service requirement of composition, arguing that these characteristics hold back composition from being a legitimate discipline with the “traditional goals of disciplinarity – the pursuit of knowledge and the professional advancement of practitioners” (253). Crowley documents and historicizes the marginalization and identity crisis of composition as a discipline and the academy’s low regard for practitioners. With her provocative call for the abolition of freshman composition, she argues for a broadening of composition’s disciplinary focus to include more theoretical, epistemological, and scholarly pursuits that elevate the status of composition beyond strictly pedagogical practices. In doing so, the practitioners benefit from the elevated disciplinary status as well by participation in a fuller, more scholarly disciplinary community.

Robert Connors’ historical perspective acknowledges its purpose as promoting reform of current practices in composition through review of its pedagogical beginnings.



Connors ends up telling a complex story of composition as it is affected by and affects social, cultural, and economic conditions. The pedagogical focus of Connors' work does not limit itself strictly to classroom practice but to the "economic, political, and theoretical" pressures shaping the American university, which inform composition's development as a legitimate academic discipline (*Composition* 4). By outlining composition's history, Connors argues, as does Berlin, for acknowledgement of composition's relationship to ancient rhetorical tradition and for its complete acceptance in the academy.

Moving away from the pedagogical focus of composition, Gary A. Olson, too, disputes composition's often primary emphasis on pedagogy, arguing for composition to expand its horizons toward more theoretical pursuits of knowledge and disciplinary legitimacy. As Jasper Neel asserts in Olson's *Rhetoric and Composition as Intellectual Work*, "composition becomes mature, however, able to sustain itself, when it constantly scrutinizes its theoretical underpinnings" (9). The notion of disciplinary maturity is used by Olson and Maureen Goggin, among other compositionists, when arguing about composition's disciplinary status. This argument is often tied to the theory/praxis binary, which has historically been one of the dominant themes in composition. The two camps of theory and praxis, in these so-called theory wars, as represented by Gary Olson and Joseph Harris, are often engaged in a struggle for supremacy and recognition. Maturity and growth of the discipline, however, come in the journey toward peaceful co-existence and equality of the two perspectives. Development equals movement toward mutual and respectful coexistence, not stagnation or inertia within a positioning stance. Olson argues that composition is a viable discipline by foregrounding the intellectual research and

scholarship that compositionists have been engaging in all the while they were being viewed as strictly providing a service, the teaching of writing, to American colleges and universities. Olson and others assert the need for more scholarship of a theoretical nature that will help to establish composition within the more theoretical, epistemological aspects of disciplinarity with less emphasis on the practitioner and pedagogical focus.

In studying the particularly interesting genre of the review and its connection to disciplinarity, I look to Maureen Goggin's work on the contributions of scholarly journals in composition. The theme of disciplinary legitimacy permeates Goggin's *Authoring a Discipline*, as she examines the discipline of composition through scholarly journals, which "have been one of the most important vehicles for shaping the intellectual and social features of rhetoric and composition" (186). Goggin argues that the apparatus of the journal, "one legitimating instrument of disciplinarity, function[s] in a dialectical relation with a discipline" (xiv). Reviews, one of the features of academic journals, provides a disseminating function, assisting not only in establishing respectability and professionalism, but also in "acquainting readers with a large, diverse body of knowledge" (Goggin 88). Goggin asserts that reviews "gave tangible proof of the vitality and complexities of rhetoric" (91). Therefore, the review constitutes a significant feature of the journal, a tool of scholarship and academic disciplinarity, and a legitimizing construct.

In describing the evolution of the field of composition, Goggin documents the changing role and character of the review genre within scholarly journals. "Still another symptom of an expanding field [of composition studies] is that Irmischer [the editor of *College Composition and Communication (CCC)* from 1965 to 1973] began the tradition

of devoting the Feb. issue of *CCC* to reviews” (96). As a barometer of the development of the field of rhetoric and composition, Goggin argues that *CCC*, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, displayed “another symptom of an expanding field” through this devotion of an entire issue (February) to reviews, indicating that “...composition was now beginning to generate enough books to command substantial journal space for their review” (96).

Another example Goggin uses to illustrate the influence of reviews in scholarly journals is with the *Journal of Advanced Composition (JAC)*. Since its initial editions in 1980, *JAC* has undergone several transformations in its features and editorial philosophy. During its initial editorship (*JAC* under Lally, from 1980-1986), “virtually all of the books reviewed for the journal were writing textbooks,” Goggin points out (120). In sharp contrast, later editors for *JAC*, such as Gary Olson from 1987 to 1996, led a movement “toward making *JAC* a theory journal” (Goggin 123). “Although he printed the occasional book review of writing textbooks early on, the bulk of the books reviewed under Olson have been scholarly texts” (Goggin 123). Olson’s editorial and disciplinary point of view revised *JAC*’s perspective from “practical information on the teaching of advanced writing courses to aiming ‘to be a champion of theory, to help increase the sophistication of the kinds of scholarship done in the field, and to push the borders of what it means to be composition and rhetoric’” (Olson qtd. in Goggin 123). Goggin observes this decision about reviews as a means of “constructing the field,” (120) thus giving credence to the argument that reviews are both a significant contributor to disciplines and a significant reflection of disciplines.

Goggin’s focus throughout her study is to argue that the scholarly journal contributes to a discipline through “the construction and maintenance of legitimizing

apparatuses that serve both to permit and encourage and to control and limit objects of inquiry, questions, methods, and discourses” (xxi). Ironically, as Peter Vandenberg states in a review of Goggin’s book, what makes *Authoring a Discipline*, “a significant contribution to rhetoric and composition is the argument it pursues about the impulse toward discipline and the questions it raises, explicitly and otherwise, about the limiting effects of disciplinarity” (951). Goggin’s main contribution, then, in providing this history of composition journals is to steer the discussion toward questions of disciplinarity and whether disciplinarity expands or limits a field of study. The limited view of the field of composition, as a pedagogically-driven discipline, accentuates the typical debate in composition regarding the object of study and the theoretical perspective. Reviews, then, serve in a significant fashion to legitimize and expand the subject of the discipline.

While reviews have been given limited attention in scholarly research, they have, at times, been controversial, igniting interesting reactions and responses. Fred Reynolds, *JAC* book review editor from 1990-1994, resigned this position for several reasons which he editorialized in the Winter 1994 edition, including some dealing directly with the nature of reviews. Reynolds argued that no one person with his or her own particular biases or preferences should “be allowed to do it—for too long,” the “it” referring to being the editor of reviews. Reynolds asserted that too many excellent books are published with too little space allotted to reviews of the books in journals and that the “publish-or-perish pressures” that create both an “administrative double-standard” of “get reviewed but don’t review” and a “disciplinary double standard” of graduate students seeking publication through writing reviews, yet the students’ professors wanting “real”

scholars to review their own books. In addition, he claimed that “inappropriate forces” determine what books are reviewed such as a “mere textbook” versus a “real book,” books that have been reviewed elsewhere or that have received awards, or a book that was “published by a cooperative publisher.” His analysis is that requests to respond to reviews themselves when there already is a limited amount of space in journals and the favoritism and intellectual dishonesty that results from requests for reviews of certain books are detrimental to the genre. Reynolds’ resignation stance contributes to the idea of the importance and significance attached to reviews within scholarly journals.

Another important example of the significance of reviews is demonstrated by Stephen North’s 1992 article “On Reviews in Rhetoric and Composition.” Surveys at the time showed that “subscribers cited reviews among the journals’ most useful features” for both *College Composition and Communication* and *College English* (348). North argues that books that are reviewed in composition are “pretty well guarantee[d]... to get at least sustained attention” (353). In the course of this article, North argues for the power of reviews both to promote and to stifle certain authors, arguments, and texts. He indicates that this is true mostly because while “reviewers speak” there is no time given for anyone who disagrees, or agrees for that matter, to speak back (358). North ascribes such importance to reviews in this article that he provides suggestions for reform of reviews. These suggestions include the promotion of “more dissonance around reviews” by inviting multiple reviews of the same text and by inviting authors and other writers to respond to reviews, by making the “selection process of books... a more public matter,” and by “speed[ing] up the reviewing process” to remain more current (360). North further suggests more collaboration of journal editors in the process as well as creating a

biweekly or monthly publication devoted exclusively to the review of books in English studies (360). While these suggestions were never acted upon, they do argue for a broader role and deeper significance of reviews to the field of composition.

Some other lesser known works on reviews include Evelina Orteza y Miranda's article, "On Book Reviewing," which calls for critical book reviewing that "functions as a change agent, creating a critical climate of opinion, as it presents books with new constructions of knowledge in the different areas of study that encourage possibilities for a renewal of thought and a renewed sense of commitment to our tasks" (191). Miranda, from the field of education, goes on to argue for reviews' contribution of setting works in their broader disciplinary contexts and in "relation to previously published works" (193). She also asserts that reviews "point to our quest for knowledge in researching and publishing" and help to hold "members of a scholarly community" responsible to disciplinary standards (193).

The research article has often been the genre of choice for the study of academic writing. Swales' two volumes on genre both include extensive analysis of research writing as central to academic disciplines and knowledge-making. A lengthy chapter in *Genre Analysis* approaches this academic genre in several fashions including historical, constructual, textual, and discorsal in order "to both broaden and deepen the perceptions of those concerned with the genre in practical and applied ways" (174). Swales's more recent genre study sets out "to reassess what we know of genres, their producers and their consumers, and the contexts in which they occur" (*Research 2*). Mapping out several genre constellations, including genre hierarchies, genre chains, genre sets, and genre networks, Swales argues for the complexity of "genres as *networks* of variably distributed

strategic resources” (*Research* 31). Reviews would seem to fall within the described realm of genre chains that are a succession of genres including both the “official” genre, i.e., the review, and “occluded” genres, i.e., the call for reviews, the letters, the review processes, drafts, revisions, etc.

Swales includes reviews as involving “the writer in serious evaluations, which are often replete with dedicated displays of scholarship and expertise, presumably in order to give the texts the required gravitas in the eyes of their institutional readership and to maintain the elevated status of their authors” (*Research* 19). Swales also asserts that “...the book review is problematic because this can vary from a short summary ‘notice’ to using the chosen book as a springboard for a wide-ranging essay of the type we might find in *The New York Review of Books* or in a book review article in *Language*” (*Research* 64).

The literature from English for Academic Purposes (EAP) concerns itself with families of genres, offering an account of how reviews are situated within academic genres. Swales and Feak identify reviews as one of the genres of critique within the academy. They assert that reviews have evolved from “an uncritical discussion or summary of the content of a book...to a highly evaluative genre” (181). In the field of EAP, Désirée Motta-Roth studied reviews in economics, chemistry, and linguistics and “proposed a schematic description of the elements in reviews” (Swales and Feak 183). Motta-Roth concluded that “the study of reviews associated with their context of production is relevant in that it provides EAP writing and reading instruction with more accurate information of how academic genres perform a function in specific disciplinary matrices” (125). Lorena Suárez Tejerina conducted a contrastive study of reviews in

English and Spanish in literary, history, and law journals. One of her major aims was “to define and characterise the book review genre” which she sees as descriptive, evaluative, and critical (Tejerina 80). Philip Shaw confirms the work of Motta-Roth and Tejerina in his assertion that “teachers of EAP [are interested in reviews] both as genres which offer pedagogical possibilities and opportunities for recently graduated scholars to publish in a shorter and perhaps less competitive form than articles” (“How Do We” 123). Shaw also concurs with Hyland that reviews “represent one way in which disciplinary standards are formulated and maintained” (“How Do We” 123). All of these EAP studies point to the varied social and epistemological contributions that reviews, as a genre, have played in various disciplines.

Arguing from his empirical research, Ken Hyland also sees reviews as reflective of the development of the trends and trajectories in disciplines, in general. Hyland’s *Disciplinary Discourses* argues that reviews “continue to play a significant role in the scholarship of the soft disciplines,” such as composition (43). Hyland’s study focuses on the occurrences of both praise and criticism within reviews and how those occurrences reflect promotion of arguments and perspectives within the disciplines as well as collegiality and disciplinary unity. While praise is oftentimes rare in other evaluative situations associated with composition, such as student writing, reviews display an uncommon frequency of praise particularly in the beginning and ending of the review (Hyland, *Disciplinary* 52). This praise serves to encourage further research and scholarship, further discussion of various perspectives, and deepening of professional relationships. “Reviews contribute to the dissemination and evaluation of research,” but are “shaped by the expectations and practices of their discipline... [while] attending to



disciplinary practices which embody values of collegial respect and scholastic fairness” (Hyland, *Disciplinary* 62). Reviews thus represent a somewhat non-threatening environment in which to participate in the scholarly conversation of the discipline. Hyland argues “that it is largely through texts that individuals collaborate with others, both to create knowledge and to define their academic allegiances” including the genre of reviews (*Disciplinary* x). Hyland’s argument “that academic writers do not simply produce texts that plausibly represent an external reality, but use language to acknowledge, construct and negotiate social relations” is applicable to the genre of reviews (*Disciplinary* 13). Following Hyland, Polly Tse and Ken Hyland’s metadiscourse analysis of the role of gender in academic reviews and Mackiewicz’s article on compliments and criticisms in business communication reviews further explore the impact of reviews on disciplines.

Just as composition has often been a marginalized and invisible discipline within the university, in scholarship, reviews are a “somewhat neglected genre” (Hyland, *Disciplinary* 41) and as such “[in] the academic world...reviews are often tucked away at the back of the journal and give neither space nor prominence to their writers” (Hyland, *Disciplinary* 43). While this lack of prominence and the occluded nature of the location of reviews can be problematic, Hyland argues that although the review is “a somewhat unsung genre of the academy,” it “nevertheless plays an important role” in knowledge production and disciplinary community (*Disciplinary* 43). Hyland’s study of reviews in scholarly journals specifically focuses on how the discourse of reviews reflects praise and criticism, and how this discourse contributes to “the structures of social and institutional

relations in academic texts” (*Disciplinary* 41). This study of reviews uses textual analysis to demonstrate the contributions that this genre makes to disciplinarity.

Thus, while reviews have received some attention in Becher, Goggin, Hyland, and others, there has been no full-fledged study of the genre of reviews in composition journals. This genre calls for further in-depth exploration as reviews are a changing genre within the scholarly journal apparatus of the discipline of composition. Therefore, the review, as part of the academic journal, is an essential genre in not only defining and legitimizing the discipline, but also in legitimizing participation in the professional culture of the discipline. Reviews deserve further study and in particular, reviews in English and composition journals deserve further exploration.

### **Project Description and Research Questions**

This project investigates reviews within scholarly journals as a genre which both contributes to and reflects the disciplinarity of composition. The purpose of this dissertation project is to discover historical trajectories and textual trends in reviews published in two flagship journals and to explore how these trends help reflect and shape the discipline, theory, and pedagogy of composition. The materials for this investigation consist of reviews from the two major journals in the field of composition: *College English (CE)* spanning 1939 to 2007 and *College Composition and Communication (CCC)* spanning 1950 to 2007, representing close to a 70-year perspective of composition as well as significant milestones in composition’s relatively short history as a discipline. In the following sections, I provide the research questions, corpus and methods of the study, and an outline of the chapters.

In this study of reviews in scholarly journals, the working hypothesis is that reviews reflect the historical and textual development of composition's struggle for disciplinary legitimacy. This hypothesis is investigated through the following specific research questions.

1. Historically, how do reviews reflect the disciplinary trajectory of composition studies?
2. Textually, how do genre trends in reviews reflect the development of changing research and scholarship in composition?
3. Professionally, how do journal editors contextualize the review genre and the development of reviews in the field of composition?

I investigate these questions by describing the disciplinary trajectories in the field through a historical study of reviews, by describing the textual trends of reviews through genre analysis, and then by using the genre analysis as a basis to argue for reviews as reflective of composition's struggle toward disciplinary maturity and legitimacy. I also investigate the genre of reviews and their development by gathering information from the editors through interviews and editorials.

### **Corpus**

In order to investigate the above research questions, I engage in an exploration of reviews through the selection of a corpus from the flagship scholarly journals. After consideration of several other English and composition journals such as *Written Communication*, *Journal of Advanced Composition*, *Composition Studies*, *Rhetoric Review*, and *Research in the Teaching of English*, I selected *College English (CE)* and *College Composition and Communication (CCC)* as being the most important to the

discipline, as having the longest history of the journals considered, as containing reviews of books that tend to have significance to the field, and as distinguished from some of the other journals by their more widespread readership. In addition, *College English* and *College Composition and Communication* are more clearly situated in the humanities as opposed to journals such as *Research in the Teaching of English* and *Written Communication*, which have a more social science perspective. In fact, these two journals do not contain reviews, likely pointing to their valuation of the research article over the book. According to Goggin, The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) formed in 1911, and in 1912 the *English Journal* was founded as the first NCTE publication. In 1939, *College English* appeared “as a spin-off” of the original NCTE publication and in the Nov. 2009 issue (72.2) reported an average of 6, 420 copies per issue with a total distribution of 5,189 copies (Goggin 40). *CE* quickly became the journal for literary scholarship, leaving a gap for composition, which was filled in 1950 by the first edition of *CCC*, as the official journal of the newly-formed Conference on College Composition and Communication, the composition arm of NCTE (Goggin). *CCC* maintains a large subscribership, reported in the Dec. 2008 issue (60.2) as 7,351 with an average publishing of 8,459 copies per issue. Therefore, the significance of these two journals to composition’s disciplinarity continues and provides an important resource for this collection and study of reviews.

In this study, the size of the corpus requires some consideration. Previous studies analyzing texts from scholarly journals include Atkinson, Goggin, and Hyland, whose selected corpora have varied in both size and nature of investigation. Dwight Atkinson’s study in *Scientific Discourse in Sociohistorical Context* examines scientific writing from

1675-1975 (300 years) by studying 50-year intervals of the Royal Society of London's affiliated journal *The Philosophical Transactions (PTRS)* in a "wide angle perspective" that cuts "across substantially its full modern history" (xviii). Atkinson's study selected "two closely related corpora of scientific research articles" taken from the "first bound volumes of the *PTRS* for the years 1675, 1725, 1775, 1825, 1875, 1925, and 1975" (65). While Atkinson's original corpus consisted of all articles from the above mentioned years, his main focus was on Corpus B, which "represented a subset of the articles comprising Corpus A," which was also a subset of a previous study. This Corpus B was "a 2-million-word corpus representing 10 historical written and speech-based genres ...generally sampled in 50-year segments between 1650 and 1990" known as ARCHER (Atkinson 68). Atkinson also created "a random sampling rubric to choose 12 samples from each targeted year/volume of *PTRS*, [which eventually led to] a total of 70 texts (10 per period...)" (69). This total of 70 texts supplied a corpus of 243,204 words (Atkinson 71). Atkinson synthesizes cultural-historical, linguistic, and rhetorical analyses which argue for the influence of these historical writings on contemporary scientific study.

Maureen Goggin's *Authoring a Discipline* investigates the history of scholarly journals in composition, making a case for dual function of disciplinary histories as they "contribute to the emergence and rise of" a discipline and "legitimize intellectual communities" (xiv). Goggin views this critical history of "journals, as one legitimating instrument of disciplinarity" in the field of composition, which has often struggled with "marginalization" (xiv). Goggin's study focuses on ten rhetoric and composition journals from their initial issue to 1990, and she considers the journals as wholes, not investigating single genres within them. She selected journals which "are among the most frequently

cited periodicals in the professional literature of rhetoric and composition,” including the two I have selected, *College English* and *College Composition and Communication* (xvi). In addition to examining the journals themselves, Goggin also surveyed past and present editors of the journals (xvii).

Goggin’s disciplinary history of scholarly rhetoric and composition journals “focuses more broadly on the institutionalization of rhetoric and composition as a discipline” revealed through the lens of its journals (xiv). Through the use of a gardening metaphor, Goggin “traces changes in objects of inquiry, methodologies, and discourses; shifts in the identities of contributors and editors, and in editorial policies and practices to demonstrate how a discipline both responds to and is shaped by a confluence of forces” (xiv). She argues that by tracing this history, composition will have a better perspective from which to reconceptualize and redefine itself.

Ken Hyland’s corpus for his study of reviews within *Disciplinary Discourse* covers 160 texts from 8 disciplines for a total 160,000 words (xi). Hyland’s investigation of reviews employs a corpus of “20 published reviews in each of the eight disciplines” that “varied in their average length between 1,700 words in philosophy and 400 in electronic engineering” (43). Hyland argues that “reviews continue to play a significant role in the scholarship of the soft disciplines, often consuming a considerable amount of journal space” (43). Hyland’s focus is on the appraisal of praise and criticism in reviews and how this contributes to both the disciplinary knowledge and the community-building social practices of an academic discipline (62).

For this study of reviews in prominent journals, I considered a total of 90 reviews, 45 each from *College English* and *College Composition and Communication*. From

*College English* (1939-2007), a total of 68 years, three reviews were selected from issues every five years (1939-1944-1949-1954-1959-1964-1969-1974-1979-1984-1989-1994-1999-2004). These 14 years of issues provide a corpus of 42 reviews along with three reviews which were selected from a recent year (2007) for a total of 45 reviews. Since some years' editions do not contain any reviews, I used the year before and the year after each of the above designated years to obtain useable composition reviews. In addition, if there are three reviews in a year that are related to composition texts, all three are used. If there are more than three reviews in a year that are related to composition texts, the first and last review are selected, along with one review in between.

*College Composition and Communication* (1950-2007), representing a 57-year publication history, began publishing reviews in 1953. For my study, I selected four reviews from issues every five years (1955-1960-1965-1970-1975-1980-1985-1990-1995-2000-2005). These 11 years of issues provide a corpus of 44 reviews with one review selected from a recent year (2007) for a total of 45 reviews from the *CCC* corpus. In *CCC*, reviews do not appear in any useable format beyond very short (one or two sentence) annotated bibliographies until 1957. As with the *CE* reviews, if there were not reviews in the selected years noted above, the year before and the year after was checked for reviews. Also similar to the selection process for *CE*, if there are four reviews in a year, one is selected from each issue. If there are more than four reviews in a year, the first one from the first issue is selected, the last one from the last issue is selected, and two are selected from the middle issues. This selection method proves to be more random and equalizes the numbers of reviews from each journal. *College English* is published bimonthly in September, November, January, March, May, and July, so each year

represents six issues. *College Composition and Communication* is published quarterly in September, December, February, and June, so each year represents four issues. Along with multiple issues, there are often multiple reviews per issue; when this happened, I selected the first review and the last review from the issue until I had the necessary three reviews from *College English* and four reviews from *College Composition and Communication* for every five years of the corpus.

## Methods

This investigation of reviews in composition is a qualitative, multi-modal discourse study involving textual analysis with a focus on historical trajectories and genre trends. In addition, this study incorporates interviews with the journal editors. My methods include historical analysis following Atkinson and genre analysis following Swales, Bazerman, Bhatia, and Miller.

Atkinson provides methodological frameworks for historical analysis of scholarly journals and their components. He uses rhetorical and linguistic analysis to “reveal textual development across time,” which informs my own analysis across time of the evolving genre of reviews in the field of composition (xx). Atkinson recognizes “five identifying characteristics” of his rhetorical analysis that will also apply to the analysis of the reviews (xx). The characteristics include the “eclectic” nature of the analysis as “it borrows concepts and techniques from a broad range of fields;” the “highly contextual” nature of the analysis, which includes the need for knowledge of the discipline, the social contexts, and exposure to the genres to be analyzed; the “interpretive” nature of the analysis, which calls for reading the context; the inductive nature of the analysis, which calls for “engagement with the individual texts themselves;” and the operation at the



“level of genre” within the analysis (xx). The textual trends point toward historical trajectories and disciplinary contributions.

John Swales initially defines genres as “a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes” (*Genre Analysis* 58). In Swales’ later work, he “believes that we should see our attempts to characterize genres as being essentially a metaphorical endeavor, so that the various metaphors that can be involved shed, in varying proportions according to their circumstances, their own light on our understandings” (*Research* 61). Swales analyzes reviews as a genre of importance to the academic community as they “exhibit various patterns of similarity of structure, style, content, and intended audience” (*Genre Analysis* 58). Swales also makes distinctions between occluded and non-occluded genres. Swales additionally asserts, “Academic occluded genres are, in part, those which support the research publication process but are not themselves part of the research record (45). Reviews are a public genre in that they are published in scholarly journals and thus visible and available to the academic community. On the other hand, reviews demonstrate occluded features with respect to location (anterior to the more prominent research articles within the scholarly journal) and as far as their production and use (by the limited group of journal editors and the selected review writers and readers).

John Swales’ genre analysis model is based on a series of moves and steps which define rhetorical movement. Specifically, Swales defines a move in genre analysis as “a discursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse...a functional, not a formal, unit” (*Research* 229). Steps, also labeled realizations by Swales, include among other things, “counterclaiming, raising a

question, indicating a gap, and continuing a tradition” (*Research* 229). Through the use of genre analysis, I hope to uncover how the structure of the genre of reviews utilizes certain moves and steps and how these moves and steps change over time.

The genre analysis of my project reveals various features specific to reviews as a genre in order to argue for the contribution the genre of reviews makes to the evolving disciplinarity of composition. As Berkenkotter and Huckin have argued, “knowledge production is carried out and codified largely through generic forms of writing” (1). They further assert, “Genres are intimately linked to a discipline’s methodology, and they package information in ways that conform to a discipline’s norms, values, and ideology. Understanding the genres of written communication in one’s field is, therefore, essential to professional success” (1). Carolyn Miller’s work on genres argues that “a rhetorically sound definition of genre must be centered not on the substance or form of discourse but on the action it is used to accomplish” (151). In my project, the genre of reviews is analyzed with a view toward the construction and accomplishment of the discipline’s norms.

Swales uses Charles Bazerman’s characterization of the metaphorical nature of genres:

Genres are not just forms. Genres are forms of life, ways of being. They are frames for social action. They are environments for learning. They are locations within which meaning is constructed. Genres shape the thoughts we form and the communications by which we interact. Genres are the familiar places we go to create intelligible communicative action with

each other and the guideposts we use to explore the familiar. (qtd. in Swales *Research* 61)

This metaphor of a “frame for social action” is applied to the review genre, seeking the meaning that is constructed within this genre.

Returning to the method of genre analysis, Vijay Bhatia recalls Swales’s full definition of genres by arguing that “each genre is an instance of a successful achievement of a specific communicative purpose using conventionalized knowledge of linguistic and discoursal resources” (16). Bhatia’s approach to the method of genre analysis involves placing the genre in a situational context, surveying existing literature, refining the contextual analysis, selecting a corpus, studying the institutional context, and deciding upon levels of linguistic analysis (23-24). Swales’ use of moves and steps to analyze text are further described by Bhatia who notes that moves provide genre structure, and steps are the strategies used to develop the moves (29-30). The reviews in this project are read with an eye toward identifying the steps that develop the moves, which create the genre structure.

In addition to the genre analysis of reviews, an open-ended set of interview questions was developed to capture journal editors’ views of the genre and development of reviews. Questions are asked regarding how editors view reviews in general, how they determine which books to select, how they select reviewers, and which reviews to publish. Editors also were asked to define essential qualities and features they look for in reviews, and to describe their views on the contributions and significance of reviews to both their journals and to their disciplines.

As with any research project, there are limitations of design. The genre analysis cannot be based on a corpus that would include all reviews in all issues of the journals. Similarly, historical analysis has an inherent difficulty in establishing conclusively whether reviews are more contributory or reflective of the disciplinarity of composition.

## **Outline of Chapters**

### **Chapter Two – Historical Trajectory of Reviews**

Chapter Two tracks historical features that include the form of reviews (i.e. short review, book review, and review essay); space devoted to reviews (i.e. percentage of pages devoted to reviews as compared to total pages); number of reviews (i.e. a count of reviews); length of reviews (i.e. word count); type of books reviewed (i.e. reference, textbooks, and scholarly); and the theoretical and pedagogical framework of the books reviewed (i.e. current traditional, process, expressivism, cognitive, social construction, postmodern, feminist, critical literacy/critical pedagogy, and post-process). This chapter addresses research question #1. Historically, how do reviews reflect the disciplinary trajectory of composition studies?

Included in this analysis is an assessment of the amount of space devoted to reviews in the journal and how that has changed over time. According to the NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English) website, *College English* describes its reviews as “short critical essays treating 3-5 recent books of interest to the field of English studies.” “...Each issue of *CE* typically includes ...at least one review essay covering at least two books.” It describes its process for obtaining “these cluster or field review essays” as being “solicited by the editor. Reviews generally reveal the reviewer's own

philosophical and theoretical positions as well as those of the authors under review. Frequently, according to the NCTE website, “*CE* review essays aim to support undergraduate and graduate instruction in English Departments.”

A brief pilot study of reviews in *College English* from the first edition to a current edition revealed a broad range of difference that is further explored in the complete investigation of the reviews for this chapter. In Vol. 1, No. 1 of October 1939, one book, *The Pride and Passion of Robert Burns*, is discussed in what could be considered a fuller length review of the time – 2 ½ pages. In addition, there are seven pages of “in brief reviews” covering three different categories: for the general reader, for the scholar, and for the college student. Each of these reviews is made up of a short paragraph of a few sentences. The general reader category in this issue reviews twenty-six books, mostly novels. The scholar category reviews six books including a dictionary, bibliography, and books on Chaucer, Milton, American literature, and Emerson’s letters. Finally, the student category reviews ten books including ones on punctuation, speech, English composition, college verse, English language quotations, a handbook, a business English guide, usage, grammar, and “an anthology with exercises for students of composition.” Vol. 69, No. 1 of September 2006, reveals a very different picture of reviews. The review, titled “Growing Resources in Asian American Literary Studies,” is a nine-page referenced essay that evaluates three texts: *A Resource Guide to Asian American Literature*; *Words Matter: Conversations with Asian American Writers*; and *Screaming Monkeys: Critiques of Asian American Images*. One of the aspects of English this dissertation project uncovers is the types of books reviewed in this flagship English journal and the role that composition has had in the discipline of English.

This chapter provides also the historical genre analysis of reviews in *College Composition and Communication*, again in relation to research question #1, but with a specific focus on situating reviews within composition for its own scholars, researchers, and practitioners. Again, included in this analysis is an assessment of the amount of space devoted to reviews in the journal and how that has changed over time. The guidelines for reviews for CCC simply state, “Reviews (whether single reviews or review essays) are solicited by the editor. Please contact the editor before writing a review” (CCC 58.1, 127).

In a small pilot study done in advance of this dissertation project, the first edition of CCC that included reviews was previewed. The Vol. IV, No. 2 edition of May 1953, contained an inaugural feature titled “Some of the Year’s Work in College Composition and Communication.” It was presented as a summarization of articles “as does *College English*,” while indicating not the same articles as in the *CE* journal, but rather articles that the journal’s readers may find hard to access. This first set of reviews contains brief paragraph summaries of thirty-three articles and one book. The book, hailed as “the book of 1952,” is Charles C. Fries’ *The Structures of English*. Again in Dec. 1953 in Vol. IV, No. 4, this same feature “summarizes articles in the field of composition and communication,” and this volume contains mostly educational journal articles and no reviews. In a contrast similar to that of *CE*, a more recent volume of CCC, Vol. 57, No. 3 of February 2006, contains one review essay, an 8 ½ page evaluation of three books on feminism and composition: *Fractured Feminism: Rhetoric, Context, and Contestation*; *Feminism and Composition: A Critical Sourcebook*; and *A Way to Move: Rhetorics of Emotion and Composition Studies*. The contrast between the 1950s edition and the 2006

edition is dramatic and consequential. Chapter 2 provides a detailed historical record of the reviews during the corpus years.

### **Chapter Three- Genre Analysis of Reviews**

Chapter Three presents the genre analysis of the reviews in *College English* and *College Composition and Communication*, responding to research question #1. Textually, how do genre trends in reviews reflect the development of changing research and scholarship in composition? Specifically, this chapter describes the genre features in the moves and steps of reviews and explores how the moves and steps change over the publication time of the journal. The genre study of the reviews of *CE* and *CCC* expands the textual analysis to reveal how genre trends reflect changing theoretical, pedagogical, and methodological frameworks in composition.

### **Chapter Four – Editorial Perspective on Reviews**

Chapter Four focuses on the editorial perspectives regarding the publication of reviews in the journals. This chapter responds to research question #3. Professionally, how do journal editors contextualize the review genre and the development of reviews in the field of composition? Through a review of the editorials, the transitioning of editors, and the results of interviews of the editors of the journals, the production, function and professional contextualization of reviews is revealed.

### **Chapter Five – Review Conclusion**

Chapter Five draws conclusions about the historical trajectory and genre analysis to argue for the significance of reviews to the discipline and to disciplinary knowledge. The hypothesis regarding the review as it reflects composition's historical and textual

progress in its struggle for disciplinary legitimacy is also revisited. I argue that the significant movement over time from short reviews to book reviews to review essays shows a significant shift in the review genre, and that the role of the review in composition has changed. This change is reflected in the devotion of more space in journals for lengthier reviews of individual books as well as more space for review essays of several books that address a similar issue from a situational and theoretical perspective. Authors of reviews demonstrate attention to the changing nature of the audience, which has shifted over time, from a need for brief descriptive reviews to more evaluative and scholarly approaches. I argue that reviews are a significant genre for composition studies that provide a source that reveals both the historical and current struggle for the discipline's academic legitimacy, theoretical debates, pedagogical conflicts, and divergent methodological frameworks. This final chapter also discusses the limitations of the study along with laying out an agenda for future studies.



## CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY OF REVIEWS

### Introduction

“Writing academic book reviews is a ubiquitous and mundane activity for scholars and scientists alike, as is borne out by the countless reviews, review articles, book notices, etc. published in learned journals on a regular basis,” according to Béla Hollósy, in an article based on one of the few dissertation-length studies of reviews in scholarly disciplines (1). Certainly, few would argue that reviews are a predominant type of publication in the scholarship of a field published in research, peer-reviewed journals. On the other hand, reviews are a part of scholarly journals in many disciplines, both historically and currently, and reviews can sometimes make a provocative and important contribution to scholarship in a discipline.

Perhaps, it is needless to say that it is well established that the primary genre of the scholarly journal in science and the humanities is the research article or the scholarly monograph (Swales, Hyland). However, in the humanities, historically, reviews are also a common sight on the landscape of scholarly journals, appearing typically in the anterior pages, providing a forum for the discipline to showcase the publications and critique of its research, scholarship, and textual academic record. As John Swales argues in *Research Genres*, “Book reviews have been an important part of academia for hundreds of years,” with evidence of a shift in the genre over time (18). Echoing Swales, the genre of reviews, with its mixture of summary, evaluation, and rhetoric, opens a new view of the trajectory of disciplinary knowledge in composition.

The complicated disciplinary nature of composition and rhetoric invites various approaches to access its knowledge base and legitimacy. The histories of composition

attest to the field's preoccupation with its own development and need to justify its disciplinarity (Berlin, Connors, Crowley). These histories also document various theoretical and pedagogical approaches that have no clear lines of demarcation. In other words, the various theories and pedagogies of composition frequently do not have clearly marked beginnings or endings and are often times blended not only with each other but with borrowed theories from other disciplines. For example, process pedagogy seldom stands alone but incorporates several theoretical frameworks within it, namely expressivism, cognitive theory, social constructionism, and even early critical literacy/critical pedagogy. Even while these theories and pedagogies co-exist, there is a tension and competitiveness among them for viability and dominance. Additionally, contemporary composition theories often do not replace or supersede previous theories, so historical approaches may be just as contemporary, in practice, as newer theories and pedagogies. Composition studies also has a rich tradition of borrowing from other disciplines for theoretical and pedagogical frameworks as well. An example of this includes ethnographic research and writing, which composition has borrowed or adapted from anthropology. Linguistics, history, and psychology are some of the additional disciplines from which composition has borrowed and adapted theories, methodologies, and practices. A historical analysis of reviews in two significant English journals, *College English* and *College Composition and Communication*, thus affords an opportunity to analyze a historical record of composition's evolution toward disciplinarity and its continual self-scrutiny and preoccupation with the quality and character of that disciplinarity.

### Findings: Journal Level Genre Features

In her study of reviews in chemistry, economics, and linguistics journals, Désirée Motta-Roth points out that each particular journal “has its own idiosyncrasies” when it comes to reviews (“Rhetorical” 94). The reviews that Motta-Roth studied tended to be short (between 500 to 1,000 words) and, like most reviews, located anteriorly and separately “from the higher status section that includes the research articles” (“Rhetorical” 91). Motta-Roth does specify that, at times, depending on the significance of the text, longer reviews are published that go beyond a review of a book itself into a greater discussion of the field or some aspect of the field (“Rhetorical” 91). These varying qualities and characteristics of reviews also apply to the historical record of reviews in the two journals under study here.

To analyze the significance of reviews to these journals and to the discipline of composition, I engaged in recursive readings in order to identify six categories of the journal-level genre features of the review: form, space, number, length, type, and framework. This chapter provides evidence of the historical trajectory of composition reviews through a study of the following six categories:

- the *form* of reviews, defined as format and type, including page layout and headings
- the *space* devoted to reviews, defined by percentage of pages devoted to reviews as compared to total pages
- the *number* of reviews, defined by a count of reviews
- the *length* of reviews, defined by a word count of the corpus reviews only

- the *type* of books reviewed, defined as reference, textbooks, and scholarly books within the corpus only. Reference books are defined as those used for reference but not direct instruction such as encyclopedias and dictionaries. Textbooks are defined as those used for instruction and include rhetorics, handbooks, grammar books, linguistics books, composition texts, and the like used by students and teachers. Scholarly books are defined as those dealing with research, theory, pedagogy, and other academic or scholarly pursuits, meant for professionals in the field or others interested in composition as a discipline.
- the theoretical and pedagogical *framework* of the books reviewed, defined as the theory/pedagogy that places the book within the field of composition (current traditional, process movement, expressivism, cognitive theory, social constructionism, postmodernism, feminist studies, critical literacy/critical pedagogy, and post-process theory)

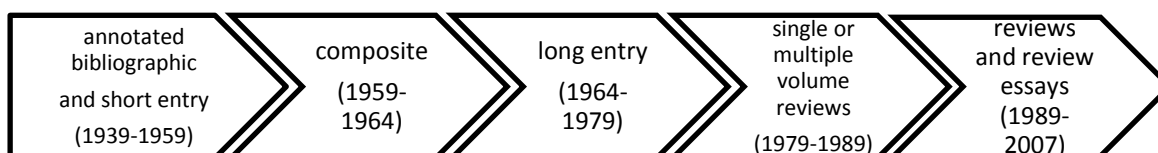
All reviews within the corpus years (*College English*, every five years from 1939 to 2007 and *College Composition and Communication*, every five years from 1950 to 2007) were studied for the first three categories (form, space, and number). Only the ninety corpus reviews themselves were studied for the last three categories (length, type, and framework). The reviews in the corpus of this study span the publication history every five years for *College English* since 1939 and *College Composition and Communication* since 1950, providing the possibility to investigate the course of composition reviews over time. In a field that has struggled with its identity and place in the academy and the English Department of that academy, reviews provide a concrete,

traceable record of the ever-changing, yet somehow always the same landscape of composition's variegated theoretical and pedagogical evolution.

### **Form of Reviews – *College English***

The first category that concerns this chapter is form, defined as format and type of the reviews in the journals. Form includes characteristics such as the format, the page layout, the headings, and the types of the reviews. The following timeline illustrates a simplified view of the various types of reviews in *College English*.

**Figure 2.1 Form Timeline – *College English***



Although this timeline is useful for illustrating the major changes in form and type throughout *College English*'s history of reviews, it should be kept in mind that the edges of these time and form transitions often blur into each other.

Reviews are a significant feature of *College English* when it is first published in Oct. 1939 as “an official organ of the National Council of Teachers of English.” Matching the formatting of the rest of the journal articles, reviews are printed in two side-by-side columns until the late 1970s when the review pages, like the rest of the journal pages, are formatted on a whole page.

### **Annotated Bibliographic and Short Entry (1939-1959) *College English***

For the most part, during the first twenty years of *College English*, 1939 to 1959, many reviews are in an annotated bibliographic format, with only two or three brief descriptive sentences in a journal feature entitled “In Brief Review.” With a range of ten to seventy books addressed in these collections of brief reviews, little “review” or evaluation of any sort beyond minimal description is presented. Large numbers of books of both literary and composition titles and subjects are archived in these annotated review pages. These annotated bibliographic records are in two column lists on multiple pages, sub-categorized under headings such as “For the General Reader,” “Teaching Materials,” “Nonfiction,” and “Fiction and Poetry.” Preceding each of these brief reviews are a few featured short entry reviews slightly longer than the annotated listings. Not surprisingly, most of these short entry reviews in *College English* cover literary titles on topics such as poets and poetry; anthologies of poetry, literature, and drama; theories and histories of literature; and various fiction titles. Within these first twenty years, even though the subtitles of reviews change, their basic form does not change. For example, around 1949 in *College English*, reviews are collected under the label “New Books,” and these are short entry reviews, which are followed by a series of brief annotated reviews under various categories such as “Fiction, Poetry, Criticism;” “Textbooks;” “New and Revised Editions;” “Recordings;” “Nonfiction;” “Professional;” and “College Teaching Materials.” These headings allow the reader to sort through the sea of annotated reviews to locate a specific book or type of book.

### **Composite (1959-1964) *College English***

In the late 1950s, the headings for reviews change to simply “Books,” in which numerous titles of a particular type are discussed in a lengthy review, known as a composite review. Some examples of these types include a survey of poetry texts, anthologies of literature of the Renaissance, and 18<sup>th</sup> century British fiction. In addition to these longer survey reviews, extended annotated bibliographic style reviews continue to appear under “Other Books.”

### **Long Entry (1964-1979) *College English***

In the early 1960s, the heading for reviews changes quite aptly to “Book Reviews,” and in the late 1960s once again back to just “Books.” While the subtitles of reviews change several times, the basic form of the review does not change until around the 1970s. In the 1970s, longer, multiple page reviews of a single featured book appear for the first time. The majority of these are literary titles such as *Beyond the Wasteland: The American Novel in the Nineteen Sixties* by Raymond M. Olderman and *The Reader, the Text, the Poem: The Transactional Theory of the Literary Work* by Louise M. Rosenblatt, but composition titles include *Black English* by J. L. Dillard in 1974. In the late 1970s, some of the reviews began to include footnotes, showing initial tendencies more toward the appearance of an article. One example review from 1979 is an eclectic mixture of four books, which includes composition book titles: *Word Abuse* by Donna Woolfolk Cross, *What’s Happening to American English?* by A.M. Tibbetts and Charlene Tibbetts, *The Reader over your Shoulder* by Robert Graves and Alan Hodge, and *On Further Examination: Report of the Advisory Panel on the Scholastic Aptitude Test Score Decline* by the College Entrance Exam Board.

### **Single or Multiple Volume Reviews (1979-1989) *College English***

In the 1980s, reviews of some single, but mostly multiple titles with a common theme or topic appear under the heading “Review,” with a subtitle that points toward the commonality of the books being reviewed. For example, “Recuperative Readings” offers a review of a group of books that “retrace the questions which produced a particular body of knowledge” while trying “to imagine how that knowledge would have differed...had alternative questions been asked” (Salvatori 209). Other example titles for multiple volume reviews on a common topic are “Women and Nineteenth-Century Fiction” and “World Literature: Teaching through the Heart.”

### **Reviews and Review Essays (1989-2007) *College English***

Review essays, displaying some of the characteristics of research and scholarly articles, such as an extended argument and a works cited listing, first appear in the late 1980s and continue throughout the 1990s and 2000s. These review essays feature reviews of one or more books on a particular theme or topic as a forum for an exchange of knowledge. In the review essays, the focus moves away from a summary and simple evaluative review of the book itself toward the presentation of an argument and critique on the theoretical, research, or pedagogical issues raised in the book or books.

### **Composition and Rhetoric Reviews in *College English***

In earlier reviews in *College English*, prior to the mid-1970s, those that relate to composition in any way include only textbooks, handbooks, dictionaries, and readers, with no substantive theoretical, methodological, or pedagogical books under review. Except for their inclusion in the very brief annotated bibliographic reviews and short



entry reviews, composition and rhetoric titles do not appear in any significant numbers in *College English* until the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s. The 1990s and 2000s contain an increasing number of reviews of scholarly composition and rhetoric books in *College English*. Ironically, since *College Composition and Communication* did not publish any reviews prior to the advent of the process movement of 1960, all of the composition texts that are reviewed prior to that time are captured in *College English*, even with its main focus on literature and not composition. *College English* then is the main forum for the review of composition texts prior to the 1960s, and those texts are mainly reference books and textbooks.

Following are three reproductions of pages of reviews in *College English* that demonstrate the evolution of the form and format over the history of the journal. These pages are taken randomly from three different decades: the 1940s, the 1970s, and the 2000s. Specifically, the first following reproduced page is taken from *College English*, Vol. 6.5 from February 1945, page 298, and is an example of formatting for annotated bibliographic reviews. The second following reproduced page is from Vol. 38.1 from September 1976, page 98, and is an example of a long entry format. The third following reproduced page is from Vol. 66.3 from January 2004, page 335, and is an example of the review essay format.

## Figure 2.2 Sample Annotated Bibliographic Review Format - CE

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## COLLEGE ENGLISH

ready for something is a state of preparation," followed in the next paragraph by the topic sentence: "Preparation means planning, getting ready for that which is to follow," he is tempted to wonder what contribution to learning, or to clarification, has been made. And when one has struggled three times through the long passage on pages 22 and 23 in which the words "interpreting," "describing," "conclusion," "generalization," "relating," "relationships," and "interpretation" are so jumbled and overlapped as to produce what the *New Yorker* would label "utter confusion," he is tempted to use the *New Yorker's* laconic

but profane form of literary criticism for such passages.

The subjects of poise and of overcoming nervousness, on which the standard textbooks waste so much space, are taken care of in one sentence, as part of a paragraph on "warming up": "Take a few deep breaths, engage in some kind of light physical workout, acquire poise—by force if necessary, overcome nervousness, but remain on the alert." This, at least, is not overelaboration.

JOHN DOLMAN, JR.

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

*In Brief Review*

[Mention under this head does not preclude review elsewhere.]

## FOR THE GENERAL READER

*The Shape of Books To Come.* By J. DONALD ADAMS. Viking. \$2.50.

Foreword: "This book derives from the profound conviction that literature, during the years immediately ahead, will seek above all else to restore the dignity of the human spirit . . . the day of untempered naturalism is dead . . . thus too is the day of man's degradation dead, as he has revealed it in his books; there is breaking over literature, I believe, the first new dawn of hope and will. We are moving into a new realism in which vision and aspiration will be joined with fact." Mr. Adams discusses the figures and phases of American literature since 1900 which, he feels, are connected with the present drift and points out their indebtedness to earlier writers and the great tradition.

*The Golden Rooms.* By VARDIS FISHER. Vanguard. \$2.50.

This is the second volume of a series of novels planned to tell the history of the development of primitive man. Elemental instincts are being replaced by sparks of intelligence as this primitive family group, whose daily living makes the story, learn to use and control fire, make and use crude implements and weapons, make a home of "golden rooms" in a cave, and tame the wolf cub. Mr. Fisher's *Darkness and the Deep*, published a couple of years ago, deals with another family group of the same period but yet more primitive than the people of *The Golden Rooms*. When the two groups meet, the first war begins.

*The Green Years.* By A. J. CRONIN. Little, Brown. \$2.50.

Robbie Shannon, a little Dublin orphan, is taken into the home of his mother's people in Scotland, where life seems very strange to him, brightened only by finding a pal in his grandfather—a tartar. Robbie grows up, and we watch the process. Enthusiastic readers of *The Keys of the Kingdom* and *The Citadel* may be a bit disappointed in this book.

*Ever New England.* By SAMUEL CHAMBERLAIN. Hastings. \$3.50.

Another of Mr. Chamberlain's beautiful photographic books.

*Brave Men.* By ERNIE PYLE. Holt. \$3.00.

The human side of the war is told in dispatches from the war front by the author of *Here Is Your War*. Book-of-the-Month Club choice for December.

*Pause To Wonder.* By MARJORIE FISCHER and ROLFE HUMPHRIES. Messner. \$3.00.

Sixty-six authors are represented: Virginia Woolf, Maugham, Steinbeck, Thurber, Orson Welles, and others. Ironic, humorous, queer. *Good*.

*Story of a Secret State.* By JAN KAASKI. Houghton. \$3.00.

The author, a reserve officer in the Polish Army, became a liaison officer in the Polish underground. He tells his story of the life the Poles have endured under German brutality and what the underground (co-selections, January Book-of-the-Month) has accomplished.

*Behold Trouble.* By GRANVILLE HICKS. Macmillan. \$2.75.

"I will not bear arms," declared young Pierre Mason. From New York he returned to his father's

Figure 2.3 Sample Long Entry Review Format - CE

## Books

THE FEMALE IMAGINATION by Patricia Meyer Spacks (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1975, 326 pp., \$10.00)

Explicitly antihistorical, *The Female Imagination* explores a wide range of books written by women in an effort to discover continuities in “ways of female feeling” and characteristically feminine patterns of self-depiction that endure despite social change. The chronological coverage is about as broad as it can be within the Anglo-American tradition of women’s writing, extending from the Duchess of Newcastle and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to Doris Lessing. It investigates journals, letters, and autobiographies in addition to novels. Spacks deals with the classics of literature by women and also turns up some refreshingly unworked material, especially amongst the autobiographies. Not the least service she performs (although not a stated goal) is to convince you of the wealth of material for women’s studies courses. George Eliot, Jane Austen, Woolf, Lessing, the Brontës, Kate Chopin have become staples. But how many other women have left records, in varying degrees of explicitness, of their experience, and how interesting these records are! Mrs. Gaskell, Edith Wharton, Lillian Hellman, Beatrice Webb, Isak Dinesen, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Mabel Dodge Luhan, Mary MacCarthy, Mary MacLane—Spacks does not show, does not attempt to show, that all these women are first-rate writers, indeed not all of them are, but she does show that their oddly assorted works repay attention, and by applying the same critical intelligence to works of fiction and non-fiction alike, she stretches fruitfully one’s assumptions about what should be read as literature. This is not a book anyone



interested in women’s studies will read passively; it is provocative, stimulates thought. An encyclopedic enterprise like this, where it does not provoke disagreement, will at least provoke addenda, writers who might have been included, from Afra Behn to Tillie Olsen.

Chapter by chapter, Spacks creates a fascinating gallery of psychological types, a catalogue of feminine strategies. Here is the adolescent who values herself for her inability to adjust to life yet who is unwilling to be treated as a child. Here is the woman who treasures her misery as a sign of her uniqueness. Working from the Freudian model of women as passive, narcissistic, and masochistic, Spacks shows how women—in life and in fiction—have made use of these characteristics to achieve a measure of success. Particularly in her discussions of nineteenth-century writers, Spacks is acute on how women have exploited the hidden opportunities of an oppressive situation, turning the disadvantages of expected feminine behavior to advantage, using passivity as a means to power, taking care of others as a vehicle for control and mastery, a limited existence as a testing ground for emotional growth. The result is to leave one awed (or is it

Figure 2.4 Sample Review Essay Format - CE

## REVIEW: Truth and Method: What Goes On in Writing Classes, and How Do We Know?

Michael Bernard-Donals

*Rehearsing New Roles: How College Students Develop as Writers.* Lee Ann Carroll. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2002. 166 pp.

*Misunderstanding the Assignment: Teenage Students, College Writing, and the Pains of Growth.* Doug Hunt. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002. 175 pp.

What really goes on in first-year writing classes? How do students in them develop as writers, and how does that development continue in other, more complex writing tasks in and outside of the university? These are tough questions to answer, though over the last few years several studies—some longitudinal (such as Marilyn Sternglass's 1997 *Time to Know Them*), some case studies (such as Ann Herrington and Marcia Curtis's 2001 *Persons in Process*)—have tried. But because the situations of writers vary so drastically across and even inside institutions, and because their lives as writers intersect with their lives as men and women, workers and students, and members of various religious, racial, geographical, and other communities, any such study can only give us part of the answer, regardless of how comprehensive it is.

The two books reviewed here attempt to give us answers from two perspectives. The first perspective is institutional, from which the authors describe first-year writing's place in the general education curriculum, and how its place affects the more discipline-specific writing that students do later. The second is developmental, from which the authors examine how writing tasks during the college years become more complex as students move through school, and how that complexity is

**Michael Bernard-Donals** is professor of English at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where he teaches courses in rhetoric, critical theory, and Holocaust studies; he also directs the department's first-year writing course. He is the coauthor, most recently, of *Between Witness and Testimony: The Holocaust and the Limits of Representation* and coeditor of *Witnessing the Disaster: Essays on the Holocaust and Representation*.

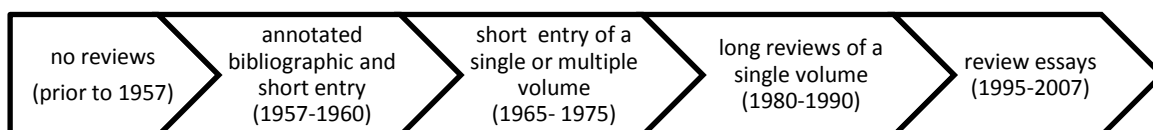
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*College English*, Volume 66, Number 3, January 2004

### Form of Reviews – *College Composition and Communication*

The following timeline illustrates a simplified view of the various types of reviews in *College Composition and Communication*. As with *College English*, although this timeline is useful for illustrating the major changes in form and type throughout *College Composition and Communication*'s history of reviews, it should be kept in mind that the edges of these time and form transitions often blur into each other.

**Figure 2.5 Form Timeline – *College Composition and Communication***



#### No Reviews (Prior to 1957) *College Composition and Communication*

As noted above, there were no reviews in *College Composition and Communication* when it was first published in March 1950 as “the official bulletin of the Conference on College Composition and Communication.” However, the first edition, which is a mere sixteen pages, includes an apologia from the chairman of CCCC and the editor of *College Composition and Communication* as an introduction to the conference and journal: “One might apologize for the temerity which adds another publication to our already groaning presses and readers” (Gerber 12). The purpose of the Conference on College Composition and Communication is outlined in this first edition as threefold: a fall meeting for members only; a quarterly bulletin, (*College Composition and Communication*) “designed for a highly specialized group [whose content]...does not

overlap in purpose or material with *College English*"); and a spring meeting, "open to everyone interested in the problems of teaching composition or communication at the college level" (Gerber 12).

The editor, in the first issue, writes the following about the journal: "... [*College Composition and Communication*] might do a great deal of good and be of service for a long time... to provide a 'systematic way of exchanging views and information quickly' and a 'means of developing a coordinated research program' ...to preserve and disseminate to wider audiences the valuable papers and report given at the fall and spring meetings" (Roberts 13). Interestingly, this editorial note makes an argument for the field of composition viewing itself as a research field from its very beginnings. The editor goes on to assert that *College Composition and Communication* will serve its readership "...modestly and with limited means. We can promise quarterly publications of a sixteen page issue. Eventually our membership may grow sufficiently large to support the more frequent publication of a thicker bulletin" (Roberts 13). While the initial issue of this journal is unpretentious, the editor does predict and aspire to the typical disciplinary activity of research and publication of scholarship.

In May 1953, a feature of the journal appears for the first time, entitled "Some of the Year's Work in *College Composition and Communication*." Again, apologetically, the editor writes that *College English* summarizes "articles in the field appearing in other magazines"; however, *College Composition and Communication* will not be summarizing those same articles, but will "summarize materials from some of the periodicals which may not be too easily accessible" (56).

### **Annotated Bibliographic and Short Entry (1957-1960) *College Composition and Communication***

In December 1957, a feature entitled “Among the New Texts” appears for the first time, and this is the first time reviews of any type appear in *College Composition and Communication*. Most of the initial reviews are in annotated bibliographic format, made up of a descriptive sentence or two, with a few that are a little longer, up to a couple of paragraphs. There are also occasionally some short entry reviews of about 200 words on both single and multiple titles in these early years. Some examples of reviews of this type include *Composition, A Course in Writing and Rhetoric* by Richard M. Weaver and *Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr.

### **Short Entry of a Single Volume or Multiple Volumes (1965-1975) *College Composition and Communication***

During these years, there are some issues that contain no reviews at all. For example, in 1965, the November issue is devoted to directory information for graduate study assistantships and fellowships in place of reviews. In the issues that reviews do appear, some of the reviews are short, less than a page, and may range from a review of a single book up to reviews of multiple books. For 1970, the February and May issues are the only ones that contain reviews, and these range from single reviews to reviews of eight or nine books. The February issue of 1975 is the exclusive issue for that year that contains reviews. There are twenty-four short entry reviews on seventy-one pages in this issue with seventeen reviews covering composition books and seven covering non-composition books. Examples of these reviews include *A New Reading Approach to College Writing* by Martha Heasley Cox, *Patterns: Readings for Composition* by James D. Lester, and *Probing Common Ground: Sources for Writing* by James Burl Hogins.

### **Long Reviews of a Single Volume (1980-1990) *College Composition and Communication***

During the 1980s and 1990, the majority of the reviews focus on single books, and each one of these substantial length single volume reviews is written by one reviewer. These reviews range from about 750 words to over 2500 words for the single book, providing the opportunity for more detail, specifics, and depth about a single volume work. The October issues during these years do not contain any reviews, and instead introduce a feature called “Counterstatement,” where compositionists respond to articles from a previous issue. Two examples of these single reviews include *The Great American Writing Block: Causes and Curse of the New Illiteracy* by Thomas C. Wheeler, reviewed by Susan Miller and *A Teacher’s Introduction to Deconstruction* by Sharon Crowley reviewed by Edward M. White.

### **Review Essays (1995-2007) *College Composition and Communication***

The mid 1990s mark the beginning of the present day review essay, a lengthy review of multiple books on a particular topic; only occasionally does a review feature a single volume. These review essays include evaluation and argument about the book itself and the book’s subject matter or framework. One example of a review essay of this time period includes the following review: *The Literary Structure of Scientific Argument: Historical Studies* edited by Peter Dete, *The Literature of Science: Perspectives on Popular Scientific Writing* edited by Murdo William McCrae, and *Understanding Scientific Prose* edited by Jack Selzer all reviewed by Liz Hamp-Lyons. Another example is a review essay titled *Affecting Rhetoric*, which features *The Transmission of Affect* by Teresa Brennan, *Toward a Civil Discourse: Rhetoric and Fundamentalism* by



Sharon Crowley, and *Impersonal Passion: Language as Affect* by Denise Riley, all reviewed by Cory Holding. Harkening back to an earlier form, during 1995 only, interspersed among the review essays is a feature entitled “Recent Books” in which about ten to twenty books are reviewed in short paragraphs.

### **Composition and Rhetoric Reviews in *College Composition and Communication***

Following are three reproductions of pages of reviews in *College Composition and Communication* that demonstrate the evolution of the form and format over the history of the journal. These pages are taken randomly from three different decades: the 1960s, the 1980s, and the 2000s. Specifically, the first following reproduced page is taken from *College Composition and Communication*, Vol. 11.3 from October 1960, page 298, and is an example of formatting for annotated bibliographic reviews. The second following reproduced page is from Vol. 31.1 from February, page 91, and is an example of a single book long entry format. The third following reproduced page, page 182, is from September 2008, Vol. 60.1, and is an example of the review essay format.

Figure 2.6 Sample Annotated Bibliographic Review Format- CCC

## Among the New Texts

**HOW AND WHERE TO LOOK IT UP**, by Robert W. Murphey. (McGraw-Hill, 1959, 720 pp., \$15).

This new guide should be purchased by Freshman English programs for its instructors. Superficially it might seem to offer few advantages over the old standby, Winchell's **GUIDE TO REFERENCE WORKS** (American Library Association, 1951, supplement in 1954), which is cheaper (\$10, \$3.25 for paper binding), better bound (thinner paper, tighter stitching), and more prestigious. Murphey's 70-page subject and title index, however, is more complete, "unstumped" even by the supreme test, a list of Freshman "free topics." The 43-page "Reference Works and Their Use" is usable either as supplementary reading for classes or as brush-up for the instructor. "Basic Types of Reference Sources," (descriptions of encyclopedia, almanacs, and guides to bibliographies, periodicals, directories, government publications, and graphic information) gives not only standard directions but also many surprising uses of references such as how telephone books are used for espionage and how the *New York Times* is used to tell whether someone is still alive. "Specific Sources of Information" contain leads to biographical and geographic data and 481 subjects including accounting, ballet, coptics, hymnology, military science, proofofreading, women, yoga, and zoos.

Mr. Murphey started out cheekily to produce the reference work "most useful for the large number of readers." Because his book answers almost every conceivable question about library usage and is written in engaging, chatty first person, he probably succeeds. Henceforth, freshman handbooks will rely heavily on this guide for their chapters on library usage.

Boston University  
HARRY H. CROSBY

**SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR THE STUDY OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE**, Richard D. Altick and Andrew Wright (Macmillan, 1960, 138 pp., \$2.50).

This attractive paperback (sewn binding) bibliography, compiled by two scholars from the Ohio State University, offers some 500 items, listed under 31 headings, essential in the study of English and American literature. The entries are printed in clear type on good paper; they are numbered, but

gaps are left in the numbering for the addition of other titles. All verso pages are blank for such additions and for notes. Occasionally the compilers comment on an entry. There are two pages of "Some Books Every Student of Literature Should Read" (a highly subjective group and perhaps the least valuable part of the book), thirteen pages of "A Glossary of Useful Terms," and thirteen pages of Index. The price is a little steep, but the book should be most useful.

GEORGE WILLIAMS  
Duke University

**AMERICAN LITERARY FORMS**, William Van O'Connor, Thomas Y. Crowell, 1960, 5 vols., \$13.75, paper, boxed).

In five well-printed and well-bound paperback volumes, William Van O'Connor, the general editor of *American Literary Forms*, has assembled more than 1500 pages of American literature—dramas, essays, short novels, poetry, and short stories—that provide a comprehensive literary survey arranged chronologically by genre. Generally speaking, the first selection in each volume was chosen from among the earliest of its kind to show identifiably native characteristics. This emphasis on our "American heritage" declares itself from each table of contents.

Of the introductions to the individual volumes, R. P. Blackmur's handsomely written and brilliantly conceived analysis of form in the American short novel best fulfills the promise of the general title. Karl Shapiro introduces the poetry with an evaluation that seeks to shift the balance of critical esteem from the expatriates toward those poets who find their materials in the American milieu. Shapiro's preferences are reflected in his choices which are as fresh as an anthologist's can be.

Ray B. West's short stories and Lewis Leary's gracefully and intelligently introduced essays cover the ground well, while Alan Downer's rapid survey of American drama includes examples which, though of marginal literary significance, add historical interest to a gallery of distinct forms related to the social, intellectual, and artistic climate out of which they grew.

Each volume provides a bibliography. The best of these are Blackmur's, Leary's, and Shapiro's.

FRANCIS E. SKIPP  
Duke University

Figure 2.7 Sample Long Entry Review Format - CCC

## Reviews

**Teaching Expository Writing**, William F. Irmischer (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979, 192 pages).

Reviewed by Walker Gibson, University of Massachusetts

Bill Irmischer may be the perfect person to have written this book—an introductory guide for beginning teachers of composition. As a teacher himself for over thirty years, as an extraordinarily durable director of a large freshman writing program, and as editor for some years of *CCC*, he is surely as well qualified as anyone to undertake this important task. The result is a short and consistently unpretentious book, low-key, disarming, optimistic, sensible, moved by a determination to be practical and useful to young teachers who don't have much idea what to do.

Irmischer tells his readers that the main thing people should do in a writing class is write. But then, if we grant that a kind of success in our society is possible without writing, why teach it anyway? Quoting Robert Heilman, Irmischer emphasizes "the process of putting together. We have composed, and in a sense we are composed." In practice, the teacher's job is learning "what concessions to make to freedom and what concessions to make to discipline." Irmischer is a conservative relative to the messengers of a decade ago; nevertheless he devotes a chapter to "Acknowledging Intuition," by which he means "perceptions we accumulate, internalize, and synthesize into patterns." For writers, this means developing a sense of tone, in tune with one's audience; a sense of simplicity, akin to Hirsch's "readability"; a sense of prose rhythm; and finally a sense of order. The good composition teacher is above all one who cares, who avoids dogmatism in a continuing effort to build up student confidence.

If there is nothing terribly surprising about these propositions, they are nevertheless worth repeating, especially to beginners. "A little humanity and sensitivity" is what Irmischer is calling for, and if that seems a bit obvious, we all know how often these qualities are missing from the classroom.

Turning in his Part II to more concrete considerations, Irmischer briefly outlines several possible plans for structuring a course. A chapter on Topics includes a number of specific isolated suggestions; he is less confident about setting up a series of interrelated assignments, though he refers us to Coles' *The Plural I* if we wish to pursue that line. (And we should!) A chapter on Pre-Writing proposes several devices for stimulating organized composing, including the making of collages. Heuristic procedures for the writing of papers include Pike's particle-wave-field theory for changing perspective, and Burke's dramatic pentad. This leads to teaching the structure of paragraphs and sentences, with emphasis on the work of Christensen, Becker, and Paul Rodgers. (Rodgers is neatly quoted: "Paragraphs are not composed; they are discovered. To compose is to create; to indent is to interpret.")

I've mentioned Irmischer's conviction (which I share) that the main thing to do in a writing class is to get writing. It's consistent with this conviction that matters of vocabulary and mechanics are treated after the larger issues of topics and organization. Even spelling gets its due, but near the end. I would have placed Style in a more central position than Irmischer does, but his chapter on the subject is adequate and

**Figure 2.8 Sample Review Essay Format – CCC**

Daphne Desser

**Review Essay**

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Politics, Gender, Literacy: The Value and Limitations of  
Current Histories of Women's Rhetorics

***Managing Literacy, Mothering America: Women's Narratives on Reading and Writing in the Nineteenth Century***

*Sarah Robbins*

Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004; 326 pages

***Regendering Delivery: The Fifth Canon and Antebellum Women Writers***

*Lindal Buchanan*

Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005; 202 pages

***Vote and Voice: Women's Organizations and Political Literacy, 1915–1930***

*Wendy B. Sharer*

Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004; 218 pages

My inclination has always been to look to history to answer life's big questions, and thus, as a female (and feminist) academic specializing in writing and rhetoric, I am the sort of person who can get enthusiastic about, for example, the Radcliffe course catalogue published in 1920 that one of my graduate students purchased on eBay the other day. Histories of women's discursive practices are just the sort of reading I treasure and enjoy. I didn't mean, therefore, to pose a controversial question when I asked the ten women currently enrolled in my

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While composition and rhetoric reviews appear slowly and gradually in the publication of this journal, once they appear, the reviews increasingly are developed from brief annotative entries to full length review essays. The 1950s and early 1960s contain annotated bibliographic and short entry reviews. The mid 1960s to 1980s are dominated by short entry of single and multi-volume composition books. The decade from 1980 to the mid 1990s feature long reviews of a single book. Finally, from the mid 1990s to 2007, the contemporary review essay is the exclusive format for reviews. The reviews move from a focus on reference books to textbooks to scholarly texts. As such, the reviews in *College Composition and Communication* demonstrate the historical trajectory of composition as a discipline.

### **Review Space**

In this study, the second characteristic of reviews that I consider is space, which is measured by the percentage of pages devoted to reviews as compared to total journal pages. I used percentages here because in order to measure space, the number of pages turns out to be a non-viable distinctive feature since what constitutes a page varies widely over time due to various font sizes and styles, use of columns or full page formatting, and various other print features that render the term “page” less meaningful.

### **Space - *College English***

For the 109 issues of *College English*, Chart 2.1 indicates the total number of journal pages per year, the total number of review pages per year, and the percentage of review pages in relationship to total journal pages.

**Chart 2.1: Number/Percentage of Review Pages Compared to Total Journal Pages**

<i>College English</i> Year- # Issues	Total Number of Journal Pages	Total Number of Review Pages	Percentage Review Pages
1939 – 3	288	33	11%
1944 – 8	481	43	9%
1949 – 8	489	56	11%
1954 – 8	500	54	11%
<b>1959 - 8</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>21%</b>
1964 – 8	653	66	10%
1969 – 8	752	17	2%
1974 – 9	1156	21	2%
1979 - 8	909	48	5%
1984 – 8	726	48	7%
1989 – 8	739	100	14%
<b>1994 – 8</b>	<b>811</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>20%</b>
1999 – 6	720	82	11%
2004 – 5	498	43	9%
2007 – 6	612	34	6%
Totals	9860	916	10%

As the chart indicates, the review pages in the corpus for *College English* range from lows of 17 pages in 1969 and 21 pages in 1974 (2% of the total journal pages for those years) to highs of 109 pages in 1959 (21% of the total journal pages for that year) and 162 pages in 1994 (20% of the total journal pages for that year). The chart also illustrates that for these fifteen years of journal issues of *College English*, comprising 9,860 pages, an average of 10%, or 916 pages, are devoted to reviews.

As Chart 2.1 demonstrates, the years of 1969, 1974, 1979, and 2007, all represent percentages well below the average of 10% of the total journal pages devoted to reviews. By way of explanation, for 1969 and 1974 only one issue of each of these years contains reviews, and for 1979 and 2007 only half of the issues contain reviews. In these issues, the journal shifts away from reviews as a feature and devotes that space to some other writing, including opinion pieces.

Two additional years, 1959 and 1994, are noted in bold in the chart since they represent a significant increase in the percentage of review pages to total journal pages and are explained by shifts in the genre of reviews: the first year (1959) of a significant increase in the percentage of review pages, up to 21%, represents a genre shift to composite reviews; the second year (1994) of a significant increase in the percentage of review pages, up to 20%, represents another genre shift to the review essay.

### **1959 - Composite Reviews - *College English***

The only composition-based review that is not in annotated bibliographic form during 1959 is a fourteen-page composite review based on twenty-eight freshman composition textbooks. Since there is only one composition review in 1959, in order to fill the corpus requirement, I needed to look to the subsequent year, 1960, for two additional composition reviews. The three composition reviews in the corpora from this time period are all composite reviews. Composite reviews are very lengthy survey reviews, covering many books of the same type or genre in an extended, in-depth review of each of the books as well as a review of the type or genre, in general. The two composition reviews from 1960 are both composite reviews: one is a review of twenty-six language books, and the other is a yearly review of no less than seventy-one composition texts. The composite review of seventy-one composition texts, under the title “Grammar with Tears,” is characterized as a “‘review’ to survey all of the composition texts published since...1959” (426). The texts are sub-categorized as complete courses, meaning a reader, handbook, and rhetoric all in one; readers, handbooks, and rhetorics individually; controlled student research books, offering readings on history and literary topics, which are then used to write a documented theme;

and finally workbooks. The remaining reviews in 1959 cover 247 annotated bibliographic reviews and four full reviews of literary titles.

### **1994- Review Essays - *College English***

In addition to the composition reviews, as one would expect, the issues of 1994 contain ten literary review essays covering thirty-eight different books. In 1994, the increase in pages is explained by four full review essays of composition texts covering a total of eighteen books. These review essays are in-depth looks at several texts of the same theoretical or pedagogical category. The first one is entitled “The Politics of Radical Pedagogy: A Plea for ‘A Dose of Vulgar Marxism’” and covers five books on critical pedagogy/critical literacy by some well known scholars, Giroux, Graff, and Shor among them. The second review in this year is entitled “Critical Literacy, Critical Pedagogy” and covers three books dealing with literacy, politics, and pedagogy as it relates to basic writers, diverse writers, and the theoretical framework of critical literacy. The third composition review essay in 1994 is entitled “Theory, Method, Practice” and covers five books on rhetoric and technology. These review essays present both comprehensive appraisals and evaluations of the books themselves as well as arguments regarding the theoretical and pedagogical frameworks of the books in question.

### **Space – *College Composition and Communication***

For the forty-six issues of the eleven corpus years for *College Composition and Communication*, Chart 2.2 indicates the total number of journal pages per year, the total number of review pages per year, and the percentage of review pages in relationship to



total journal pages. As this chart illustrates, reviews represent about 596 pages out of a total of 5757 journal pages, or an average of 10%, much the same as for *College English*.

**Chart 2.2: Number/Percentage of Review Pages Compared to Total Journal Pages**

<i>College Composition and Communication</i> Year- # Issues	Total Number of Journal Pages	Total Number of Review Pages	Percent Review Pages
1960 – 4	250	13	5%
1965 – 5	440	50	11%
1970 – 5	542	66	12%
<b>1975 – 4</b>	<b>424</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>17%</b>
1980 – 4	440	26	6%
1985 – 4	508	40	8%
1990 – 4	513	53	10%
1995 – 4	603	58	10%
2000 – 4	617	55	9%
2005 – 4	680	73	11%
2007 – 4	740	91	10%
Total	5757	596	10%

The first year of reviews, in 1960, at the low of 5% of the journal, exemplifies the initial offerings of reviews. Chart 2.2 also illustrates what Maureen Goggin asserts, “Rhetoric and composition was now [late 1960s and early 1970s] beginning to generate enough books to command substantial journal space for their review” (96).

### **1975 – Review of Current Books Issue – *College Composition and Communication***

For the years of the *College Composition and Communication* corpus that contain reviews, 1975, noted in bold in the chart, stands out as the one with the largest percentage of pages devoted to reviews, 17%. This year is an example of only one issue—February—containing reviews. The practice of “devoting the February issue of *CCC* to book reviews,” had been started by William Irmscher, who was the sixth editor of *College Composition and Communication*, serving from 1965-1973 (Goggin 96, 211).

In 1975, these pages represent reviews of multiple books, with seventeen reviews of sixty-two composition titles and seven reviews of twenty-eight non-composition titles. The reviews in 1975 each cover only two to three books and are not yet written in the review essay genre. The reviews cover freshman composition anthologies, rhetorics, grammar texts, and pedagogy for secondary English.

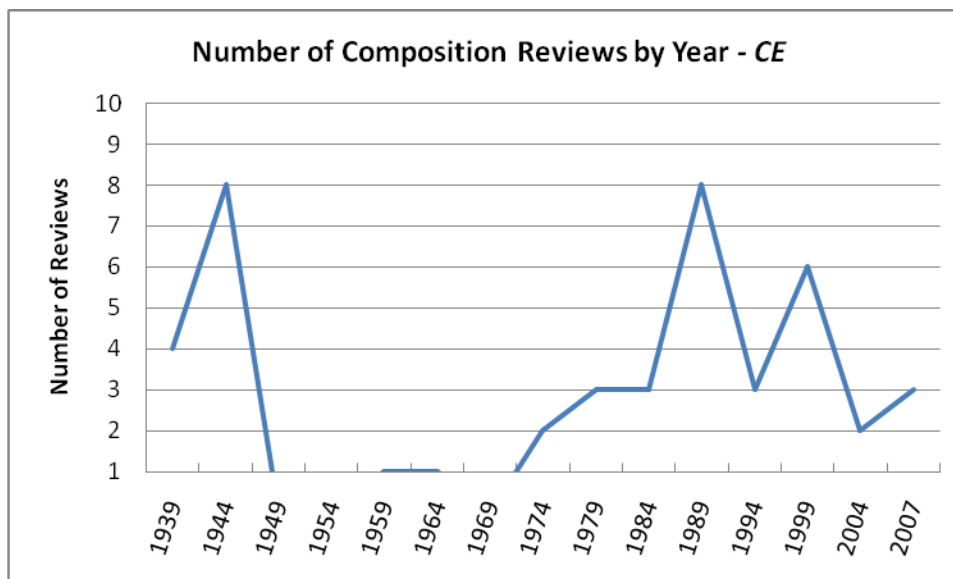
### Number of Composition and Rhetoric Reviews

The number of composition and rhetoric reviews might obviously and easily be considered a viable and meaningful way in which to measure the significance of reviews to the journal and its readership. To establish the number of reviews, I counted all of the reviews in the journals and then determined the number related primarily to composition.

### Number of Reviews – *College English*

Figure 2.9 illustrates the number of composition reviews published in *College English* during the corpus years.

**Figure 2.9**



Over these years of 109 issues for *College English*, there are a total of 44 (36%) composition reviews and 79 (64%) non-composition reviews. In addition, there are 1,611 annotated reviews from 1939-1964. Of the 1,611 annotated reviews, 189 (12%) are composition titles and 1,422 (88%) are non-composition titles. Perhaps not surprising because of the nature of this journal, the percentages of non-composition titles are greater in this journal. As Figure 2.9 indicates, 1944 and 1989 show increases in the number of composition reviews as compared to the other years in the corpus.

### **1944- *College English***

In 1944, there are eight reviews on composition titles and eight reviews on literary titles. During this same year, there are 271 annotated reviews, with 36 on composition titles and 235 on literary titles. The eight 1944 composition reviews are all on a single book and take up one to two pages each. I was not able to determine the reason for this increased number of composition title reviews during this year.

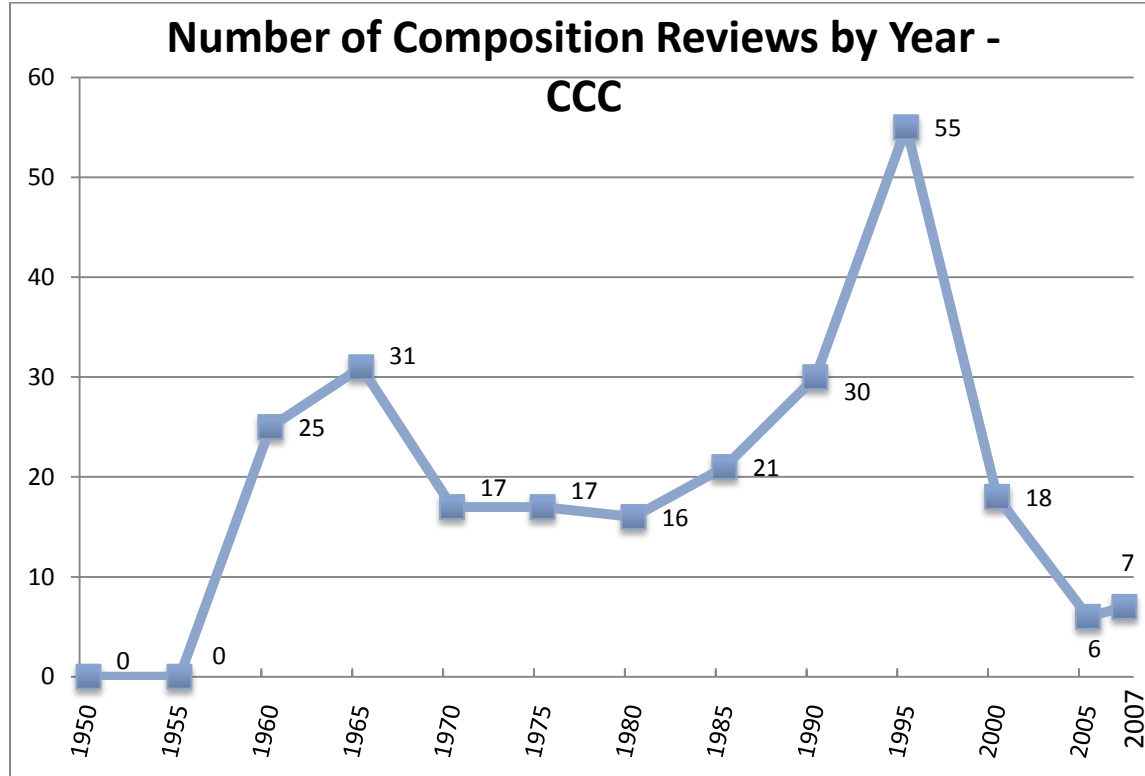
### **1989 – *College English***

Surprisingly, for this journal, in 1989 there are eight reviews on composition titles, with only five reviews on literary titles. The 1989 reviews are review essays of two to three books and take up six to eight pages each. Perhaps by this time in its history, composition is more established as a part of English studies.

### **Number of Reviews – *College Composition and Communication***

Figure 2.10 illustrates the number of composition reviews published in *College Composition and Communication* during the corpus years.

Figure 2.10



As this figure indicates, 1965 demonstrates an increase as compared to the previous years in the number of composition reviews. In 1965, there are thirty-one composition reviews and seventeen non-composition reviews. Gradually building from 1980, there is a dramatic increase in 1995 to fifty-five composition reviews, with no non-composition reviews. The gradual upturn in the 1990s with the crescendo to 55 reviews in 1995 is explained by a feature of the journal during this time period of one book per review with one reviewer per book, creating a need for more reviews than when multiple books are reviewed within the same review. Within these 54 issues for *College Composition and Communication*, there are a total of 243 (80%) composition reviews and 61 (20%) non-composition reviews, a ratio that one would expect for this journal.

### **Length – Word Count**

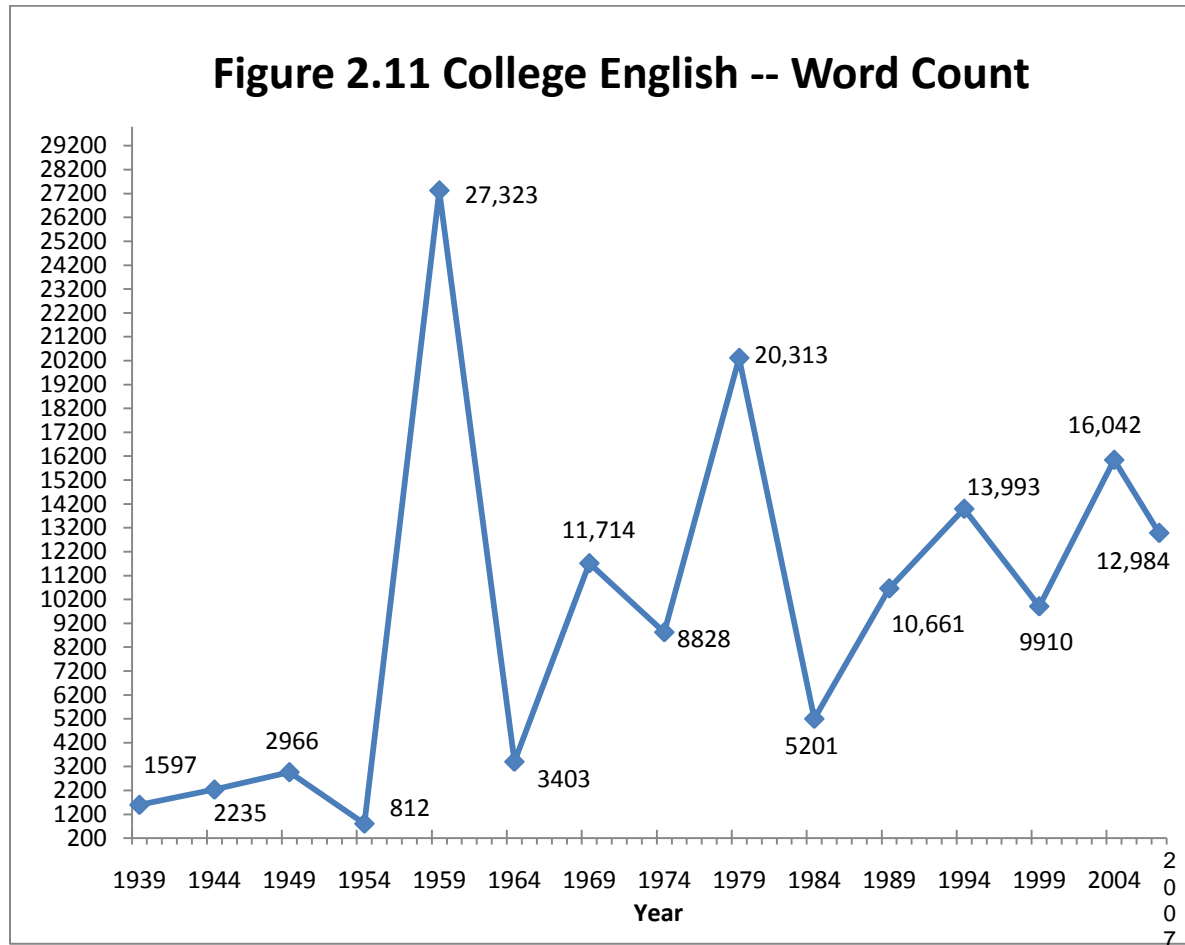
Beginning with the category of length, the rest of this chapter refers to the dissertation corpus of ninety reviews, with forty-five from each journal. Length was determined through word count. The process for determining word count involved downloading each of the ninety reviews in PDF format from the J-Stor database, converting to text, and saving it as a *Word* document. The “word count” feature of *Word* was then used to count the number of words in the review. All word counts are approximate and not exact due to some features of the nature of the conversion from PDF to text to *Word*. The length of a single review in the corpus varies from the shortest of about 230 words for a short entry single book review to the longest of over 10,000 words for a review essay. *College English* with 9, 865 total average words in its forty-five review corpus and *College Composition and Communication* with 8,639 total average words in its forty-five review corpus demonstrate similarities in this category of length (word count) with a difference of only 1,226 words. Surprisingly, the larger word count for composition reviews occurs in *College English*. Additionally, there is a difference of only 633 words between the two journals as far as average word length.

### **Length – Word Count – *College English***

Figure 2.11 for *College English* demonstrates some dramatic increases in the number of words for three of the corpus years:

- 1959                      27, 323 words                      (composite book review)
- 1979                      20,313 words                      (multiple volume review)
- 2004                      16,042 words                      (review essay)

The average length for *College English* reviews in the corpus is approximately 2,800 words. The total average word count for the *College English* corpus is 9,865. The total word count for the *College English* corpus is 147,982 words.



### 1959- Composite Review - *College English*

As was previously explained, 1959, which in the corpus contains one review from 1959 and two from 1960, due to the dearth of composition reviews of significant length in 1959 alone, is characterized by a genre format called the composite book review. These composite reviews attempt to review an entire class of books for an entire year, explaining the large increase in the number of words (27, 323) needed for the review. They represent exhaustive “group evaluations” of texts in great numbers: twenty-six,

twenty-eight, and staggeringly, seventy-one (C. Williams 313). Indeed, the composite reviewers themselves comment on the exhaustive and exhausting nature of this genre of review.

In the 1959 composite review of twenty-eight freshman composition texts, Cecil Williams comments ruefully on the comprehensive character of this genre: “As I near the end of many hours of work on the assorted writing texts mailed to me for group evaluation, I find myself in a state of mixed thoughts and emotions, compounded most, perhaps, of indigestion and wonder, mingled with embarrassment and misgivings, but lightened somewhat by a touch of admiration” (313). “I was left wondering often as I plowed through them...” (C. Williams 313). “If all these books reflect complete course offerings (I am sure some do not), then, nationwide, freshman English is not a course but a chaos” (C. Williams 313). And finally, as is understandable from someone who has just reviewed twenty-eight composition texts: “I don’t wish for anyone else the task of going through all of them; it has nearly worn me out” (C. Williams 314).

In the twenty-six book review composite on language and linguistics texts, Allen critiques the selection of texts by stating, “...the twenty-six books received as the material for this article reflect the entire spectrum from advanced research in English linguistics to apparent unawareness even of its existence” (294). In this reviewer’s attempt to classify the books into some manageable categories for review, he indicates exasperation in stating that the last four books “form an unclassifiable residue” (Allen 294). And finally, the *pièce de résistance* is the aptly titled, “Grammar with Tears: Seventy-one Composition Texts” composite review, which includes such ironic phrases as, “The task assigned to me in this review was appallingly simple: to survey all of the

composition texts published since the appearance of ... [the] review last year. To review all of these texts fully and to do justice to every one of them was obviously impossible” (Sherwood 426). In addition, the reviewer points to the responsibility he feels for accurately and effectively reviewing “a whole year’s crop of textbooks” without letting “the review degenerate into a bibliography” (Sherwood 426). He apologetically begins his classification and critique by noting the following: “The review is intended to include all composition texts published in 1959 and all those published in 1958 which were not reviewed by Professor Williams, but considering the mass of available material, it would be surprising if there were no stragglers left over to be reviewed in 1960” (Sherwood 426). Keep in mind that Professor Williams is the reviewer for the twenty-eight book composite review previously mentioned, which by the way, bears a title borrowed from John Milton’s *Paradise Lost* “In Wand ‘ring Mazes Lost’: Freshman Composition Texts.” It is not difficult to imagine why this particular genre of reviews faded away in later years.

### **1979 –Multiple Volume Review *College English***

The 1979 word count of 20, 313 represents three different reviews of a total of six books in addition to one review on the many books for teaching rhetorical invention. These reviews mark the end of multiple books reviewed and are on the cusp of the cited review essay that will come to dominate current books reviews. While not containing a works cited list, these reviews do contain footnotes and go beyond evaluation of the books themselves into arguments about the theoretical and pedagogical underpinnings of the books. The composition reviews for this corpus year are as follows:



- February 1979 “Review: A Critical Survey of Resources for Teaching Rhetorical Invention”

Written by five reviewers, this “review-essay” addresses many textbooks that concern the use of invention to analyze discourse, categorizing them into various types of invention frameworks and placing them in historical contexts of previous similar theoretical approaches.

- April 1979 and December 1979

Both contain untitled reviews on multiple scholarly texts, one of which deals with process theory and the other with current traditional emphasis on correctness.

#### **2004 –Review Essay- *College English***

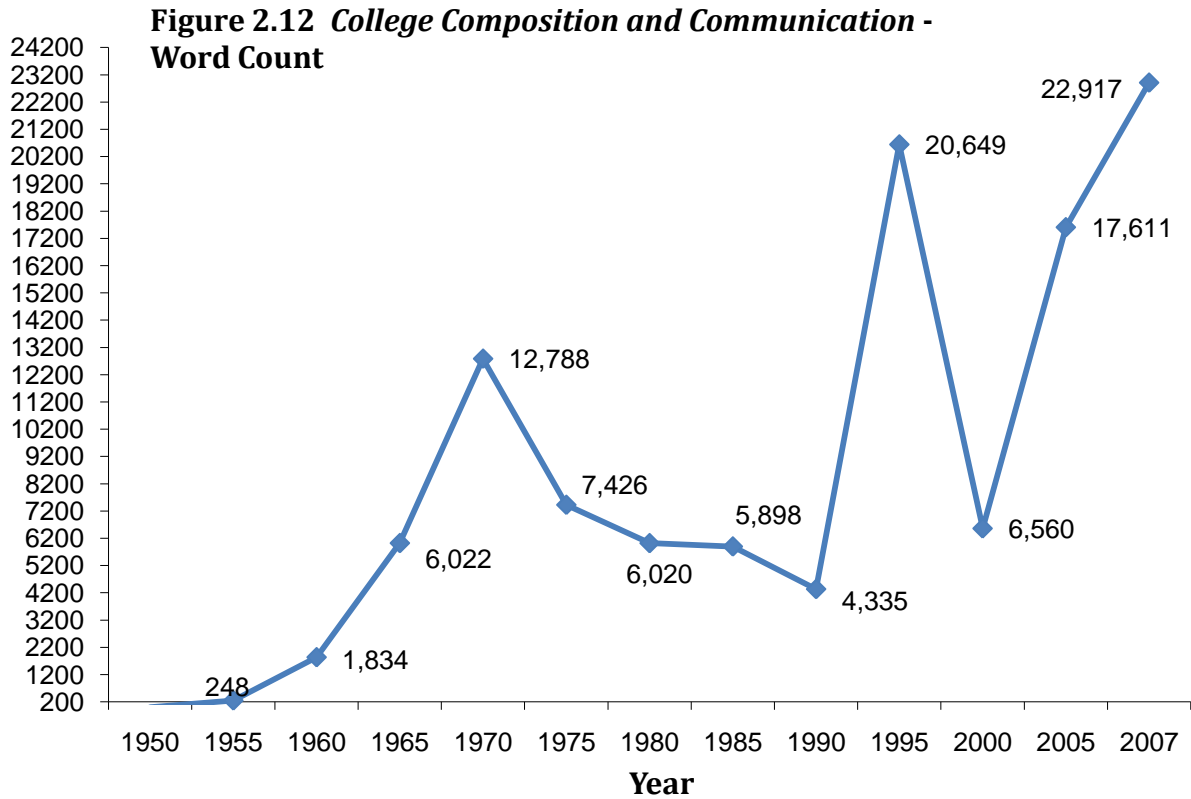
The 2004 word count of 16, 042 is deceiving in that in order to equalize the corpus reviews for *College English* with *College Composition and Communication*, I needed to have three reviews from each corpus year, and that was only possible by using the year before and the year after, in this case, to find three composition reviews in *College English*. In other words, while there are 16, 042 words in this part of the corpus, three years are needed to accumulate that number. Each of the reviews in 2003, 2004, and 2005 are cited review essays of two to three books each of a scholarly nature, two of which concern feminist studies and one of which concerns post-process theory in composition. These reviews are examples of the review essay with its in-depth treatment of not only the evaluative statements regarding the book itself, but also of the arguments and critique of the theoretical and pedagogical framework of the book.

### **Length – Word Count – *College Composition and Communication***

Turning to the word count feature for *College Composition and Communication*, represented in Figure 2.12 , the three major increases in word count are demonstrated in four volumes:

- 1970            12, 788 words            (issue devoted to reviews)
- 1995            20, 649 words            (first review essay)
- 2005            17, 611 words            (review essay)
- 2007            22, 917 words            (review essay)

The average length for *College Composition and Communication* reviews is 2,200 words. Again, keep in mind that for *College Composition and Communication*, in 1950 there were no reviews; and in 1955, the corpus presents one review with a total of 248 words at the low end. The next lowest word count for four reviews is in 1960 with 1, 834 words, and an average of 459 words per review. At the high end, in 2007, four reviews contain a total of 22, 917 words, with an average of 5, 729 words per review. The total word count for the *College Composition and Communication* corpus is 112,328.



### 1970 – Issue Devoted to Reviews- *College Composition and Communication*

The 1970 increase represents the practice, at the time, of devoting the February issue of the journal to, as the subtitle of the issue indicates, “Reviews of Current Books.” Rather than published reviews throughout the yearly volume, this one issue, which also includes some articles, is mainly devoted to featuring reviews under such sub-categories as “Of Books on Composition and Rhetoric,” “Of Books on Language,” “Of Books on Literature and Criticism,” and “Of Books on Education.” These reviews are two-columned reviews of single and multiple books categorized as certain types such as freshman composition textbooks, linguistics titles, literary criticism titles and poetry titles, and books on topics concerned with higher education.

Even though this represents an increase in word count from the twenty years prior to and twenty-five years after this practice, the word counts increase again significantly in the 1990s and 2000s. The 1995 volume represents a genre shift to the review essay, which features either a single book or multiple (two to five books or more) with the same general pedagogical or theoretical framework. The reviewer is also associated or connected to the framework of the reviewed books through his or her own research, scholarship, or practice.

### **1995- First Review Essays -*College Composition and Communication***

It is not until the mid-1990s that a works cited list appears at the end of reviews, signaling what may be viewed as a more researched and scholarly approach to the genre of the book review. This cited book review heralds the current day review essay expanding its perspective beyond the mere contents of the books reviewed to a controlled discussion of the theories or practices published within the books themselves.

The 1995 reviews with a word count of over 20,000 words include the following scholarly, researched, and cited review essays:

- February 1995 “Review: Women, Rhetoric, Teaching”

Five scholarly texts on feminist theory and its connections to the pedagogy of composition and rhetoric written by feminist composition scholars and reviewed by a feminist composition scholar

- May 1995 “Review: Rhetorical Analysis of Scientific Texts: Three Major Contributions”

Three scholarly texts on the “social construction of scientific knowledge” which address “the developing scholarship on rhetoric of science,” written and reviewed by scholars of technical communication and rhetoric (CCC 292-293)

- October 1995 “Review: Uncovering Possibilities for a Constructivist Paradigm for Writing Assessment”

Four scholarly texts on the assessment of writing, its socially constructed nature, and the complicated concerns of portfolio assessment and holistic scoring, written and reviewed by compositionists interested in and concerned with writing assessment

- December 1995 “Review: Proceeding with Caution: Composition in the 90s”

Two scholarly texts on critical literacy and critical pedagogy written by and reviewed by critical theorists in composition with a stance on “politics and pedagogy” (CCC 567)

Each of these reviews goes well beyond describing and evaluating the particular texts that are the subject of the reviews. Each of these reviewers uses the forum of the book review to promote and publish a particular viewpoint on the topic of the books in question. Arguments are made not only for the praise or critique of the books themselves, but more essentially, for the praise or critique of the underlying theoretical or pedagogical framework of the book.

### **2005 and 2007 –Review Essays - *College Composition and Communication***

Finally, the 17, 611 word count of 2005 and the 22,917 word count of 2007 are indicative of the cited review essay on multiple works of scholarly composition studies. Each is a lengthy argument not only on the books under review but for or against the theoretical/pedagogical framework of those books. Whether it is rhetoric, critical

literacy/critical pedagogy, feminism, racial justice and literacy, or post-process theory, by 2005, the review essay is an elaborated genre. It is significant for this genre of the book review that, for instance, in one of these reviews, the writing goes on for almost a full ten pages before the books that are under review are even mentioned. This example dramatically demonstrates the review essay's dual purpose of review and forum for argument and critique regarding the subjects and theoretical or pedagogical positions of the books themselves.

### **Types of Books Reviewed**

Through recursive readings of the corpus reviews, I identified three main types of reviewed books that appear in *College English* and *College Composition and Communication*: reference books, textbooks, and scholarly books. Reference books are defined as those used for reference but not direct instruction such as encyclopedias and dictionaries. Textbooks are defined as those used for instruction and include rhetorics, handbooks, grammar books, linguistics books, composition texts, and the like used by students and teachers. Scholarly books are defined as those dealing with research, theory, pedagogy, and other academic or scholarly pursuits, meant for professionals in the field or others interested in composition as a discipline.

### **Types of Books Reviewed – *College English***

Chart 2.3 represents books from the *College English* corpus and categorizes them into the three general types: reference books, textbooks, and scholarly books.

**Chart 2.3: General Types of Reviews**

<i>College English</i> YEAR	Number of reviews	Number of reference reviews	Number of textbook reviews	Number of scholarly reviews
1939	3	0	3	0
1944	3	0	3	0
1949	3	0	3	0
1954	3	0	3	0
1959	3	0	3	0
1964	3	1	1	1
1969	3	2	1	0
1974	3	0	0	3
1979	3	0	0	3
1984	3	0	0	3
1989	3	0	0	3
1994	3	0	0	3
1999	3	0	0	3
2004	3	0	0	3
2007	3	0	0	3
Total	45	3	17	25
% of total		7%	38%	56%

Of the forty-five reviews in the *College English* corpus, three (6%) are reference, seventeen (38%) are textbooks, and twenty-five (55%) are scholarly. The three reference reviews appear in 1964 and 1969. The seventeen textbook reviews appear in journals from 1939 to 1969. The twenty-five scholarly reviews begin with one in 1964, but come to prominence from 1974 on, during which time scholarly reviews are exclusive and dominant. Notable not only are the types of books reviewed, but the time frames during which the specific type is featured. For example, textbook reviews occur only from 1939 to 1969; reference book reviews occur only in the mid and late 1960s; and scholarly reviews dominate mostly from the mid 1970s to the present day.

### Types of Books Reviewed – *College Composition and Communication*

Chart 2.4 represents books from the *College Composition and Communication* corpus and categorizes them into the three general types: reference books, textbooks, and scholarly books.

**Chart 2.4: General Types of Reviews**

<i>College Composition and Communication</i> YEAR	Number of reviews	Number of reference book reviews	Number of textbook reviews	Number of scholarly reviews
1960	5	1	4	0
1965	4	0	3	1
1970	4	0	4	0
1975	4	0	3	1
1980	4	0	0	4
1985	4	0	0	4
1990	4	0	0	4
1995	4	0	0	4
2000	4	0	0	4
2005	4	0	0	4
2007	4	0	0	4
Total	45	1	14	30
% of Total		2%	31%	67%

Of the forty-five reviews in the *College Composition and Communication* corpus, one (2%) is reference, fourteen (31%) are textbooks, and thirty (67%) are scholarly. The fourteen textbook reviews appear from 1960 to 1975. The one reference review appears in 1960, and except for the one scholarly review in 1965, scholarly reviews are exclusive and dominant from 1975 to 2007.

### Theoretical/Pedagogical Framework of Books Reviewed

Traditionally, the history of composition and rhetoric is told through a series of pedagogical and theoretical movements ranging from current traditional rhetoric to



critical literacy to post-process theory (Berlin; Connors; Tate, Rupiper, and Schick). Books, as part of the record of composition's history, and reviews published in composition journals, as another part of that historical record, both promote and mirror these theoretical and pedagogical movements of composition's disciplinary history.

In order to categorize the theoretical and pedagogical frameworks of the books reviewed, I use a simplified categorization model, drawn from several histories of composition (Connors, Crowley, Goggin). Keeping in mind the complex nature of these overlapping theoretical and pedagogical movements in composition, I use a scheme of nine distinct categories: current traditional, process movement, expressivism, cognitive theory, social construction, feminist studies, postmodernism, critical literacy/critical pedagogy, and post-process theory. In reality, there are no clearly defined lines and demarcations between these theories and pedagogies and the dates of their existence, as demonstrated by Crowley's observation in the late 1990s regarding the initial theoretical and pedagogical stance, "Current traditional remains alive and well in composition in the university" as a still viable pedagogy for certain practitioners and publications, in particular college composition textbooks (191). Additionally, many of these theories and pedagogies interact and participate in metamorphisms of various types.

The categorization of broad pedagogical, theoretical, and disciplinary movement frameworks is not without problem or concern. Trying to capture these very large and complex pedagogies, theories, and movements in order to create a schema to classify overarching frameworks of the books reviewed is conditional and limited, at best. Obviously, the categories are not always distinct, nor are they always completely descriptive. The history of composition demonstrates the recursive and often

simultaneous ways in which multiple theories and pedagogies are acting and reacting at any one time or within any one site. At times, theory dominates and informs pedagogical practice, but at other times pedagogy and practice are the focal point. While I have collapsed these theoretical and pedagogical frameworks for purposes of cataloging the frameworks of the books under review, it is important to note that distinctions exist, and that the pedagogies and the theories operate both separately and integrally with each other. It is also important to note that these theories and pedagogies do not operate one at a time and distinctly during various time periods. Additionally, the various social and political movements that create an environment or impetus for the development of particular theories and pedagogies are complex and not easily defined by a single descriptive phrase or category. As with all social movements their beginnings, their endings, and their influences are diverse, complicated, and difficult to contain within certain time periods.

### **Definitions of Nine Frameworks**

Relying on the authors within *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies* edited by Tate, Rupiper, and Schick for definitions, I present this overly simplified sketch of composition's theoretical and pedagogical frameworks and basic definitions of the categories. Chart 2.5 following chart includes the theoretical or pedagogical framework, its approximate dates of importance within a historical record of composition, and some examples of its main theorists, authors, scholars, and researchers, in other words those who propose, perpetuate, or practice the various theoretical or pedagogical frameworks.

**Chart 2.5: Theoretical or Pedagogical Frameworks**

Category	Theory or Pedagogy	Dates	Main theorists/scholars
1	current traditional (CT)	Prior to 1960	Hill, Wendell, Whately
2	process movement (PM)	1960s-1970s	Emig, Murray
3	Expressivism (EXP)	1960s-1970s	Macrorie, Elbow
4	cognitive theory (COG)	1970s-1980s	Flower, Hayes
5	social construction (SC)	1980s	Berlin, Brodkey
6	feminist studies (FEM)	1970s-2000s	Miller, Holbrook, Jarratt, Schell
7	Postmodernism (PMOD)	1980s-1990s	Faigley, Olson
8	critical literacy/critical pedagogy (CL/CP)	1990s-2000s	Shor, Freire, Kincheloe, Giroux, Bizzell, Clifford, Schilb
9	post-process theory (PPT)	1990s-2000s	Kent, Trimbur

**Current Traditional – Prior to 1960**

Prior to 1960, current traditional rhetoric dominated composition and “emphasized academic writing in standard forms and ‘correct’ grammar” (Burnham 22). As Covino asserts, “...current traditional rhetoric maintains unity, coherence, and correctness, as primary virtues and generates textbooks that emphasize four modes of discourse - narration, description, exposition, and argumentation – as the standard venues for writers” (44). This is the theoretical framework of the late nineteenth century that was distilled into the American research model and practiced in the Harvard initiation of composition as a required course in the curriculum. In spite of persistent and continuous critiques of current traditional rhetoric by many scholars including Berlin and Crowley,

this approach historically often dominates, at least, the texts of composition and often times pedagogical practice as well.

### **Process Movement – 1960s and 1970s**

In the 1960s, process theory and pedagogy emerged with important works by Donald Murray and Emig's *Composing Processes of Twelfth Graders*. The process movement not only emphasizes the recursive writing process over the final product but also places the student writer in the center of the process. Process-oriented pedagogy argues for "student choice of topics and forms; the necessity of authentic voice; writing as a messy, organic, recursive form of discovery, growth, and personal expression..." (Tobin 4). Tobin argues of this time period of the 1960s and 1970s that of all of the "scholarly approaches, it was the version of process that emphasized freewriting, voice, personal narrative, and writing as a form of discovery...that had the greatest influence on classroom practice and drew the most impassioned support and criticism" (9). Murray, Macrorie, and Elbow championed this approach, commonly known as expressivism, with its attention to the personal, with the student as authority, and with the notion that writing cannot be taught, only opportunities for writing can be provided.

### **Cognitive Theory – 1970s and 1980s**

The 1970s and 1980s briefly concentrated on the cognitive theory of writing, which focuses on inquiry into the writing process as problem solving, think aloud protocols, the recursive nature of writing, writing as a goal-oriented task, and cognitive development revealed through writing, all parts of the cognitive approach exemplified by Flower and Hayes. This research "viewed writing as a cognitive act... focused on what was going on in a writer's mind when, for instance, she framed a problem..." (9). The

shelf-life of cognitive theory was relatively short and confined to a few notable practitioners and researchers, most recognizably, Flower and Hayes.

### **Social Constructionism -1980s**

The 1980s, as demonstrated in the work of Berlin, Berthoff, and Brodkey, heralded social constructionism with its belief that knowledge and language are both socially constructed, framed by social interaction and a social context. Social constructionism placed a “new emphasis on multiculturalism, the politics of literacy, and the implications of race, class, and gender for the study and teaching of writing” (George and Trimbur 72). Social constructionism focused on the place of culture, class, and politics in how writing is constructed, perceived, and received.

### **Feminism – 1970s to 2000s**

While feminism evolved from a strong movement of the 1970s and continues to the current day, its original beginnings are connected to the 1960s with its civil rights and anti-war movements. Feminist composition pedagogy stresses authority and knowledge sharing, as well as emphasis on process over product. Feminism is distinguished by its focus on sexism and patriarchy as it relates to language and by its questioning surrounding gender and inclusion (Jarratt). Feminist pedagogy “shares with the pedagogical innovations of the process revolution in writing instruction” the following characteristics: “the decentering or sharing of authority, the recognition of students as sources of knowledge, a focus on processes (of writing and teaching) over products” (Jarratt 115). It is distinguished from process by “its investment in a view of contemporary society as sexist and patriarchal, and of the complicity of reading, writing, and teaching in those conditions” (Jarratt 115). Some proponents of feminist studies in

composition include Susan Miller, Sue Ellen Holbrook, Susan C. Jarratt, and Elizabeth Flynn.

### **Postmodernism – 1980s to 1990s**

Faigley's characterizations of postmodernism with his critiques of the self and knowledge, destabilized identity, and anti-foundationalism along with feminism and its critiques of gender dominated the landscape of the 1980s and 1990s. "Faigley argues that expressivism's romantic view of the self is philosophically and politically retrograde, making it ineffectual in postmodern times" (Burnham 28). Postmodernism relies heavily "on the view that humans are created entirely by their social/cultural experience – that culture and history determine identity" (Burnham 32). Faigley and Olson, among others, argue for the relevance and influence of postmodern theory on rhetorical and composition theory (Covino 46-47).

### **Critical Literacy/Critical Pedagogy – 1990s to 2000s**

The 1990s also saw the flourishing of critical literacy theory, with early proponents of Bizzell, Clifford, and Schilb critiquing social/cultural positioning, drawing from various inter-disciplines, and theorizing the political nature of knowledge. Critical pedagogy, an off-shoot of critical literacy, is another composition theory of the 1990s and 2000s, which concentrates on the teaching of composition incorporating social, political, and cultural critique as a significant element of writing. Critical literacy/critical pedagogy as defined by Ira Shor is also espoused by Joseph Kincheloe and Henry Giroux. Shor distinctly defines critical pedagogy in the following way: "Habits of thought, reading, writing, and speaking which go beneath surface meaning, first impressions, dominant myths, official pronouncements, traditional clichés, received wisdom, and mere opinions,

to understand the deep meaning, root causes, social context, ideology, and personal consequences of any action, event, object, process, organization, experience, text, subject matter, policy, mass media, or discourse" (*Empowering Education* 129). These two theoretical and pedagogical approaches have been collapsed into one for the sake of categorization of the reviews.

### **Post-process Theory – 1990s to 2000s**

The late 1990s brought post-process theory as argued by Kent for writing as practice, public, interpretive, and situated, not controlled by a master theory. Post-process is a critique of process theory, which, according to some theorists, has lost its spontaneity and effectiveness. Some argue for composition courses “organized around canonical works of literature...cultural critiques and ‘contact zones’” (Tobin 13). “From one perspective, the turn to the politics of writing instruction figures as a logical outgrowth of ‘postprocess’ composition theory and practice...bringing a heightened emphasis on the dynamics of power and a call for social justice” (George and Trimbur 72). Diana George and John Trimbur make the case that post-process theory is intimately connected to process theory and that its emphasis on “cultural studies is the latest import of theory into composition” (71). One of the hallmarks of this theoretical approach is the “persistent use of materials from popular culture and media studies” making the content of the course “the culture of everyday life, while shifting the emphasis from the personal...to the lived experience of participants in the larger culture” (George and Trimbur 82).

### Theoretical/Pedagogical Frameworks of Composition - *College English*

Chart 2.6 maps the *College English* corpus of composition reviews in relationship to the theoretical and pedagogical occurrences of reviews pertaining to particular categories, keeping in mind the complicated nature of the categories.

**Chart 2.6: *College English*  
Theoretical/Pedagogical Frameworks**

YEAR	CT	PM	EXP	COG	SC	FEM	PMOD	CL/CP	PPT	Total
1939	3									
1944	3									
1950	3									
1954	3									
1959	3									
1964	2	1								
1969	3									
1974	3									
1979	1	2								
1984		1		1			1			
1989		1					2			
1994					1			2		
1999						2		1		
2004						2			1	
2007								3		
<b>Totals</b>	24	5	0	1	1	4	3	6	1	45
<b>Percentage of Total</b>	53%	11%	0%	2%	2%	9%	7%	13%	2%	99%

This chart demonstrates the surprising grasp that current traditional theory held on composition reviews from 1939 and throughout the 1970s. During composition's formative years, the emphasis was strictly on correctness and production of texts to support the service course of freshman composition within the university. As this chart demonstrates, 53% of the total corpus of reviewed books in *College English* is devoted to current traditional frameworks, and this focus is exclusive through 1959, with process pedagogy making some tentative inroads in the mid 1960s to the 1980s. The 1980s and



early 1990s demonstrate the emphasis, at that time, of various pedagogical and theoretical frameworks: cognitive theory, social construction, and postmodernism, among them. Noticeably absent are reviews dealing with expressivism. On the other hand, the main texts of expressivism are student writing and articles rather than books, so it is perhaps not unusual that few reviews in the corpus cover this theoretical framework. The 1990s and 2000s are dominated by feminist studies and critical literacy/critical pedagogy. Post-process is conspicuously underrepresented, perhaps pointing to its newness and amorphousness, which may account for its being subsumed into other theoretical and pedagogical frameworks.

While over 50% of the reviews are in the current traditional framework, this may be more a result of the historical nature of this study and the years of the corpus than of the general predominance of that particular theoretical stance. This dominance of current traditional reviews also demonstrates how composition was narrowly defined (and sometimes is still narrowly defined) by freshman composition textbooks. This preponderance of current traditional framework reviews does point to one reason for the perceived need by composition studies itself to continually scrutinize its scholarship and call into question its legitimacy. With its history based on a non-disciplinary approach such as current traditional rhetoric, composition often finds itself fighting for and justifying its subsequent disciplinary status.

### **Theoretical/Pedagogical Frameworks – *College Composition and Communication***

Chart 2.7 maps the *College Composition and Communication* corpus of composition reviews, indicating the categorization of the books being reviewed as far as major theoretical or pedagogical frameworks of the texts, again keeping in mind the broad

categorization.

**Chart 2.7:**  
***College Composition and Communication* Theoretical/Pedagogical Frameworks**

YEAR	CT	PM	EXP	COG	SC	FEM	PMOD	CL/CP	PPT	Total
1960	5									
1965	4									
1970	3	1								
1975	3				1					
1980	1		2					1		
1985	1		1				1	1		
1990		1				1	1	1		
1995					2	1		1		
2000			1				1	2		
2005			1				1	2		
2007								3	1	
<b>Totals</b>	17	2	5	0	3	2	4	11	1	45
<b>Percentage of Total</b>	38%	4%	11%	0	7%	4%	9%	24%	2%	99%

This chart also clearly demonstrates the dominance of current traditional theory in the textual record reviews of composition studies. The dominance of current traditional rhetoric is demonstrated to a lesser extent in *College Composition and Communication* (38%) than in *College English* (53%). *College Composition and Communication*'s reviews show the overwhelming preoccupation with current traditional rhetoric throughout the 1960s and 1970s, trailing off into the 1980s. Again because of the emphasis on freshman composition textbooks, many reviews of the time are dominated by the current traditional framework. The process movement and other major theoretical and pedagogical frameworks such as expressivism, cognitive theory, social construction, feminist studies, and postmodernism, account for about a total of 35% of the textual book review record. Accounting for 24% of the reviews, critical literacy/critical pedagogy appears first in the 1980s and 1990s and then continues to gain strength in the 2000s. As with *College English*, post-process is a minor player at this point, only 2% in 2007. It is

interesting to note that cognitive theory is not at all present in the *College Composition and Communication* corpus and only minimally present with one review in *College English*. On the other hand, oddly enough, process movement reviews are more predominant in *College English* than they are in *College Composition and Communication* at a rate of five to two.

### Discussion

In order to manage the historical trajectory of this corpus of reviews, I collapse categories even further to characterize the main summative features of the reviews. Following is a visual summary of the six categories for the journal level genre features of the reviews studied in this chapter: form, space, number, length, type, and framework. The trend in form for these journals demonstrates the progression from annotated bibliographic and short entry to long reviews of single/multiple volumes to the final and current format of the review essay. Figure 2.13 summarizes the various forms into three main categories for manageability in the genre analysis that follows in Chapter 3.

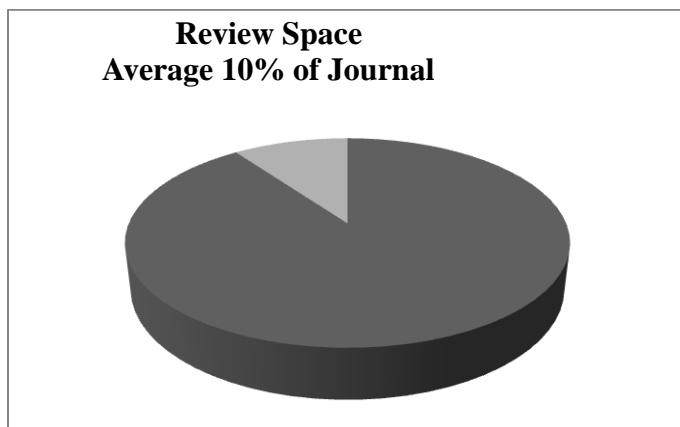
**Figure 2.13 Forms**



The trend in space over the history of these two journals is illustrated in the pie chart, Figure 2.14 noting the average of 10% of the journal being devoted to reviews. The relatively steady concentration on the amount of space of 10% over time points to the

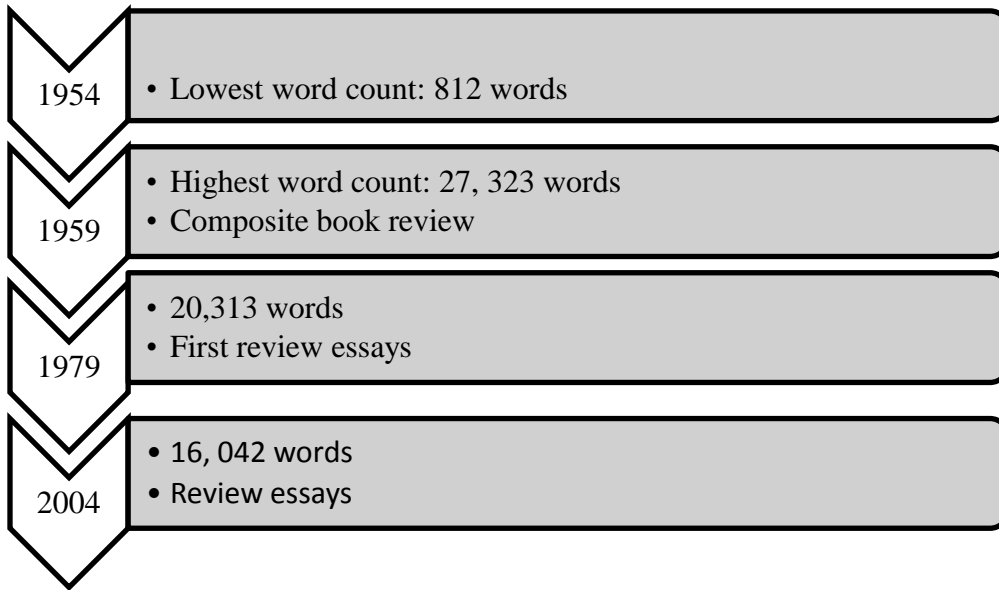
consistency with which the journals value reviews as a contribution to their scholarship, research, and publication.

**Figure 2.14 Space**

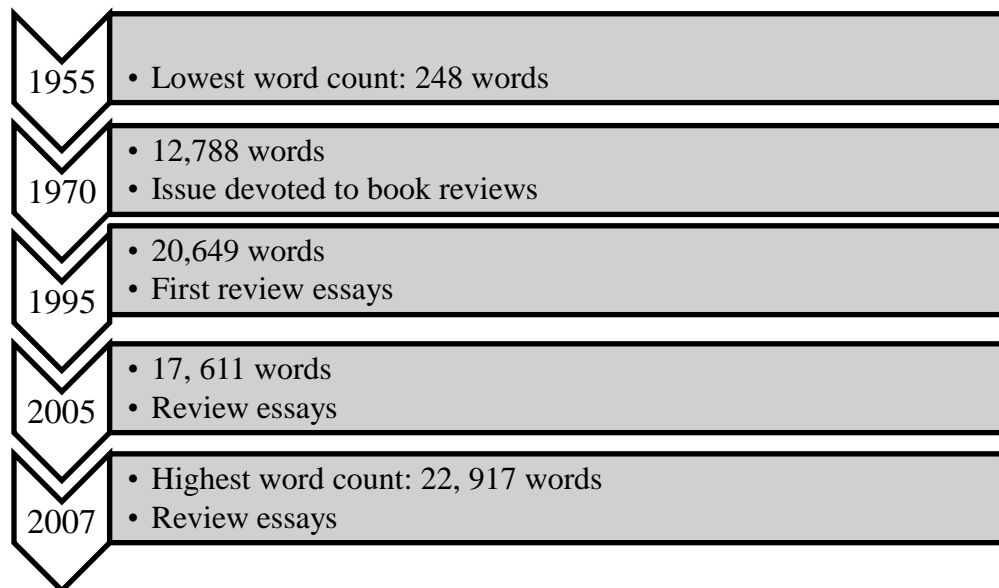


The trend in length is represented visually in the following two charts, Figures 2.15 and 2.16, the first for *College English* and the second for *College Composition and Communication*. These charts express the lowest word counts, the highest word counts, and other significant word counts. The average word count for the *College English* corpus is 2, 800 words and the average word count for the *College Composition and Communication* corpus is 2, 200 words.

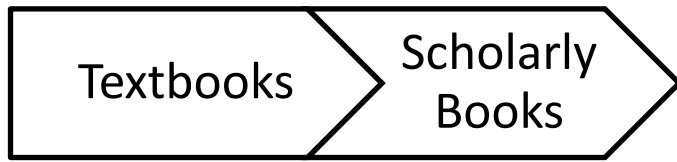
**Figure 2.15: College English Length - Word Count**



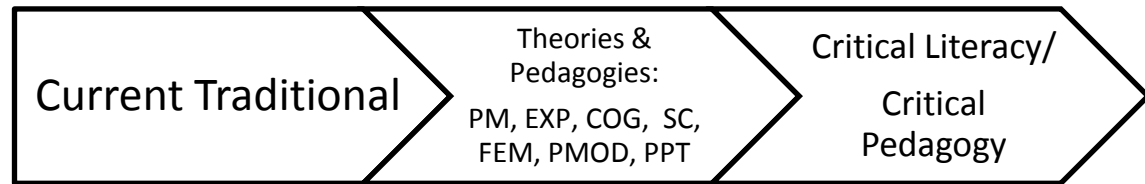
**Figure 2.16: College Composition and Communication Length – Word Count**



The trend that emerged for type involved only two main categories: textbooks and scholarly books, as shown in Figure 2.17.

**Figure 2.17 Types**

The trend for theoretical and pedagogical frameworks (Figure 2.18) shows a movement from current traditional to various theories and pedagogies and then to critical literacy/critical pedagogy.

**Figure 2.18 Theoretical and Pedagogical Frameworks**

So what does this study of the journal level features of reviews in *College English* and *College Composition and Communication* reflect and reveal about the historical trajectory of composition and its struggle for disciplinary legitimacy? Just as the field of composition has gone through a series of increasingly complex and sophisticated movements toward theoretical and pedagogical maturation, so too have reviews both reflected and revealed these movements. As the evidence in this chapter indicates, reviews began with summative and descriptive bibliographic and short entry format and through gradual metamorphoses evolved into evaluative and argumentative review essays. I investigate the genre structure of the reviews themselves in the next chapter, but

this chapter's focus was a historical trajectory of only the journal-level genre features of the book review: form, space, number, length, type, and framework.

In addition, the history of reviews reflects and reveals composition's disciplinary trajectory from freshman composition textbook-based current traditional rhetoric to a kaleidoscope of theoretical and pedagogical frameworks. The dominance of reviews with a current traditional framework helps shed light on composition's disciplinary struggle for legitimacy beyond a service course within the academy. Composition's own preoccupation with its self-perceived marginality in the academy may be related to its own historical emphasis on current traditional theory in its own textual records and publications as evidenced by the physical and historical record of reviews in composition.

The movement toward incremental and ever-increasing theoretical and pedagogical sophistication is reflected in the charting of the frameworks. While the next chapter will delve into the form and content of the reviews, and in particular the review essays, through an in-depth investigation of the genre structure of the reviews themselves, this chapter's focus of the journal-level genre features of the book review: form, space, number, length, type, and framework, also reveals and reflects composition's evolutionary character toward increasing scholarly erudition.

The major finding of this chapter is the emergence of the review essay as the dominant and preferred form of the field for reviews in these two English journals. This trend in the historical trajectory of reviews culminates in the present day review essay, which takes a more scholarly approach to reviews. As Hyland argues, reviews "contribute to the dissemination and evaluation of research while providing an alternative forum in which academics can set out their views...allow[ing] established writers a rhetorical

platform” (*Disciplinary* 43). In addition to providing a forum for dissemination, evaluation, and rhetoric, the review essay also provides a forum for composition’s constant reflection on itself as a field of study. While other fields often do not indulge in this practice of constant scrutinization, as Hyland demonstrates, the soft fields, such as composition, engage more in “controversy and debate” than the hard fields, which are more interested in “demonstration and proof” (*Disciplinary* 52). In chemistry, for example, Desiree Motta-Roth, argues in her dissertation on academic reviews in linguistics, chemistry, and economics that “contextual factors such as the high cost of books for personal purchase and the need for efficient information on new material are the main reasons for reading book reviews” (“Rhetorical” 81). Reviews in the linguistic, chemistry, and economic fields are written to answer basic questions of “what the book is about, who wrote it, how is compares with books by the same author, on the same subject, or in the same field, in a concise text” as concluded by Motta-Roth (“Rhetorical” 288). This is very different from the review essay in composition, which moves the review genre beyond evaluation into theorization. The historical trajectory of reviews toward the review essay is a significant finding in that it reveals and reflects the field’s preoccupation with self-reflection on its position as a field within English studies and its legitimacy as a discipline.

Even though reviews are not the main feature or purpose in scholarly journals, they do represent a constant, ever-present record of the apparatus and scholarship of the relatively recent discipline of composition and rhetoric. If they had no significance or purpose for the discipline, one could surmise that they would have disappeared from the pages of the journal sometime during the last sixty years of *College English* or the last



fifty years of *College Composition and Communication*. Instead, they seem to serve multiple functions of providing a publication venue for professionals within the field, of presenting a forum for a spirited exchange of disciplinary arguments, of archiving various movements within the discipline, and of disseminating the pedagogical and scholarly record of the profession. Reviews in composition journals provide a record of the development of the field of composition.

I recognize that there are limitations to this historical study of reviews in *College English* and *College Composition and Communication* in that the corpus size of ninety reviews, forty-five from each journal, can tell only a partial story of the reviews over time. The nature of a historical study such as this one that spans nearly seventy years for one journal and nearly sixty years for the other inherently presents some restrictions about generalizing from the specific examples. Nevertheless, there is value in attempting to trace these patterns and trends over time. As Robert Connors writes, “All of historical work, then, is provisional, partial – fragments...[i]t is always a construction” (“Dreams” 21).

While much of this chapter concerns the physical record of reviews in composition, this physical record also begins to uncover possibilities for delving deeper within the corpus for further revelations about the reviews themselves and how the textual record of those reviews contributes to composition’s quest for legitimization. In the next chapter, I analyze the corpus through genre and textual analysis to see how the discourse supports and reflects composition’s tenuous view of itself within the academy.

## CHAPTER 3: GENRE ANALYSIS OF REVIEWS

### Introduction

In Chapter 2, I analyzed ninety reviews in the corpus from *College English* and *College Composition and Communication* to provide evidence of the historical trajectory of composition reviews. I described the following six categories of journal level genre features: form, space, number, length, type, and framework. In the analysis, I identified three main forms of reviews: short reviews, book reviews, and review essays. In this chapter, I present a genre analysis of the forms of reviews by providing definitions and background; explaining the methods; and outlining the findings. Based on this analysis, I argue that book reviews reflect the historical trajectory of the evolution of composition in its ongoing pursuit of disciplinarity and legitimacy as evidenced by the increasing emphasis on theory and the expanding representation of the field.

### Definitions of Review Forms

As a reminder, the generic term used in this chapter to encompass all forms of this genre is reviews, with the specific forms of reviews defined as follows. Short reviews -- defined as reviews with an average of about 450 words, each focused primarily on description of a single volume -- appear primarily in the two journals during the early years from 1939 to 1965. Book reviews -- defined as longer reviews with an average of about 2,550 words, each typically written on one or two volumes -- appear primarily in the journals from 1965 to 1995. Review essays -- defined as lengthier reviews with an average of 4,440 words, typically written on three to five volumes connected to a distinctive topic -- appear primarily in the two journals from 1995 to the present.

As illustrated in Table 3.1, this chapter develops a genre analysis of reviews in the corpus of ninety reviews, minus four composite reviews<sup>1</sup>, made up of twenty-two short reviews, thirty-six book reviews, and twenty-eight review essays for a total of eighty-six reviews.

**Table 3.1 – Forms of Reviews with Numbers and Percentages**

FORM	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE (86 REVIEWS)
Short reviews	22	26%
Book reviews	36	42%
Review essays	28	33%
Total	86	101%

Table 3.2 illustrates a detailed accounting of the three review forms as to total number of words in the corpus, average number of words per review, average number of books reviewed per review, median number of books reviewed per review, and the number of books reviewed along with the number and percentage of occurrence in the corpus.

<sup>1</sup> The four composite reviews from *College English*, only 4% of the corpus of 90 reviews, are not considered for genre analysis in this chapter, as they were discounted in chapter two as being of an inadequate number and mostly a conglomerate version of annotated bibliographic entries with limited interest or substance. Three of the composite reviews are from the short reviews and one is from the review essays, and do not lend themselves to meaningful genre analysis.

**Table 3.2 – Detail of Three Review Forms for Number of Words, Average Number of Words, Average Number of Books, Median Number of Books, and Percentage of Occurrence in Corpus**

Review Form	Total Number of Words	Average Number of Words per Review	Average Number of Books Reviewed per Review	Median Number of Books Reviewed per Review	Number of Books Reviewed/ Number and Percentage of Occurrence in Corpus
Short Reviews (22)	9,967	453	1.13	1	<b>1 book 20 (91%)</b> 2-3 books 2 (9%)
Book Reviews (36)	91,858	2,552	2.08	1	<b>1 book 19 (53%)</b> 2 books 8 (22%) <b>1 or 2 books = 75%</b> 3 books 5 (13%) 4 books 2 (5%) 8 books 1 (3%) 9 books 1 (3%) <b>3 + books = 25%</b>
Review Essays (28)	128,765	4,440	2.82	3	1 book 5 (17%) 2 books 7 (24%) <b>1 or 2 books = 41%</b> <b>3 books 9 (31%)</b> 4 books 2 (7%) 5 books 5 (17%) <b>3 + books = 55%</b>
Total = 86 Reviews	Total = 230, 590 words				

## Background

Reviews in these English journals coincide with the definition of genre as delineated early on by Swales, as they “comprise a class of communicative events...which share some set of communicative purposes” (*Genre Analysis* 58). In Swales’ later studies, he views “attempts to characterize genres as being essentially a metaphorical endeavor.” genre as frame, genre as standard, genre as biological specimen, genres as families, genres as institutions, and genres as speech acts (*Research* 61). Swales analyzes genre through the description of moves and steps. He defines a move as “a discoursal or rhetorical unit that performs a coherent communicative function in a written or spoken discourse” (*Research* 228). Swales distinguishes moves as being “functional” and not necessarily “formal” units that may or may not be grammatical sentences, utterances, or paragraphs” (*Research* 229). Steps, as defined by Bhatia, are strategies that act as “options within the allowable contributions available to an author for creative or innovative genre constructions” (32).

Bhatia argues that “genre analysis as an insightful and thick description of academic and professional texts has become a powerful and useful tool to arrive at significant form-function correlations which can be utilized for a number of applied linguistic purposes” (11), including tracing historical trajectories of fields as is being done here. Bhatia provides a useful description of moves in genre analysis:

...writers seem to be fairly consistent in the way they organize their overall message in a particular genre, and analysis of structural organization reveals preferred ways of communicating intention in specific areas of inquiry...[For example] Swales (1981b) discovered that

writers of academic research papers displayed remarkable similarities in the way they organized their article introductions...[Each move gives the] genre its typical cognitive structure...[and] each move serves a typical communicative intention which is always subservient to the overall communicative purpose of the genre (29-30).

Motta-Roth dissertation study defines the genre of the review as being part of “a set of relationships between people that are acting in a given social context,” such as an academic discipline, and in this work, the discipline of composition/rhetoric. Motta-Roth suggests that the purpose of the review genre is “to introduce and evaluate new publications in the field.” Motta-Roth further asserts that the communicative event of the review is “recognized by the expert members of the discourse community” (the reviewers and readers) who “approach book reviews using previous knowledge of academia in general and of disciplinary culture in particular...” Motta-Roth identifies the following four rhetorical moves and several possible steps in her study of reviews in chemistry, economics, and linguistics journals:

#### Move 1: INTRODUCING THE BOOK

Step 1 Defining the general topic of the book

and/or

Step 2 Informing about potential readership

and/or

Step 3 Informing about the author

and/or

Step 4 Making topic generalizations

and/or

Step 5 Inserting book in the field

Move 2: OUTLINING THE BOOK

Step 6 Providing general view of the organization of the book

and/or

Step 7 Stating the topic of each chapter

and/or

Step 8 Citing extra-text material

Move 3: HIGHLIGHTING PARTS OF THE BOOK

Step 9 Providing focused evaluation

Move 4: PROVIDING CLOSING EVALUATION OF THE BOOK

Step 10A Definitely recommending/disqualifying the book

or

Step 10B Recommending the book despite indicated shortcomings

As Motta-Roth's genre schemata of reviews attests, variability and complexity are incorporated in a flexible genre analysis schema.

Citing Hyland, Philip Shaw distinguishes statements in reviews into both evaluative and descriptive events. Tejerina also argues for "the study of evaluation as an inherent feature of this genre" [the book review] (374). Hyland provides a useful description of the historical shifts within the genre of the review, which he indicates "have been a part of the academic landscape for almost 2000 years" (quoted in Orteza y Miranda 42). Hyland writes that reviews "initially...served to summarise and chronicle uncritically the explosion of learning..." (*Disciplinary* 42). Early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century,

“more selective and critical writing” characterized the book review, including “the reviewer’s own opinion” (Hyland *Disciplinary* 42).

Some work also has been done with reviews relating to praise and criticism in eight hard and soft academic field journals by Hyland, as well as compliments and criticism by Mackiewicz in business communication journals. Hyland argues that the book review is unique in academic writing in its highly evaluative nature. Reviews, according to Hyland, are

a crucial site of disciplinary engagement, but it is a site where the interpersonal stakes are much higher...Book reviews are more interactively complex than research papers as they do not simply respond to a general body of more-or-less impersonal literature. Instead there is a direct, public, and often critical, encounter with a particular text, and therefore of its author, who must be considered as a primary audience of the review. While writers of research articles commonly avoid critical references, reviews are centrally evaluative. Intertextuality thus carries greater risk of personal conflict, for while most academic genres are evaluative in some way, the book review is most explicitly so (*Disciplinary* 41).

Hyland recognizes the complexity of the review in the social structure of academia in so much as it is an evaluative genre. He believes that

reviews are nevertheless rhetorically and interactionally complex and represent a carefully crafted social accomplishment. In most fields then, a good review needs not only to offer a critical and insightful perspective,



drawing on considerable knowledge of the field, but at the same time respond to the complex demands of this delicate interactional situation, displaying an awareness of the appropriate expression of praise and criticism (*Disciplinary* 43-44).

Hyland found that for the 160 reviews he studied, the “two most striking features” were the “amount of praise” and the frequency with which it opened or concluded the reviews (*Disciplinary* 52). “The decision to open with praise was an almost routine move in this corpus...The most frequent opening move was to offer global praise for the volume, relying heavily on a restricted range of adjectives, most commonly *interesting, significant, and excellent*” (Hyland, *Disciplinary* 53). Hyland notes that this praise occurs in the opening even when the review is not praise overall, and that the end of many reviews also contains praise and positive remarks. “The most frequent closing strategy was to offer positive comment on the book’s contribution or a commendation to readers” (Hyland, *Disciplinary* 54). “...outright criticism is not avoided in book reviews, indeed it is an integral feature of the genre, substantiating its claim to be a scholarly form of writing to be taken seriously by fellow academics as a knowledge examining domain” (Hyland, *Disciplinary* 61). Hyland also categorizes praise and criticism indicating the “tendency of writers to criticise specific issues and praise more global features” (*Disciplinary* 47). Hyland found that the focus of general content (“overall discussion: e.g. coverage, approach, interest, currency, quality”) and specific content (“argument: e.g. insight, coherence, explanatory or descriptive value”) accounted for 60.7 % of the praise and 78.7% of the criticism (*Disciplinary* 47). Genre analysis as a method of analyzing

texts and genre analysis of reviews, in particular, has some precedence in the literature, establishing a framework for this analysis of reviews in English.

## Methods

The genre analysis for this chapter was conducted for each of the three forms - short reviews, book reviews, and review essays - following a specific set of methods typical for genre analysis (Swales; Bhatia). While the methods for each form are briefly described here, the definitions of the moves and steps will follow in each section based on the form of the review.

While all three forms of reviews were analyzed with the following process, each form was analyzed individually starting with the short reviews:

1. Each review was read holistically multiple times.
2. Three moves for the short reviews and the book reviews were identified and defined: situating, describing, evaluating. For review essays, in addition to these three moves, a fourth move was identified and defined: theorizing.
3. Each short review, each book review, and each review essay was coded for the three moves. For review essays, the fourth move of theorizing was also coded.
4. For each of the reviews – short reviews, book reviews, and review essays – the instances of description were noted and exemplified.
5. For review essays, the instances of description were also coded and counted for summary of content and summary of argument.
6. Each of the reviews was read and coded for evaluation, defined as “the expression of the speakers or writer’s attitude or stance towards, viewpoint

on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about” (Thompson and Hunston 5). The move of evaluating in reviews was further coded for praise (a “judgment of good” or assigning a positive value-laden judgment) and criticism (a “judgment of bad” or assigning a negative value-laden judgment) (Hyland and Diani 3):

- a. All praise
- b. Both praise and criticism
  - i. Coded for instances of praise
  - ii. Coded for instances of criticism
- c. All criticism

The number of instances of no praise or no criticism; praise only; criticism only; or both praise and criticism were coded and counted. If both praise and criticism were present, I determined, through counting instances, whether there was more praise or more criticism. Instances are defined functionally as individual units of praise or criticism, which could be sentences or paragraphs. Instances of praise and instances of criticism were counted as separate instances if something other than praise or criticism occurred in between, for example, description.

7. Because of its relationship to disciplinarity, the move of situating in short reviews, books reviews, and review essays was analyzed to identify and code for steps.
  - a. Each step was identified and defined.
  - b. Each step was coded.

8. The following four steps were identified for situating in the short reviews, book reviews, and review essays:
  - a. Situating the book within composition pedagogy
  - b. Situating the book within the identity of the author
  - c. Situating the book within the genre of reviews
  - d. Situating the book within issues of the field
9. The move of situating was also coded for placement in the short reviews, book reviews, and review essays:
  - a. Beginning
  - b. Middle
  - c. End
10. The fourth move of theorizing in the review essays was analyzed to identify and code for concepts.
11. The following eight concepts were identified in theorizing:
  - a. Affect (2)
  - b. Marxism
  - c. Scientific Theory/Rhetorical Theory
  - d. Psychoanalytic Theory/Mourning
  - e. Self Reflection/Indigenization
  - f. Tribalism/Pluralistic Society
  - g. Feminist Theory
  - h. Black Nationalism

12. The following four steps were identified for theorizing in the review essays:
- a. Explaining/defining the concept
  - b. Advancing the reviewer's perspective of the concept
  - c. Connecting the theorizing of the concept to the books under review
  - d. Referencing the theoretical concept in an in-text citation and in a works cited list at the end of the review essay
13. The move of theorizing was also coded for placement in the review essays:
- a. Beginning
  - b. Middle
  - c. End
14. All reviews were reread multiple times for each move and step, with final coding and counts verified twice.

Coding schemes, as set out in the methods section, are something of an abstraction, and use of a coding scheme is interpretive as pointed out by Grant-Davie and others. Definitions of categories describe prototypes, but edges of categories are blurred. For example, situating and evaluating are examples of categories with blurred edges: situating can have an evaluative tinge, and evaluating can allow inferences of situating. In the coding, I categorized chunks of text in terms of the predominant function, often using multiple cues, such as placement within the review. Situating, for example, most often occurs in the beginning and ending, while evaluation mostly appears in the middle of the review.

## Findings

### Short Reviews

In this genre analysis, I define situating as placing the book within a disciplinary context. Describing is defined as providing a set or series of distinctive characteristics illustrative of the book. Evaluating is defined as appraising the qualities of the book, its author(s), and/or its content. Not all short reviews have all three moves, but the following genre analysis schema is indicative of the short reviews:

Move 1: SITUATING THE BOOKS

Move 2: DESCRIBING THE BOOKS

Move 3: EVALUATING THE BOOKS

Table 3.3 shows the three moves and their frequencies for the twenty-two short reviews.

**Table 3.3 – Short Review Moves and Frequency**

Move	Number of Reviews in Which Move Occurs	Percentage of Total
Situating (1)	15	68%
Describing (2)	22	100%
Evaluating (3)	22	100%

In the following pages, I provide examples to illustrate the individual moves. I focus first on the second and third moves of describing and evaluating as these are the most frequently occurring moves in the short reviews and as these are common moves already identified in the genre analysis literature (Hyland; Motta-Roth). I then turn to a more detailed description and analysis of situating.

### Moves 2 and 3: Describing and Evaluating in Short Reviews

In short reviews, Moves 2 and 3, describing and evaluating, play out unsurprisingly, and may be combined for this portion of the genre analysis. In coding the

short review description and evaluation, I found that short reviews incorporated these moves within the context of a sentence or phrase as well as within a paragraph. Describing and evaluating in short reviews occurs most often in the middle and conclusion of the reviews. Describing identifies the book's characteristics: physical qualities, length, parts, sections, chapters, reading selections, exercises, or content. Throughout this chapter, I use textboxes as a formatting tool for readability to provide the excerpts from the reviews. Additionally, the full citations for the excerpts are provided in Appendices A and B, which provide complete listings for both the *CE* and *CCC* corpuses. The moves of describing for short reviews are exemplified in the following Textboxes 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4:

### **Textbox 3.1 – Length and Sections Example of Describing in Short Reviews**

Move 2: Describing the book	“The text consists of three sections: a rhetoric (about 300 pages), a handbook (75 pages), and a collection of readings (about 300 double column pages)” (253).
Review Title: Among the New Texts	<i>CCC</i> 8.4, Dec. 1957
Weaver, Richard M.	
<i>Composition</i>	

### **Textbox 3.2 – Length and Sections Example Two of Describing in Short Reviews**

Move 2: Describing the book	“As such it will serve both as a rhetoric and handbook, though the emphasis is upon the rhetoric, to which nearly six hundred of the seven hundred pages are devoted” (187).
Review Title: Books: College Composition	<i>CE</i> 1.2, Nov. 1939

Babcok, R. W., R.D. Hoen, and T. H. English.  <i>Essentials of Composition</i>	
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### Textbox 3.3 – Parts and Chapters Example of Describing in Short Reviews

Move 2: Describing the book  Review Title: New Books  Warfel, Harry R., Ernst G.Mathews, and John C. Bushman.  <i>American College English</i>	“Part I, ‘College Uses of English,’ is in addition an orientation to college writing: an early chapter on getting started, another chapter on note-taking and writing examinations, and the chapters on reading and speaking” (227).  <i>CE</i> 11.4, Jan. 1950
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### Textbox 3.4 – Physical Qualities, Sections, Chapters Example of Describing in Short Reviews

Move 2: Describing the book  Review Title: Books  Harbarger, Sada A., Anne B. Whitmer, and Robert Price.  <i>English for Engineers</i>	“In format, the book is much changed. The pages are larger, with resultant appearance of shorter paragraphs. Chapters tend to have more frequent subdivisions with separate headings. Many chapters, otherwise similar to those of the former edition, have dropped the opening paragraphs for a more direct entrance into the material at hand. The book is divided into two general sections, one on principles and one on practical forms” (228).  <i>CE</i> 5.4, Jan. 1944
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As these examples show, describing in the short reviews is detailed and often specific to the layout and chapters or sections of the book.



The third move of evaluating the book is defined as assessing or appraising the qualities of the book, its author(s), and/or its contents. Hyland defines evaluating using the term praise for positive comments and criticism for negative comments. Praise, according to Hyland, “is defined as an act which attributes credit to another for some characteristic, attribute, skill, etc., which is positively valued by the writer. It therefore suggests a more intense or detailed response than simple agreement” (*Disciplinary* 44). Hyland distinguishes praise from criticism “as the expression of dissatisfaction or negative comment on the volume” (*Disciplinary* 44). Evaluating can be praise or criticism and is often used to further assess the value of the book. Some evaluation occurs within sentences or is a very brief sentence. Other evaluation is contained within topic sentences or full sentences that are exclusively evaluative. Evaluation within the short reviews focuses on mostly praise:

- “This is an original and exciting book” (121). *CCC* 11.2, May 1960
- “...the example is good...” (249) *CCC* 11.4, Dec. 1960
- “The text admirably carries out its author’s design” (51). *CCC* 16.1, Feb. 1965
- “...is particularly good from a teacher’s viewpoint...” (52). *CCC* 16.1, Feb. 1965
- “...a better than average book of its kind...” (52) *CCC* 16.1, Feb. 1965

But some criticisms of the books in short reviews, as determined by the reviewer, were also expressed:

- “The chief weakness of the work arises from the compromise the author has made” (348). *CE* 5.4, Jan. 1944
- “The book’s greatest weakness...” (422) *CE* 14.7, Apr. 1953

- “The second section is adequate but narrow” (191). *CE* 17.3, Dec. 1955
- “...too limited in scope...” (494) *CE* 24.6, Mar. 1963

Table 3.4 shows that praise is the dominant evaluative mode in the short reviews.

**Table 3.4 – Praise and Criticism Comparison in Short Reviews**

Number of Short Reviews	All Praise	Both Praise and Criticism	Predominant when Both Praise and Criticism are Present	All Criticism
22	4 (18%)	18 (82%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Praise - 16 (89%)</li> <li>• More Criticism – 1 (6%)</li> <li>• Equal Praise and Criticism – 1 (6%)</li> </ul>	0

Textboxes 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7 illustrate some examples of evaluation in the short reviews.

**Textbox 3.5 – Criticism Example of Evaluating in Short Reviews**

<p>Move 3: Evaluating the book</p> <p>Review Title: Among the New Texts</p> <p>Gibson, Walker.</p> <p><i>Seeing and Writing</i></p>	<p>“The result is a curious mixture and something much less than an adequate textbook for a college course in composition” (121).</p> <p><i>CCC</i> 11.2, May 1960</p>
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**Textbox 3.6 – Praise Example of Evaluating in Short Reviews**

<p>Move 3: Evaluating the book</p> <p>Review Title: Books: College Composition</p>	<p>“Here is a text in Freshman English that is equal in difficulty to college texts for Freshman in other subjects. Such books are few” (188).</p> <p><i>CE</i> 1.2, Nov. 1939</p>
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Babcock, R. W., R.D. Hoen, and T. H. English.  <i>Essentials of          Composition</i>	
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**Textbox 3.7 – Mixture of Praise and Criticism Example of Evaluating in Short Reviews**

Move 3: Evaluating the book  Review Title: Book Reviews  Davidson, Donald.  <i>Concise American          Composition and          Rhetoric</i>  <b>Weaver, Robert          G.</b>  <i>The Plain          Rhetoric</i>	“Sections of the text do have merit...Nevertheless, the inadequacies overshadow the bright spots...That the index does not list fused sentence or comma splice, indirect questions, restrictive or non-restrictive clause...- is simply a final reason why the book is not helpful and cannot be recommended” (52).  CCC 16.1, Feb. 1965
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Sometimes description and evaluation are combined, typically with description dominating evaluation. As demonstrated in Textboxes 3.8 and 3.9 below, at times a lengthy description includes a very brief evaluation. In the case of Textbox 3.8, the evaluative phrase is criticism and in Textbox 3.9, the evaluative phrase is praise, as noted in the italicized portions. In the left column of the textbox, for the examples, if there are multiple books reviewed, the book included in the example is noted in bold font.

**Textbox 3.8 – Criticism with Description Example of Evaluating in Short Reviews**

<p>Moves 2 and 3: Evaluating the book (noted in added italics) combined with Describing the book</p> <p>Review Title: Book Reviews</p> <p>Willis, Hulon.</p> <p><i>Structure, Style, and Usage</i></p> <p>Hepburn, James G.</p> <p><i>College Composition</i></p> <p><b>Guth, Hans P.</b></p> <p><i>A Short New Rhetoric</i></p>	<p>“The table of contents of Professor Guth’s new book <i>does not at first glance seem promising or unusual</i>. The book is organized into eleven sections: from ‘1.Observation and Description,’ to ‘11. The Research Paper.’ There is a Preview called ‘Writing as a Creative Process,’ and a Summary called ‘A Survey of Patterns’” (53).</p> <p>CCC 16.1, Feb. 1965</p>
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**Textbox 3.9 – Praise with Description Example of Evaluating in Short Reviews**

<p>Moves 2 and 3: Evaluating the book (noted in added italics) combined with Describing the book</p> <p>Review Title: Book Reviews</p> <p>Joos, Martin.</p> <p><i>The English Verb</i></p>	<p>“The book is in six chapters: I. Introduction; II. Non-finite Verbs; III. The Finite Schema; IV. Basic Meanings and Voice; V. Aspect, Tense and Phase; VI. Assertion. An appendix provides essays on several topics treated in the body of the text. <i>The style is carefully wrought; the typography excellent</i>” (654).</p> <p>CE 26.8, May 1965</p>
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As is apparent in the above examples, while some evaluative phrasing is used, description is still the dominant move. Describing and evaluating are located throughout the short reviews, in the beginning, middle, and ending.

The main finding of the genre analysis of these two moves in the short reviews of this corpus illustrates unsurprisingly that the focus is primarily on description and secondarily on evaluation in the early reviews of books in both *College English* and *College Composition and Communication*. This predominance of describing and evaluating is to be expected here since these short reviews are both published among and follow shortly after an early tradition within these two journals of annotated bibliographic reviews. Additionally, all but one or two of the books reviewed within the short review corpus are textbooks, typical of the reviews of composition books of this time period in both journals. While *College English* also publishes reviews of literary works and literary analysis that are not textbooks, the composition titles during this time frame, for both journals, are almost exclusively textbooks.

### **Move 1: Situating in Short Reviews**

In addition to coding for the moves of describing and evaluating, I coded the move of situating for the short reviews. Indeed, the first move, of situating the book, is more intriguing than the expected moves of describing and evaluating. I define situating as placing the book within a disciplinary context. Situating differs from evaluating in that evaluating is internal to the book, primarily concerned with the book's content, while situating is external to the book, primarily concerned with the book's contribution to the field.

Of the three moves (situating, describing, and evaluating) identified in short reviews, situating, if present, and it is not always present, always occurs at the beginning of the short review, before the description and evaluation. In short reviews, reviewers use four different steps within the move of situating, as is illustrated in the step analysis schema below:

Move 1:       SITUATING THE BOOKS

Step 1A: Situating the books within composition pedagogy

and/or

Step 1B: Situating the books within the identity of the author

and/or

Step 1C: Situating the books within the genre of reviews

and/or

Step 1D: Situating the books within issues of the field

For the fifteen short reviews that include situating, Table 3.5 illustrates the steps along with number and frequency of occurrence.

**Table 3.5 – Situating Moves and Steps for Short Reviews**

Move 1	Step	Number/Percentage
Situating	(1A) Within <b>composition pedagogy</b>	<b>8 / 53%</b>
Situating	(1B) Within the <b>identity of the author</b>	3 / 20%
Situating	(1C) Within the <b>genre of reviews</b>	2 / 13%
Situating	(1D) Within <b>issues of the field</b>	1 / 7%
Situating	Other <sup>2</sup>	1 / 7%
Total		15 / 100%

<sup>2</sup>There is one review that is coded as “other” since the book is related to the field of linguistics and not composition.

As shown in Table 3.5, it is significant that situating within composition pedagogy is the most frequently occurring step in situating (8/15, 53%). As Table 3.5 also shows, all eight short reviews that contain situating within composition pedagogy are related to the

teaching of composition, and in particular to the selection of a textbook for freshman English.

Examples of the steps of situating in short reviews are shown in Textboxes 3.10-3.15 that follow, with italics added to indicate the situating. Textbox 3.10 provides an example that points to change, movement, or progress in the field.

### **Textbox 3.10 – Situating within Composition Pedagogy Example for Short Reviews**

<p>Situating the book within <b>composition pedagogy</b></p> <p>Review Title: Among the New Texts</p> <p>Gibson, Walker.</p> <p><i>Seeing and Writing</i></p>	<p>“This is an original and exciting book. If English teachers show themselves able to rise to the challenge of its method, it may <i>mark the beginning of a real break-through in the teaching of college composition</i>” (121).</p> <p>CCC 11.2, May 1960</p>
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Textbox 3.11 is an example that points to two viable composition pedagogical approaches that will be supported by this particular textbook: expository writing and rhetorical writing.

### **Textbox 3.11 – Situating within Composition Pedagogy Example Two for Short Reviews**

<p>Situating the book within <b>composition pedagogy</b></p> <p>Review Title: Book Reviews</p> <p><b>Willis, Hulon.</b></p> <p><i>Structure, Style, and Usage</i></p> <p>Hepburn, James G.</p> <p><i>College Composition</i></p>	<p>“The subtitle of Professor Willis’ book is <i>A Guide to Expository Writing</i>, which <i>implies that his book is a composition text rather than a rhetoric – and so it proves to be</i>” (52).</p> <p>CCC 16.1, Feb. 1965</p>
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Guth, Hans P. <i>A Short New Rhetoric</i>	
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Situating within composition pedagogy is a step that places the book within the context of the field, and since most of the books under review in these short reviews are textbooks, the situating involves a connection to the teaching of freshman composition. Not unsurprisingly, the representation of the field at this time, 1939-1965, is focused on composition as a teaching subject (Harris *Teaching*).

Situating the books within the identity of the author is a step that involves connecting the author's identity, background, or scholarship to the value of the book under review as shown in Textboxes 3.12 and 3.13.

#### **Textbox 3.12 - Situating within the Identity of the Author Example for Short Reviews**

Situating the book within the <b>identity of the author</b>  Review Title: Among the New Texts  Weaver, Richard M.  <i>Composition</i>	“ <i>Mr. Weaver’s</i> book is at once affirmative and conservative, even classical, qualities not surprising in view of his association with the College of the University of Chicago” (253).  CCC 8.4, Dec. 1957
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#### **Textbox 3.13 - Situating within the Identity of the Author Example Two for Short Reviews**

Situating the book within the <b>identity of the author</b>  Review Title: Books  Harbarger, Sada A., Anne B. Whitmer, and Robert Price.  <i>English for Engineers</i>	“Only one book on technical writing has ever reached a fourth edition. <i>The honor of producing such a text goes deservedly, though posthumously, to the late Sada A. Harbarger, whose period of service to the engineering school of Ohio State University is common knowledge to the engineering profession.</i> The coming of joint authors to this edition is symbolic of her passing to others her own inspiration and enthusiasm” (228).  CE 5.4, Jan. 1944
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As a less frequent but still interesting occurrence, some books are situated within the genre of reviews themselves as shown in Textbox 3.14, with added underlining showing the review genre reference.

#### **Textbox 3.14 - Situating within the Genre of Reviews Example for Short Reviews**

<p>Situating the book within the <b>genre of reviews</b></p> <p>Review Title: Books</p> <p>Foster, Edward.</p> <p><i>A Way to Better English</i></p>	<p>“In attempting to evaluate a handbook for composition classes, <u>a reviewer</u> is essentially concerned with two questions: “Will the students like the book?” and “Will teachers like it?” The first question is not without significance, but, inasmuch as textbooks are chosen by teachers to suit what they consider the needs of their classes, it is the second of these critical questions that requires some attention” (347).</p> <p><i>CE 5.6, Mar. 1944</i></p>
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There is only one example of situating within issues of the field, shown in Textbox 3.15, focusing on the book’s content and contribution by pointing out the book’s relationship to one or more controversies within the field.

#### **Textbox 3.15 - Situating within Issues of the Field Example for Short Reviews**

<p>Situating the book within <b>issues of the field</b></p> <p>Review Title: New Books: Teaching Materials</p> <p>Myers, L. M.</p> <p><i>American English</i></p>	<p>“<i>They die slowly, those old misconceptions about our language.</i> Professor L. M. Myers of Arizona State College vigorously swings a stout club at them, and certainly he breaks a few more bones in the bodies that Robert Pooley, Robert Hall, and others have been pummeling” (246).</p> <p><i>CE 14.4, Jan. 1953</i></p>
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This singular example points to controversy within the developing field of composition that is shifting from the general study of language to a new conception of language that is connected to writing.

### **Conclusion for Short Reviews**

The move of situating and the steps within the move of situating are the major finding in the short reviews for this corpus. While describing and evaluating are apparent and often discussed in previous studies of reviews in academic disciplines (Hyland, Motta-Roth), situating has not been previously identified and highlighted. Situating, when it occurs in the short reviews, appears at the beginning of the review. This situating within a disciplinary context suggests a particular and specific disciplinary awareness early on in the journals' reviews --- the field is implicitly represented as the teaching of composition, and the short reviews most often concern the selection of a textbook. In fact, the field is very much textbook-driven at this point. One might expect that as the general type of book reviewed moves from textbooks to scholarly books, situating will become more and more apparent, and the steps of situating will evolve and change.

### **Book Reviews**

Through the iterative holistic reading and coding described in the methods section earlier in this chapter, the same three moves of situating, describing, and evaluating were identified for the 36 book reviews:

Move 1: SITUATING THE BOOKS

Move 2: DESCRIBING THE BOOKS

Move 3: EVALUATING THE BOOKS

Even though the same three moves are identified in these book reviews as in the short reviews, the moves in book reviews show a pattern of expansion and contraction. While a combination of describing and evaluating characterize the short reviews, in the

book reviews, describing and evaluating remain pervasive moves, but situating increases in frequency. Table 3.6 illustrates the three moves and the frequency of their occurrence in general locations within the review.

**Table 3.6 – Comparative Table - Short Review Moves and Frequency as Compared to Book Review Moves and Frequency**

Move	Short Reviews Number/ Percentage	Book Reviews Number/Percentage
Situating (1)	15 / 68%	29 / 81%
Describing (2)	22 / 100%	36 / 100%
Evaluating (3)	22 / 100%	36 / 100%
Total Number of Reviews	22	36

As Table 3.6 shows, the number and percentage of occurrences of situating increases from short reviews to book reviews, almost doubling in number. The frequency of describing and evaluating remains consistent, occurring in all short reviews and book reviews.

### **Move 2: Describing in Book Reviews**

Since describing, as a move, is very common in book reviews (occurring in all 36 book reviews), I will address this move first. As defined earlier, describing provides a set or series of distinctive characteristics illustrative of the book. Describing identifies the book's characteristics such as physical qualities, length, parts, sections, chapters, reading selections, or exercises. Describing also covers the content of ideas within the book. Examples of the describing as a move in the book reviews are shown in Textboxes 3.16-3.19.

**Textbox 3.16 – Physical Qualities Example of Describing in Book Reviews**

Move 2: Describing the book	<p>“The essays themselves are <i>printed in large and sharp, relatively easy-to-read type</i>. However, a number of <i>printing irregularities</i> make the volume somewhat less attractive than it might have been. For example, <i>pagination departs from convention, with one page beginning on a left-facing page...The essays also frequently appear cramped on the pages, with not enough white space separating the part of a given essay</i>” (433).</p>
Review Title: Reviews	
Daiker, Donald A., Andrew Kerek, and Max Morenberg.	
<i>Sentence Combining and the Teaching of Writing</i>	
	CCC 31. 4, Dec. 1980

**Textbox 3.17 – Chapters Examples of Describing in Book Reviews**

Move 2: Describing the book	<p>“But Bach begins at the beginning. <i>He states the task at hand in Chapter I and defines the tools of the trade and demonstrates their uses in Chapter II. Then he gives an exposition of each of the three parts of the grammar in Chapters III, IV, and VI. (Chapter V deals with some of the problems of syntax generally.) Chapters VII and VIII deal respectively with background information and with the outlook for work in transformational grammar. There are also a selected bibliography and two indices, the second of them an index to special symbols used in the work</i>” (49).</p>
Review Title: Book Reviews	
Bach, Emmon.	
<i>An Introduction to Transformational Grammars</i>	
	CCC 16.1, Feb. 1965

**Textbox 3.18 – Length and Reading Selections Example of Describing in Book Reviews**

Move 2: Describing the book	<p>“ Harry Brent and William Lutz have assembled <i>seventy-two essays and stories in the 571 pages of Rhetorical Considerations</i>; Caroline Shrodes, Harry Finestone, and Michael Shugrue have collected in their <i>1037 pages the poetry, fiction, essays, and autobiography of the 143 authors</i>” (62).</p>
Review Title: Reviews	
Shrodes, Caroline, Harry Finestone, and Michael Shugrue.	
<i>The Conscious Reader</i>	
Brent, Harry, and William Lutz.	CCC 26.1, Feb. 1975
<i>Rhetorical Considerations</i>	

**Textbox 3.19 – Content Summary Example of Describing in Book Reviews**

<p>Move 2: Describing the book</p> <p>Review Title: Reviews</p> <p>Irmscher, William F.</p> <p><i>Teaching Expository Writing</i></p>	<p>“Irmscher tells his readers that the main thing people should do in a writing class is write. But then, if we grant that a kind of success in our society is possible without writing, why teach it anyway? Quoting Robert Heilman, Irmischer emphasizes ‘the process of putting together. We have composed, and in a sense we are composed.’ In practice, the teacher’s job is learning ‘what concessions to make to freedom and what concessions to make to discipline.’ Irmischer is a conservative relative to the messengers of a decade ago; nevertheless he devotes a chapter to ‘Acknowledging Intuition,’ by which he means ‘perceptions we accumulate, internalize, and synthesize into patterns.’ For writers, this means developing a sense of tone, in tune with one’s audience; a sense of simplicity, akin to Hirsch’s ‘readability’; a sense of prose rhythm; and finally a sense of order. The good composition teacher is above all one who cares, who avoids dogmatism in a continuing effort to build up student confidence.”</p> <p>“If there is nothing terribly surprising about these propositions, they are nevertheless worth repeating, especially to beginners. ‘A little humanity and sensitivity’ is what Irmischer is calling for, and if that seems a bit obvious, we all know how often these qualities are missing from the classroom.”</p> <p>“Turning in his Part II to more concrete considerations, Irmischer briefly outlines several possible plans for structuring a course. A chapter on Topics includes a number of specific isolated suggestions; he is less confident about setting up a series of interrelated assignments, though he refers us to Coles’ <i>The Plural I</i> if we wish to pursue that line. (And we should!) A chapter on Pre-Writing proposes several devices for stimulating organized composing, including the making of collages. Heuristic procedures for the writing of papers include Pike’s particle-wave-field theory for changing perspective, and Burke’s dramatic pentad. This leads to teaching the structure of paragraphs and sentences, with emphasis on the work of Christensen, Becker, and Paul Rodgers. (Rodgers is neatly quoted: ‘Paragraphs are not composed; they are discovered. To compose is to create; to indent is to interpret.’)” (91).</p> <p>CCC 31.1, Feb. 1980</p>
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In comparison to short reviews, the describing in book reviews tends to be mainly about the parts, sections, chapters, reading selections, or content of the book with less emphasis on the physical qualities, length, or exercises as in the short reviews. Also, the examples of describing in book reviews are longer than in short reviews, which may be a feature of the extended length of the book reviews (averaging 2, 550 words) as compared to the short reviews (averaging 450 words).

### **Move 3: Evaluating in Book Reviews**

The move of evaluating in book reviews may take several forms, including evaluation of the author, evaluation of the book itself, or evaluation of the content of the book. Again using Hyland's definitions of praise ("credit to another for some characteristic, attribute, skill, etc., which is positively valued by the writer") and criticism ("expression of dissatisfaction or negative comment on the volume") (*Disciplinary* 44), I analyzed the evaluative statements that appeared within all of the book reviews. Evaluative statements within the book reviews tend toward praise as illustrated in the following brief sentence excerpts:

- "At least three of the four under scrutiny are better than most – in their freshness and variety of selection, in their contemporaneity, in their helpful but unobtrusive study questions" (55). *CCC* 16.1, Feb.1965
- "Herbert Kaufman's *Red Tape* is a wise, lucid, thoughtful, and detached analysis of one of society's most frustrating, confusing, exasperating, and universally-hated problems" (954). *CE* 40.8, Apr. 1979
- "This ['interpret[ing] the linguistic significance of the passages'] he does with great insight and almost artistic ingenuity" (626). *CE* 35.5, Feb. 1974

Criticism, the type of evaluating that is more prevalent in the book reviews than in the short reviews, is exemplified by these brief sentence excerpts:

- “Personally I am not happy with Muir’s luxuriant terminology and with a great deal of his analysis” (621). *CE* 35.5, Feb. 1974
- “That his line of reasoning makes nearly every subject unteachable doesn’t seem to have occurred to him” (417). *CE* 29.5, Feb. 1968
- “He insinuates, you surrender, and one hundred pages later you discover you’ve been had” (1016). *CE* 34.7, Apr. 1973
- “One important flaw, to me, is the destructive approach and negative tone which runs throughout the book” (626). *CE* 35.5, Feb. 1974

As Hyland points out, and as these book reviews confirm, praise and criticism are often mixed and mitigated. It is common to have a mixture of praise and criticism in the evaluation as is illustrated in Textbox 3.20, in which the first three sentences provide praise that is used to mitigate the criticism that leads off the last sentence. Even this short criticism, however, is mitigated with a final clause of praise. The bold title in the left portion of the textbox identifies the book that is referred to in this example.

**Textbox 3.20 – Mixture of Praise and Criticism Example of Evaluating in Book Reviews**

<p>Move 3: Evaluating the book</p> <p>Review Title: Reviews: Professional</p> <p>Finestone, Harry, and Michael F. Shugrue.</p> <p><i>Prospects for the 70s</i></p>	<p>“On balance, this is a useful book. It deals both with broad concepts and with the specifics of daily teaching in the classroom. It gives a number of useful ideas and should help the interested reader to generate many more. I cannot escape the feeling that Professor Judy could have written a better book, but the one he has written has value” (114).</p> <p><i>CCC</i> 26.1, Feb. 1975</p>
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<p><b>Judy, Stephen N.</b></p> <p><i>Explorations in the Teaching of Secondary English</i></p>	
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Textboxes 3.21-3.22 provide more extended illustrations of the mixing of praise and criticism within the evaluating sections of the book reviews. The use of praise as bookends to soften criticism that is placed inside or alongside is a common tactic in reviews.

**Textbox 3.21 – Mixture of Praise and Criticism Example of Evaluating in Book Reviews**

<p>Move 3: Evaluating the book</p> <p>Review Title: Book Reviews</p> <p>Bach, Emmon.</p> <p><i>An Introduction to Transformational Grammars</i></p>	<p>“The book before us is not exactly the guide that a literary scholar will need to teach him to make syntactical critiques of poems, though I do not mean to imply censure of our author. His purpose was quite another. But Emmon Bach has very probably put an end to the mystery in which transformational grammar was, for many readers, tightly wrapped. He has made the subject accessible to every structuralist, and to anyone else willing to do some preliminary reading in one of the standard structuralist texts. For Professor Bach's competent and forthright service we are all greatly in his debt” (50). CCC 16.1, Feb. 1965</p>
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**Textbox 3.22 – Mixture of Praise and Criticism Example Two of Evaluating in Book Reviews**

<p>Move 3: Evaluating the book</p> <p>Review Title: Reviews – Professional Books</p> <p>Ong, Walter J.</p> <p><i>Orality and Literacy</i></p>	<p>“This admirably lucid book is a compact synthesis of seven books and one article by Walter J. Ong: ... On the whole <i>Orality and Literacy</i> is an exemplary work: the ideas it offers are very important; it is extremely well documented; and it is highly readable. However, I do wish that Ong had allowed himself a few more pages. A foreword or an afterword presenting a coherent summary of the book such as what I have presented here would have been helpful” (363 and 365). CCC 36.3, Oct. 1985</p>
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Book reviews also still show occurrences in which both description and evaluation are combined as is shown in Textbox 3.23.

**Textbox 3.23 – Mixture of Description and Evaluation Example of Evaluating in Book Reviews**

<p>Moves 2 and 3: <i>Describing the book (in italics) with Evaluating the book (in bold)</i></p> <p>Review Title: Book Reviews</p> <p><b>Strandness, T. Benson, Herbert Hackett, and Harry H. Crosby, eds.</b></p> <p><i>Language, Form, and Idea</i></p> <p>Guerard, Albert J., Maclin B. Guereard, John Hawkes, and Claire Rosenfeld, eds.</p> <p><i>The Personal Voice</i></p> <p>Hughes, Richard E. and P. Albert Duhamel, eds.</p> <p><i>Persuasive Prose</i></p> <p>Alssid, Michael, and William Kenney.</p> <p><i>The World of Ideas</i></p>	<p>“As the title is meant to convey, <i>Language, Form, and Idea</i> assembles selections that highlight the nature and uses of language, rhetorical principles, and/or challenging issues. <i>Its 550 pages of many essays, some poems, and a few short stories are grouped into eleven sections bearing cliché headings such as ‘The Nature of Language,’ ‘Search for Identity,’ ‘Right and Wrong,’ and ‘The Good Life.’ The book has small print, no apparatus, and as much text as anyone can want – and more than any teacher can use. This might be a good volume for a free-wheeler, but it is a poor text to hand to the teaching assistant with the advice “Go forth and teach them about language, form and idea” (56).</i></p> <p>CCC 16.1, Feb. 1965</p>
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Overall, a mix of praise and criticism is the dominant feature of the book review genre. While praise and criticism occur throughout the book reviews, often these

evaluative remarks are made near the beginning or near the end of the book reviews. Using Hyland's definitions of praise and criticism and his study of praise and criticism in reviews, I reread the book reviews with an eye toward praise and criticism only, coding for each occurrence in each of the 36 book reviews. While acknowledging that the determination of frequency of praise versus criticism is somewhat subjective, I coded and counted instances of praise and criticism to determine the predominant patterns.

Table 3.7 shows the number of book reviews that contain all praise, all criticism, or both praise and criticism. When both praise and criticism were present, I determined which of the two was predominant.

**Table 3.7 – Praise and Criticism Comparison in Book Reviews**

Number of Book Reviews	All Praise	Both Praise and Criticism	Predominant when Both Praise and Criticism are Present	All Criticism
36	2 (6%)	34 (94%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Praise – 21 (62%)</li> <li>• More Criticism – 8 (24%)</li> <li>• Equal Praise and Criticism- 5 (15%)</li> </ul>	0

Table 3.7 shows that a combination of both praise and criticism is predominant, which is to be expected in the review genre. This table also shows that when both praise and criticism are present, there is more praise than criticism, which is also expected in the review genre. The book reviews in this corpus demonstrate Hyland's argument that reviews are "essentially an evaluative genre where writers judge a text on its academic quality, clarity, integrity, and value to the field" (*Disciplinary* 44). However, the predominance of praise calls into question the quality of the evaluation.

Table 3.8 shows a comparison of the instances of praise and criticism in short reviews and book reviews.

**Table 3.8 - Short Reviews and Book Reviews in Comparison of Praise and Criticism**

Number of Reviews	All Praise	Both Praise and Criticism	Predominant when Both Praise and Criticism are Present	All Criticism
Short Reviews –22	4 (18%)	18 (82%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Praise - 16 (89%)</li> <li>• More Criticism – 1 (6%)</li> <li>• Equal Praise and Criticism – 1 (6%)</li> </ul>	0
Book Reviews – 36	2 (6%)	34 (94%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Praise – 21 (62%)</li> <li>• More Criticism – 8 (24%)</li> <li>• Equal Praise and Criticism- 5 (15%)</li> </ul>	0

Table 3.8 indicates the expansion and contraction of this move from the short reviews to the book reviews, including:

- a decrease in reviews with all praise (19% compared to 6%)
- an increase in the instances of both praise and criticism (82% compared to 94%)
- a decrease of more praise (94% compared to 62%) when both are present
- an increase of more criticism (6% compared to 24%) when both are present
- an increase of equal amounts of praise and criticism (6% compared to 15%) when both are present
- no instances of all criticism in either form of review

Even though praise is a pervasive element in the move of evaluation in both short reviews and book reviews, book reviews demonstrate an increasing frequency of critical evaluation.

### **Move 1: Situating in Book Reviews**

The situating in book reviews, which occurs more frequently than in the short reviews, is located mainly in the beginning of the book reviews (69%). However, the book reviews also demonstrate some instances in which situating occurs at the end of the

book review (38%). There are even instances in which situating occurs in the middle of the book review (28%). Some book reviews (34%) demonstrate situating that starts in either the beginning or the middle of the review and then also ends with situating. Thus, situating in book reviews may appear throughout the review.

In this next section, I elaborate upon two of the steps within the move of situating: Step 1A, situating the books within composition pedagogy and Step 1 D, situating the books within issues of the field. Both of these steps within the move of situating have expanded from the original occurrences in the short reviews. Situating occurs within 29 of the 36 books reviews (81%) and displays three steps as indicated in the following genre analysis schema:

#### Move 1: SITUATING THE BOOKS

Step 1A: Situating the books within composition pedagogy

and/or

Step 1B: Situating the books within the identity of the author

and/or

Step 1D: Situating the books within issues of the field

The frequency of occurrence of the steps of situating in the 29 book reviews that contain situating is shown in Table 3.9. This table also shows the expansion and contraction of the steps of situating from short reviews to book reviews.

**Table 3.9 – Comparison of Short Reviews and Book Reviews for Frequency of Step Occurrence in Situating**

Move 1 Situating Steps	Short Reviews (Number and Percentage of Reviews)	Book Reviews (Number and Percentage of Reviews)
1A Within <b>composition pedagogy</b>	8 / 53%	15 / 52%
1B Within the <b>identity of the author</b>	3 / 20%	1 / 3%
1C Within the <b>genre of reviews</b>	2 / 13%	---
1 D Within <b>issues of the field</b>	1 / 7%	13/ 45%
Other	1 / 7%	---
Total	15 / 100%	29 / 100%

It is noteworthy that Step 1C, situating the books within the genre of review, almost disappears completely, only occasionally subsumed into some minor sentences regarding the selection of textbooks for composition, such as in these two examples from two different reviews:

- “Perhaps a final note should be added: no reviewer can examine a text and decide with finality whether or not it will prove useful; the classroom is the crucible where the gold must be separated from the dross’ (59). *CCC* 21.1, Feb. 1970
- “To review any textbooks for college composition is equally risky business for the same reason.” (59). *CCC* 21.1, Feb. 1970

Also noteworthy is that Step 1A, situating the books within composition pedagogy, expands to almost double the number of occurrences (8 to 15) but stays close to the same in the percentage of frequency (53% to 52%), continuing the emphasis on composition pedagogy. This emphasis on composition pedagogy points to the focus of the field at the time with its disciplinary concentration on the teaching of writing. Step

1B, situating the books within the identity of the author, lessens both in number and percentage. Finally, Step 1D, situating the books within issues of the field, expands greatly from 1 occurrence (7%) to 13 occurrences (45%). So while most of the steps are the same in the short reviews and the book reviews, the frequency of occurrence differs interestingly. This expansion points to an opening up to a wider representation of the field, both encompassing and beginning to include other aspects of disciplinarity.

An example of the move of situating within composition pedagogy, Step 1A, in book reviews follows in Textbox 3.24. Textbox 3.24 is an example of how dramatically the situating within composition pedagogy has changed from the short reviews (refer to Textboxes 3.10 and 3.11 for short reviews) to the book reviews. Not only has the length of the step increased, but the level of sophistication and depth of thought in the move and step has also been significantly elaborated. Simple phrases or single statements in short reviews are now extended into multiple paragraphs of complex development in the book reviews. The focus on a single teacher making a textbook decision in the short reviews now lengthens and complicates to the pedagogy and practices of a teaching field, questioning its purposes and its body of knowledge, as shown in Textbox 3.24.

**Textbox 3.24 - Situating within Composition Pedagogy Example for Book Reviews**

<p>Situating the books within <b>composition pedagogy</b></p> <p>Review Title: Book Reviews</p> <p>Strandness, T. Benson, Herbert Hackett, and Harry H. Crosby, eds.</p>	<p>“Freshman English is a many-splintered thing. While easily the most heavily populated college course, it possesses no defined or agreed upon body of subject matter. Yet its teachers, whether from the lowliest junior college (where the first year of English is nothing more than a high school review) or the most exalted Ivy League university (where Freshman English introduces students to the great books), are generally in agreement on its basic objective: to guide, nurture, cajole, or otherwise encourage every student to try to write more coherently, more appropriately, and more effectively. The pervasiveness of this aim, unhappily, varies widely from place to place as well as from instructor to instructor within the same place. In a few colleges, the sole focus</p>
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<i>Language, Form, and Idea</i>	is on the student's composing process. In most others, improved student writing is just one of several objectives that may include in addition more perceptive reading, more logical thinking, greater awareness of the concerns of the liberal arts, deeper appreciation of literature, keener knowledge of the nature of language, and/or enhanced speaking facility. The astonishingly diverse efforts to avoid, enliven, subordinate, or otherwise transcend the basic aim explain the chaos of Freshman English. They also help explain why the four new readers under examination are so different while undertaking to supply the raw materials for achieving the same very general end."
Guerard, Albert J., Maclin B. Guereard, John Hawkes, and Claire Rosenfeld, eds.	
<i>The Personal Voice</i>	"If the primary objective of Freshman English-perceptible improvement in writing skill-is honored with any degree of fidelity, not much time remains for secondary goals such as training Aristotelian rhetoric, development of reading skills, or intellectual stimulation through exposure to and discussion of significant ideas expressed by good writers form a large variety of subject disciplines" (55).
Hughes, Richard E., and P. Albert Duhamel, eds.	
<i>Persuasive Prose</i>	
Alssid, Michael, and William Kenney. <i>The World of Ideas</i>	
	CCC 16.1, Feb. 1965

The assessment of writing as one of the primary topics of situating within composition pedagogy is illustrative of the empirical turn in composition to gather data to support the teaching of writing and to provide evidence of the legitimacy of the teaching of writing. To that end, the book reviews in this area focus on the measurement of learning when it comes to writing, the evaluation of writing programs, the direct and indirect measurement of writing, methods of assessing writing, and strategies for integrating instruction and assessment. Textbox 3.25 provides an example of situating within composition pedagogy, with the topic of writing assessment.

**Textbox 3.25 – Situating within Composition Pedagogy (Writing Assessment)  
Example in Book Reviews**

Situating the book within <b>composition pedagogy</b>	"Educational researchers and professional examiners will be interested in the analytical instruments used in assessing dozens of discrete factors in written language. Those who view each piece of writing as an integrated whole may become nervous about the dozen of fragmentation permitted through such assessment"
Review Title: Reviews	
Purves, Alan C., and	

Sauli Takala. <i>An International Perspective on the Evaluation of Written Composition</i>	(139).  CE 46.2, Feb. 1984
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Table 3.10 shows the variety of topics addressed in Step 1A and their frequency for the 15 book reviews that are situating within composition pedagogy.

**Table 3.10 - Breakdown of Topics for Step 1A in Book Reviews– Situating within Composition Pedagogy**

1 A – Situating within Composition Pedagogy		
6	Teaching composition and textbook selection for composition courses	40%
4	Assessment of writing	27%
2	Critical pedagogy or feminist pedagogy	13%
2	Writing across the curriculum	13%
1	Reading and writing connection	7%
Total = 15		100%

While composition pedagogy, in book reviews, is still in the forefront, there are signs of expansion beyond the classroom and the textbook. The breakdown of topics for situating within composition pedagogy represents a broader definition of pedagogy than was previously shown in the short reviews. Composition pedagogy begins to encompass the emergent topics of writing assessment, critical or feminist pedagogy, writing across the curriculum, and the reading and writing connection, reflective of the field's broadening representation of itself. What is interesting is that the book reviews of the 1990s now reflect a combined field, still pedagogical, but moving more fully into pedagogical theory and research-based scholarship.

A closer look at examples of two specific book reviews with theoretical approaches reveals an interest in the emergence of pedagogical theory. The first book review opens with the following paragraph quoted in Textbox 3.26.



**Textbox 3.26 – Situating within Composition Pedagogy (Critical Pedagogy)**  
**Example in Book Reviews**

<p>Situating the book within <b>composition pedagogy</b></p> <p>Review Title: Reviews</p> <p>Shor, Ira.</p> <p><i>Critical Teaching and Everyday Life</i></p>	<p>“Ira Shor’s book breathes new political life in that stuffy, Latinate word “pedagogy.” A phrase from Paulo Freire, his mentor, expresses his goal (and his radically democratic politics) quite clearly: “education rather than domestication” (p. 97). Shor describes his experiments teaching English at Staten Island Community College and tries to develop a theoretical framework for understanding his working-class students’ difficulties in school and for creating a “liberatory” (p. xiv) pedagogy. The book beautifully exemplifies the kind of critical and creative intelligence he hopes to awaken in his students” (439).</p> <p>CCC 31.4, Dec. 1980</p>
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The book review goes on to describe Shor’s “concrete examples” of writing assignments that demonstrate relevance to the “students’ daily lives” as a way to emphasize the importance and power of language and critical thinking. The book is recommended to “the liberal or radical English teacher in a working-class college who is dissatisfied with his or her present approach to teaching” (440). This book and this book review are examples of the emergence of critical literacy/critical pedagogy as a theoretical base in composition.

A second book review, noted in Textbox 3.27, also illustrates theoretical approaches to pedagogy.

**Textbox 3.27 – Situating within Composition Pedagogy (Feminist Pedagogy)**  
**Example in Book Reviews**

<p>Situating the book within <b>composition pedagogy</b></p> <p>Review Title: Reviews</p> <p>Bleich, David.</p> <p><i>The Double Perspective</i></p>	<p>“Very impressive is the range of research that Bleich gathers for this book. He builds a community of feminists, psychologist, philosophers, linguist, anthropologists, and critical theorists in order to challenge, in a rather monumental way, the premises that support Western commonplace values for teaching in the academy” (231).</p> <p>CCC 41.2 , May 1990</p>
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This book review handily demonstrates the emergence of theoretical approaches to composition and illustrates the practice of composition as a field that borrows from a variety of academic disciplines in forming its own methods and theories. The reviewer argues that “the overall weight of the book in pedagogical” in its topics of “collaborative learning, student-teacher relationships, and course design” (231). Bleich stresses the importance of a feminist approach that is “nonoppositional” in the college classroom (232). The reviewer ends with a statement that this is “an important book that stimulates interest and encourages inquiry in language theory and in the interrelatedness of writing (speaking), reading (listening), thinking, and rhetoric” (233). This book review illustrates the emergence of feminist pedagogy and social construction as important to composition classroom pedagogy.

The emergence of more theoretical topics in the teaching of composition also point to movement in the field away from a primary focus on practice in the teaching of writing toward a more theoretical approach to pedagogy. These early explorations into theory preview a combined focus that begins to develop in composition over theory and practice and what should be the focus of the composition classroom. These investigations into the role of culture and gender in the teaching of writing will have deeper ramifications for the field as it reflects on and expands its disciplinary identity.

Another primary step of situating in book reviews is Step 1D, situating within issues of the field. Textbox 3.28 provides a lengthy and intricate example of situating within issues of the field with a theme of literacy and its political and cultural ramifications. Here again is the stark contrast of the situating in short reviews to the extended and more complicated situating in book reviews. The length and sophistication

of the situating in book reviews result in increasing complexity of coding; for example, steps may become moves. This situating demonstrates the complexity of the issue of literacy within the field of composition and the opening up of multiple perspectives on issues of the field, as shown in Textbox 3.28.

**Textbox 3.28 – Situating within Issues of the Field (Literacy) Example for Book Reviews**

<p><b>Situating the book within issues of the field</b></p> <p>Review Title: Reviews</p> <p>Winterowd, W. Ross.</p> <p><i>The Culture and Politics of Literacy</i></p>	<p>“But what about the many students who do not become fully or even marginally literate, whose ‘natural sequences’ are somehow aborted, who are perhaps hopelessly behind in ninth grade, or even out of school? Here Winterowd has two answers. On the one hand, far more than most composition theorists, he relies upon neurological explanations, especially on the concept of dyslexia to explain reading problems. It is only logical to blame a breakdown in the natural process of language acquisition on a breakdown in the natural mechanism itself. On the other hand, he also recognizes that literacy is a cultural as well as a psycholinguistic phenomenon, and thus that becoming literate (or not becoming so) ultimately involves issues of cultural identity. As Winterowd perceptively writes, ‘The fundamental cause of the literacy crisis is the unwillingness or the inability of illiterate or marginally literate people to change cultures (98)’” (93).</p> <p>“Just how does one reconcile a passionate belief in the natural, democratic practice of language development (except for those with specific neurological dysfunction) with the recognition that literacy is an inherently cultural condition, and thus that, given existing social and pedagogical practices, many students from diverse cultural backgrounds are likely to have an especially difficult task attaining high levels of reading and writing proficiency? Here, seemingly at the limits of Winterowd’s theorizing, we must also recognize his affinity with that earlier rhetorician of American life, Walt Whitman-not just in seeming to rise above contradictions (even</p>
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	<p>to expressing disdain for such narrowly logical thinking that would insist upon a false unity), nor in the steady series of autobiographical references (to his wife's pound cake as well as his early reading), nor even in the startlingly abrupt transitions (including 'Whoa, Nellie'), but in a more substantial way as well. Like Whitman, Winterowd is both a pragmatist and an idealist, mixing theory with extensive practical advice on such topics as speed reading, improving the readability of business communication, and invention strategies for critiquing school cafeterias. It is his pragmatism that makes him deeply suspicious of what he in his 1987 <i>College English</i> article calls the vitalist school ('Berthoff, Elbow, Macrorie, and Coles'), yet it is his own idealism that makes him as protective as any of these critics of the natural powers of individual learners, warning teachers in this current book to be 'extremely cautious in assigning remediation and absolutely fearful about flunking anyone (187)'" (94).</p> <p>CCC 41.1, Feb. 1990</p>
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Literacy emerges as a vital topic to the representation of the field of composition in the 1980s to the 1990s. The issue of literacy and its connection to writing along with its political and cultural ramifications make it a hotbed issue for the emerging field. With this focus on literacy, composition is pushing its representation outside of, and beyond, the freshman writing classroom to address issues of more widespread and democratic concerns.

An example of the second most frequent topic within issues of the field, linguistics, and specifically transformational grammar, is provided in Textbox 3.29.

**Textbox 3.29 – Situating within Issues of the Field (Linguistics-Transformational Grammar) Example in Book Reviews**

<p>Situating the book within <b>issues of the field</b></p> <p>Review Title: Reviews</p> <p><b>Owen, Thomas, and Eugene R. Kingten.</b></p> <p><i>Transformational Grammar and the Teaching of English</i></p> <p>Wolfram, Walt, and Ralph W. Fasold.</p> <p><i>The Study of Social Dialects in American English</i></p>	<p>“An uncomfortable decision often facing the teacher of English is the primary and secondary schools is whether or not to teach transformational grammar (TG). Despite the fact that the Roberts series and other TG approaches have not only been approved but even required by many states for all public schools, the TG textbooks unfortunately have too often found their way into the teacher’s lower desk drawer instead of the student’s hands. However, it would certainly be unfair to point the finger solely at the teachers, because their confusion and, ultimately their rejection of a grammar based on linguistic assumptions often foreign to them are greatly due to the simple fact that most teachers have not been adequately prepared to work with TG. Eliminating this deficiency in our teacher-training programs is primarily the objective and achievement of the much revised and improved second edition of <i>Transformational Grammar and the Teacher of English</i> (TGTE) by Owen Thomas and Eugene R. Kingten” (96).</p> <p>CCC 26.1, Feb. 1975</p>
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Finally, Textbox 3.30 illustrates situating within issues of the field with theme of disciplinarity. This example illustrates the movement toward concerns with composition as a discipline and particularly, its relationship to other disciplines and its interdisciplinarity. The field of composition, as is illustrated in this review, is demonstrating movement toward complexity and sophistication, as it explores and establishes its place as an emerging discipline. This review points to a desire for academic integration and disciplinary relevance for the field.

**Textbox 3.30 – Situating within Issues of the Field (Disciplinary) Example in Book Reviews**

<p>Situating the books <b>within issues of the field</b></p> <p>Review Title: Reviews – Professional</p> <p>Finestone, Harry, and Michael F. Shugrue.</p> <p><i>Prospects for the 70s</i></p> <p>Judy, Stephen N.</p> <p><i>Explorations in the Teaching of Secondary English</i></p>	<p>“Cassandra was not popular in her time, nor was Jeremiah in his. Foretelling doom used to be dangerous. Of late, however, the practice has become remarkably popular among English professors, particularly department chairs. Conferences and seminars of the chairmen’s own organization, The Associate of Department of English (ADE), have provided a stream of steady speakers eager to display their satirical skill at the expense of their profession. Presenting the worst possible case scenario can make us look silly, and it can provide excellent opportunities to turn a mordant phrase” (110-111).</p> <p>“Times are hard, and the future is fraught with peril, but little less than imminent Armageddon would seem to justify the number of voices calling for sackcloth and ashes as the uniform of the day. A closer look, however, reveals usually that the prescribed repentance amounts not to real reform but rather to money for travel and conferences or perhaps for switching from traditional courses to the prophet’s current interest. In short, the sackcloth turns out to be finely tailored polyester, and the ashes are delicately scented talc” (111)...</p> <p>“Restoring the natural but neglected links between English studies and other academic disciplines is proposed as the best way for us to rejoin the mainstream, but the reunion cannot be merely superficial or cosmetic, these writers insist. There must be genuine reintegration of knowledge and renewed interaction of ways of knowing” (111).</p> <p>CCC 26.1, Feb. 1975</p>
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To return to the move of situating within issues of the field, Table 3.11 shows the breakdown of topics of those issues and their frequency of occurrence in the book reviews.

**Table 3.11 – Breakdown of Topics for Step 1D in Book Reviews – Situating within Issues of the Field**

1 D – Situating within Issues of the Field in Book Reviews	Frequency
4 Literacy	31%
2 Transformational grammar (Linguistics)	15%
2 Working conditions/role of teacher	15%
1 Disciplinarity	8%
1 Research and writing	8%
1 Public language in the classroom	8%
1 Role of rhetoric	8%
1 Use of technology in the composition classroom	8%
Total = 13	101%

Eight of the thirteen issues of the field (62%) represent the top three occurrences: literacy, defined here simply as a focus on the ability to read and write (Brandt); linguistics, confined here to transformational grammar; and working conditions/role of the teacher, addressed here as concerns with adjunct faculty in composition. Table 3.11 clearly shows the expansion and variety of issues that are now represented in the book review form, with the field moving into new areas such as technology.

### **Conclusion for Book Reviews**

The two main findings for book reviews are the expansion and increasing sophistication of both evaluating and situating within reviews. Evaluating, particularly criticism, expands to become the hallmark of this review form as compared to short reviews, which are mainly descriptive. Criticism is the hallmark of the book review genre as demonstrated by the increased frequency of both praise and criticism, by the increased frequency of more criticism when both praise and criticism are present, and by the increased frequency of equal praise and criticism, all of which point to criticism as the predominant feature within the book review genre.

Situating in composition pedagogy in book reviews expands beyond the selection of composition textbooks to reflect ever-increasing complexity within the field of composition. The reviews are beginning to reflect the movement toward establishing composition as a disciplinary field with an expansion of knowledge beyond the original purpose of choosing textbooks, teaching composition, and demonstrating pedagogy. Even when textbooks are a part of the landscape of book reviews, more emphasis on pedagogy has emerged. While more than half of the situating still concerns composition pedagogy, the examples are more sophisticated and complicated, moving beyond composition as strictly a classroom teaching subject to the conceptualization of a more fully developing discipline.

Situating in book reviews illustrates how the issues of the field have grown to reflect the expansion of the field as a scholarly discipline. The issues of the field expand to a broadening sphere of influence and a broadening definition of composition as demonstrated by specific issues such as literacy, uses of transformational grammar in the teaching of writing, working conditions, and the meta-issue of disciplinarity. Additionally, concerns such as the relationship between research and the teaching of writing, the uses of public language in the classroom, the role of classical and contemporary rhetoric in the teaching of writing, and the role of technology in the teaching of writing round out the situating that occurs in book reviews within issues of the field showing the expanding sphere of the field of composition.

### **Review Essays**

The review essays account for twenty-eight (33%) of the total corpus of reviews. Appearing in the journals from 1995 to the present, the review essay is defined as



lengthier reviews with an average of 4,440 words, typically written on three to five volumes connected to a distinctive topic. Through holistic reading and coding, the following four moves were identified for the 28 review essays.

Move 1: SITUATING THE BOOKS

Move 2: DESCRIBING THE BOOKS

Move 3: EVALUATING THE BOOKS

Move 4: THEORIZING THE BOOKS

The first three moves are the same as those identified in both the short reviews and book reviews. I define the fourth move, theorizing, as the development of the reviewer's own perspective on a particular theoretical concept in the field, a concept related to the books under review but not necessarily developed in the books under review. In other words, *the reviewer is developing theory*. Theorizing uses the review essay genre as a springboard for exploring arguments, interpretations, politicizations, and knowledge building, sometimes specifically in pedagogical theory and sometimes generally in composition theory (e.g. feminist theory). In a review essay, the move of theorizing shifts the genre to more of an essay and less of a review.

Table 3.12 illustrates the moves and comparative frequency of their occurrence in the three review forms: short review, book reviews, and review essays.

**Table 3.12 –Moves and Frequency: Short Reviews, Book Reviews, and Review Essays**

Move	Short Reviews Number/ Percentage	Book Reviews Number/Percentage	Review Essays Number/Percentage
Situating (1)	15 / 68%	29 / 81%	23 / 82%
Describing (2)	22 / 100%	36 / 100%	28 / 100%
Evaluating (3)	22 / 100%	36 / 100%	28 / 100%
Theorizing (4)	-	-	9 / 32%
Total Number of Reviews (86)	22	36	28

As Table 3.12 illustrates, the frequency of the move of situating steadily increases over time from 68% in short reviews, to 81% in book reviews, and finally to 82% in review essays. Describing, as would be expected in the review genre, remains a move with 100% occurrence in all three forms: short reviews, book reviews, and review essays. Table Twelve also shows the consistent presence of evaluating in all three review forms (100%), affirming the evaluative nature of the review genre (Hyland). Theorizing emerges as a fully-fledged move in review essays, with a 32% occurrence.

### **Move 2: Describing in Review Essays**

Since describing occurs in all of the review essays, I address this move first. Describing, in review essays displays some evidence of further development than was illustrated in the short reviews and book reviews. Describing in short reviews and in

some book reviews includes the identification of the book's characteristics such as physical qualities, length, parts, sections, chapters, reading selections, and exercises. Describing in some book reviews and in review essays has a more focused emphasis on the book's content. Over time, describing has expanded to include the describing of content, which includes summaries of narratives, ethnographies, explorations, discussions, investigations, and the like, which occur within the books under review. Textboxes 3.31 and 3.32 show examples of describing content in the book reviews as compared to describing content in the review essays.

### **Textbox 3.31 – Content Summary Example of Describing in Book Reviews**

<p>Move 2: Describing the book</p> <p>Review Title: Reviews</p> <p>Fadiman, Clifton, and James Howard.</p> <p><i>Empty Pages</i></p>	<p>“Such sympathy tempered by realism accounts, in large measure, for the book's value. Unlike works of unrelieved back-to-basics advocacy, <i>Empty Pages</i> does more than just feed the biases of readers. And I find it especially heartening that parents and teachers and school board members within the back-to-basics movement will read, in a book of <i>Empty Pages'</i> credentials, that ‘neither the SAT nor the decline in scores may add up to much’; that ‘learning the mechanics of writing is not the same thing as learning to write’; that ‘students will be helped if they have in mind a specific audience’ which ‘will differ in accordance with the nature of the assignment’; that ‘learning to write cannot be tightly programmed, and too fine a definition of goals for children as they go from grade to grade may set a trap of expectations resulting in frustration all round’; and that while relentless marking of mechanical errors ‘may indeed give teachers a feeling of security,’ it ‘has as a way of making students feel insecure and may very well distract them from the intellectual effort that is the condition of competent writing’”(232-233).</p> <p>CCC 31.2, May 1980</p>
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This review has a very book-centered focus pointing internally to the book with multiple references and several quotations. It makes explicit the relationship between the book and the reader.

**Textbox 3.32 – Content Summary Example o of Describing in Review Essays**

<p>Move 2: Describing the book</p> <p>Review Title: Women, Rhetoric, Teaching</p> <p><b>Kirsch, Gesa E.</b> <i>Women Writing the Academy</i></p> <p>Larabee, Mary Jeanne, editor.</p> <p><i>An Ethic of Care</i></p> <p>Luke, Carmen, and Jennifer Gore.</p> <p><i>Feminism and Critical Pedagogy</i></p> <p>Phelps, Louise Wetherbee, and Janet Emig, editors.</p> <p><i>Feminine Principles and Women’s Experience in American Composition and Rhetoric</i></p> <p>Singley, Carol J., and Susan Elizabeth Sweeney.</p> <p><i>Anxious Power</i></p>	<p>“In addition to the vivid examples provided by individual stories, Gesa Kirsch’s book provides useful analyses of feminist issues in rhetoric and composition as introductions to the more specific descriptions of her research results. Her chapter on authority, ‘Working against Tradition,’ for example, begins by bringing familiar ideas about the need for students to master conventions together with the complications introduced by gender. ‘Expanding Communities’ talks about audience, summarizing problems women have with authority that many have noted, and adding the important problem brought about by feminist desires to address larger audiences, to go outside the academy with their message. ‘Crossing Disciplinary Boundaries’ notes the limitations of interdisciplinary research as well as its promise to change knowledge. Together with Pat Sullivan, Gesa Kirsch established a feminist workshop at CCCC several years ago which helped bring academic women together to talk about their work. Her book serves a similar function, laying the groundwork for women to examine their lives in the academy” (117).</p> <p>CCC 46.1, Feb. 1995</p>
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This review essay uses description of three specific chapters in an overarching summation of the content of the book and how it connects to the theme of the books under review, feminism and rhetoric.

These two examples of content summary illustrate the differences typical of the book reviews versus the review essays when it comes to describing book content. The book review example of content description tends to maintain its focus within the book

itself and the quotations of the book that will be influential for the reader (See Textbox 3.31 above). The review essay example provides more complete development and draws on description of contents within the book to illustrate the connection to the thematic focus of rhetoric and feminism, in general (See Textbox 3.32 above).

Textbox 3.33 illustrates further development in describing arguments that appear within review essays.

### Textbox 3.33 – Argument Summary Example of Describing in Review Essays

<p>Move 2: Describing the book</p> <p>Review Title: Truth and Method: What Goes on in Writing Classes, and How Do We Know?</p> <p>Carroll, Lee Ann.</p> <p><i>Rehearsing New Roles</i></p> <p>Hunt, Doug.</p> <p><i>Misunderstanding the Assignment</i></p>	<p>“But first let me lay out the strands of the books’ arguments. Both Carroll and Hunt are interested in how members of academic disciplines see ‘development’ differently: while some focus upon what’s often called ‘content knowledge’ or ‘getting it right,’ others, particularly in English, education, and communications departments, focus upon complexity of thought as demonstrated in writing...In any writing class there is a ‘complex web of social practices that shape what can and cannot be said’(7), and so ‘development’ means different things to different teachers. For Hunt, the term refers primarily to psycho-social development and his three sources are primarily from the field of human development (William Perry and Robert Kagan, along with Jean Piaget). He argues that individuals move from stage to developmental stage from the time they are born to their maturity, sometimes moving to advanced stages of complex thought, and sometimes remaining static for long periods of time. ‘[In freshman composition [...] students who are more-or-less Interpersonal confront work that is more or less Institutional’ (hunt 39). Carroll’s view, supported by Urie Brofenbrenner, Michael Cole and Sylvia Scribner, Miles Myers, and Stephen Witte and Jennifer Flach (among others), argues that development is not a continuous process, but one that ‘takes place during periods of transition...’ (336-337)</p> <p>CE 66.3, Jan. 2004</p>
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Describing of content in review essays differs from that in short reviews and book reviews in that the description moves from a summary of content to a summary of argument. In short reviews, the describing is mainly physical qualities, length, sections, and chapters of the book. In book reviews, the describing is mainly chapters, reading selections, and limited content. Review essays provide a fuller, well-developed, and sophisticated description of content that is pervasive and extensive in the review essay. Whether the describing is a summary of the general content of the book or a summary of the argument of the book, it is a significant part of the review essay.

In coding the review essays for description, I also coded and counted the instances of content description, both summary of content and summary of argument. Summary of content appears in all twenty-eight review essays, and summary of argument, appears in twenty of the twenty-eight review essays (71%). Table 3.13 shows specific instances of summary of content compared to summary of argument.

**Table 3.13 - Instances of Describing Summary of Content and Summary of Argument in Review Essays**

Summary of Content in Describing	Summary of Argument in Describing
314 instances in 28 review essays	52 instances in 20 review essays

Many of the summaries of content and summaries of argument are paragraphs of substantial length and development. While summary of content dominates the review essays, the move to summary of argument reflects a change in describing from book reviews.

One final example of description in review essays is provided in Textbox 3.34, which illustrates a typical pattern for description in the review essay. The passage starts with a statement of praise (although, at times, this may also be a statement of criticism)

and then summarizes the argument the author presents. I have added italics to highlight the praise.

**Textbox 3.34 – Argument Summary with Praise Example of Describing in Review Essays**

<p>Move 2: Describing the book</p> <p>Review Title: Counterstatement: Autobiography in Composition Scholarship</p> <p><b>Ede, Lisa.</b></p> <p><i>Situating Composition</i></p> <p>Tingle, Nick.</p> <p><i>Self-Development and College Writing</i></p> <p>Smit, David. W.</p> <p><i>The End of Composition Studies</i></p>	<p><i>“Ede’s critique is perceptive. After a thoughtful consideration of the process movement and its influence on composition studies, she argues, for example, that “post-process” positions should be reconsidered, not only because process still has more to tell us about students, writing, pedagogy, and the field’s professionalization, but also because process continues to play a role in composition courses nationwide. Thus, the frequent dismissal of process by so many scholars in the field reflects, in Ede’s view, a larger issue—the growing “distance from the materially grounded scene of the classroom” (45). Others have expressed a similar concern (see Fleming), but it certainly bears repeating. The professionalization of the field has widened the gap between theory and practice to such an absurd degree that, as Ede notes, we commonly find that those who write about composition no longer teach the course. Instead, their teaching often is limited to graduate courses in cultural studies, history of rhetoric, feminist rhetoric, and so forth, in which they make claims about undergraduate students and their writing without any immediate, firsthand experience with either” (211).</i></p> <p>CE 68.2, Nov. 2005</p>
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As I have demonstrated in this section, there is evidence of more fully developed and detailed description in the review essays, sometimes focusing on content and sometimes on argument. The arguments made by the books under review become more central to the review essay than just a straightforward description of the books’ contents.

**Move 3: Evaluating in Review Essays**

Evaluating in review essays is still an essential move that appraises the qualities of the book, its author, its content, or especially in review essays, its argument. Praise and criticism are still a prominent feature of evaluation in the review essay. In many ways,

review essays are similar to book reviews and short reviews when it comes to praise and criticism. Phrases of praise have a familiar tone, as noted in the following:

- “Gordon makes a strikingly fresh case for the relevance of rhetorical studies in general and for investigations of black nationalist rhetoric in particular” (364) *CCC* 57.2, Dec. 2005.
- “The study is a strong example of imaginative, resourceful, and thorough archival research and it will be a valuable resource for future researchers...” (667). *CCC* 51.4, June 2000
- “...engaging little book...- she is right on the mark” (491) *CCC* 58.3, Feb. 2007
- “These three books, all useful in our composition and rhetoric courses...” (138) *CCC* 59.1, Sept. 2007

Criticism, on the other hand, as demonstrated in the following excerpts, seems to have moved to a new level that goes beyond just criticism of the book to criticism of the content along with the author’s and book’s perspective.

- “Some will surely object that it treats composition theory too narrowly – that its persistent themes of social construction and social justice are emphasized at the expense of other points of view” (717). *CE* 58.4, June 2007
- “Although Ede’s critique is salutary, some readers will be disappointed that it does not go far enough” (212). *CE* 68.2, Nov. 2005



- “Both these books left me wishing for more of the discipline-based, inquiry-based research into learning which the ‘genuine’ scholarship of teaching is designed to provide” (398). *CE* 69.4, Mar. 2007
- “In my view, it is a wholly inadequate effort to make sense of the interrelationships among theory, method, and practice” (830). *CE* 56.7, Nov. 1994

Review essays demonstrate instances of pure praise (Textbox 3.35), pure criticism (Textbox 3.36), and a mixture of praise and criticism sandwiched in such a way as to mitigate the criticism (Textbox 3.37).

### **Textbox 3.35 – Pure Praise Example of Evaluating in Review Essays**

<p>Move 3: Evaluating the book</p> <p>Praise</p> <p>Review Title: Reviews</p> <p>Cintron, Ralph.</p> <p><i>Angels' Town</i></p>	<p>“This is a nicely written, thoughtful book that combines insight with respect for the community. Carefully theorized and engaged with contemporary debates, it is not densely theoretical. The feminist anthropologist Laurel Richardson has recently lamented that so many ethnographies of fascinating places are themselves dull; she admits that she often leaves such ethnographies unfinished. Cintron’s is not such a book” (494).</p> <p><i>CCC</i> 51.3, Feb. 2000</p>
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This example of pure praise in a passage from a review essay is actually taken from a review in which there is no evidence of criticism. The review is composed entirely of only two moves: description and evaluation, and the evaluation consists of praise only.

Textbox 3.36 provides an example of the opposite evaluation: criticism. This passage is part of a “tribute volume” in honor of “veteran composition theorist Jim Corder, who died in 1998” (520). For the most part, the review of this one of the three

books in the essay is descriptive with one small instance of praise, but the reviewer has no qualms about critiquing one of the writers of the volume.

**Textbox 3.36 - Pure Criticism Example of Evaluating in Review Essays**

<p>Move 3: Evaluating the book</p> <p>Criticism</p> <p>Review Title: Review Essay: Prospects for “Rhetcomp”</p> <p>Petraglia, Joseph, and Deepika Bahri, eds.</p> <p><i>The Realms of Rhetoric</i></p> <p>Olson, Gary A., and Lynn Worsham, ed.</p> <p><i>Postmodern Sophistry</i></p> <p><b>Enos, Theresa, and Keith D. Miller, eds.</b></p> <p><i>Beyond Postprocess and Postmodernism</i></p>	<p>“The book’s main title seems pretentious. I think the phrase ‘beyond postprocess and postmodernism’ is best left to Buzz Lightyear. Perhaps Corder would agree, for he was willing to engage these schools of thought more than the title implies. At any rate, the volume is weakest when some of the contributors, notable Warnock, blast postmodernist thinking. Especially egregious is her claim that composition’s expressivists are beleaguered, when they’ve actually enjoyed a comeback. Such polemics fall short of the patient, informed exchanges that Corder esteemed” (521).</p> <p>CCC 56.3, Feb. 2005</p>
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Textbox 3.37 demonstrates a typical pattern of evaluation in review essays; and that is, praise and criticism are mixed, illustrating the way in which praise is used to mitigate criticism. In these twenty-eight review essays, there were fourteen instances

(50%) such as this, in which praise and criticism parallel each other and are placed in close approximation with the resulting effect being to soften the critique.

**Textbox 3.37 - Mixed Praise and Criticism Example of Evaluating in Review Essays**

<p>Move 3: Evaluating the book</p> <p>Mixed praise and criticism <i>Criticism-Praise</i> <i>Criticism-Praise</i></p> <p>Review Title: Review Essay: Language, Identity, and Citizenship</p> <p>Gordon, Dexter B.</p> <p><i>Black Identity</i></p> <p><b>Prendergast, Catherine.</b></p> <p><i>Literacy and Racial Justice</i></p> <p>Kells, Michelle Hall, Valerie Balester, and Victor Villanueva, eds.</p> <p><i>Latino/a Discourses</i></p>	<p><i>“These positions are not contradictory, just underdeveloped. Nonetheless, Prendergast’s book, its attention to history, can enrich virtually all deliberations about literacy no matter how one defines the central term. The book probably should have been longer and incorporated discussions of the 1974 Lau v. Nichols decision and the 1979 King v. Ann Arbor case. Yet the volume is impressive, timely, and held together by an engaging narrative style. It is innovative and wonderfully edgy, and provides one of the best discussions of language, discrimination, and legal interventions that we have to date” (368-369).</i></p> <p>CCC 57.2, Dec. 2005</p>
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In spite of the frequency of praise in the review essays, there are instances, such as shown in Textbox 3.38, of particularly biting and incisive criticism of the books and the authors.

**Textbox 3.38 – Criticism Example of Evaluating in Review Essays**

<p>Move 3: Evaluating the book</p> <p>Criticism</p> <p>Review Title: Review: Counterstatement: Autobiography in Composition Scholarship</p> <p>Ede, Lisa.</p> <p><i>Situating Composition</i></p> <p>Tingle, Nick.</p> <p><i>Self-Development and College Writing</i></p> <p><b>Smit, David W.</b></p> <p><i>The End of Composition Studies</i></p>	<p>“It is never easy to read – much less to review – a piece of unsuccessful writing, and the discomfort level increases exponentially when the writing is remarkably unsuccessful, as is the case here” (217).</p> <p>“Throughout the text, but especially in Part I, Smit makes assertions and claims with only a nodding recognition of the obligation to provide evidence, and the scant evidence is too often out of date, drawn from the wrong area, unrepresentative, or logically flawed. Indeed, the number of claims without proper, or even adequate, support is so large that is it impossible to address them all in this review; thus, those that follow can only be illustrative, not comprehensive” (219).</p> <p><i>CE</i> 68.2, Nov. 2005</p>
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Table 3.14 shows a comparison of the instances of praise and criticism in all three forms of review.

**Table 3.14 –Short Reviews, Book Reviews, and Review Essays in Comparison of Praise and Criticism**

Form of Review Number of Reviews	All Praise	Both Praise and Criticism	Predominant when Both Praise and Criticism are Present	All Criticism
Short Reviews – 22	4 (18%)	18 (82%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Praise - 16 (89%)</li> <li>• More Criticism – 1 (6%)</li> <li>• Equal Praise and Criticism – 1 (6%)</li> </ul>	0
Book Reviews – 36	2 (6%)	34 (94%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Praise – 21 (62%)</li> <li>• More Criticism – 8 (24%)</li> <li>• Equal Praise and Criticism- 5 (15%)</li> </ul>	0
Review Essays – 28	8 (29%)	20 (71%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More Praise – 12 (60%)</li> <li>• More Criticism – 7 (35%)</li> <li>• Equal Praise and Criticism – 1 (5%)</li> </ul>	0

Table 3.14 illustrates the expansion and contraction of the move of evaluating in the forms of praise and criticism from the short reviews to the book reviews to the review essays. For all three forms, the fact that there are no reviews that evaluate with “all criticism” may reflect several possibilities: the extraordinarily collegial nature of composition as an academic discipline (Becher and Trowler; Hyland); judicious editorial decision-making; or compatibility between the authors and the reviewers regarding the object of the publications. “Vicious criticism can seriously undermine an author’s credibility and lavish praise can be unwelcome as superficial and indiscriminating” (Hyland 45). Hyland’s work suggests the review genre strikes a balance between praise and criticism, focusing on the evaluative nature of the genre.

What is somewhat surprising is the 29% frequency of “all praise” in review essays, exceeding the occurrences in both short reviews (18%) and book reviews (6%). A change within the genre of reviews is demonstrated in the new mixed genre of the review essays, a mix of review and essay. The increase in all praise in review essays signals a movement away from the standard for the review genre as an evaluative genre. Hyland argues that reviews are “rhetorically and interactionally complex and represent a carefully crafted social accomplishment,” and the review essay demonstrates this complexity (*Disciplinary* 43-44). The review essay demonstrates the fine line between collegiality and positive commentary toward scholarship and the need to be critical of works that do not contribute positively to the knowledge building of the field. Interestingly, Hyland found that the “engineering and science reviews contained far more praise than those in the soft fields” such as in these composition reviews (*Disciplinary* 49). As with the review essays, Hyland found “a striking feature” in the “amount of praise...contained” in his 160 review corpus (*Disciplinary* 52). This subtle movement away from the expectation of the review genre, its evaluative nature, is demonstrated in the historical trajectory of praise and criticism in this corpus.

### **Move 1: Situating in Review Essays**

Situating is present as a move in twenty-three of the twenty-eight review essays (82%). Steps of situating in review essays include all of the same steps identified for the short reviews and book reviews:

#### **Move 1: SITUATING THE BOOKS**

Step 1A: Situating the books within composition pedagogy

and/or

Step 1B: Situating the books within the identity of the author

and/or

Step 1C: Situating the books within the genre of reviews

and/or

Step 1D: Situating the books within issues of the field

By way of comparison, Table 3.15 shows the steps of situating and their frequency for all three forms of reviews.

**Table 3.15- Comparison of Review Essays, Book Reviews, and Short Reviews for Frequency of Step Occurrence in Situating**

Move 1 Situating Steps	Review Essays - 28 (Number and Percentage of Reviews)	Book Reviews -36 (Number and Percentage of Reviews)	Short Reviews -22 (Number and Percentage of Reviews)
1 D Within issues of the field	16 / 23 70%	13 / 29 45%	1 / 15 7%
1A Within composition pedagogy	7 / 23 30%	15 / 29 52%	8 / 15 53%
1C Within the genre of reviews	5 / 23 22%	—	2 / 15 13%
1B Within the identity of the author	1 / 23 4%	1 / 29 3%	3 / 15 20%
Other	—	—	1 / 15 7%
Total	23 / 28 82%	29 / 36 81%	15 / 22 68%

Twenty-three of the twenty-eight review essays displayed situating; for these there were a total of twenty-nine instances of situating. Six of the twenty-three review essays (26%) that displayed situating demonstrated double situating within the same review essay. The double situating in these six reviews appears in Table Fifteen and includes four instances of situating within issues of the field combined with situating within the genre of reviews. Additionally, there is one instance each of situating within composition pedagogy combined with situating within the genre of reviews and one instance of situating within composition pedagogy combined with situating within the identity of the author.

As Table 3.15 illustrates, the most frequent step of situating in the review essays is now situating within issues of the field, which will be discussed in more detail below. The step of situating within composition pedagogy is still present in review essays (30%), but it is no longer the most frequent step as it was in short reviews (53%) and book reviews (52%). Table 3.15 shows the steady increase in situating within issues of the field from 7% in short reviews to 45% in book reviews to 70% in review essays. Table 3.15 also demonstrates the continuing expansion and contraction of steps of situating in review essays. The step of situating within the identity of the author that was present in 20% of short reviews has lost its presence, except for one instance in the book reviews and one in the review essays as shown in Table 3.15.

Interestingly, the step of situating within the genre of reviews, which disappeared in the book reviews, re-emerges in the review essays, which may be a reflection of the new emphasis on the essay part of the review genre in composition and rhetoric, as I will argue in the conclusion. Textbox 3.39 shows an example of situating in short reviews as compared to review essays, with italics added to the portion directly referring to the review genre.

**Textbox 3.39 – Comparison of Situating within the Genre of Reviews Examples in Short Reviews and in Review Essays**

<p>Situating within the <b>genre of reviews</b> in short reviews</p> <p>Review Title: Books</p> <p>Birk, W. Otto, Frederick William Holmes, Harold Wesley Melvin, and Joseph Lee Vaughan.</p> <p><i>Basic Principles of Writing</i></p>	<p><i>“Dear Mr. Editor: On second thought I really should not, I suspect, review Basic Principles of Writing. Not ethical, perhaps. I happen to know three-fourths of the four authors. I even hope they are friends of mine. My case grows worse and worse”</i> (400).</p> <p>CE 5.7, April 1944</p>
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<p>Situating within the <b>genre of reviews</b> in review essays</p> <p>Review Title: Review: Counterstatement: Autobiography in Composition Scholarship</p> <p>Ede, Lisa.</p> <p><i>Situating Composition</i></p> <p>Tingle, Nick.</p> <p><i>Self-Development and College Writing</i></p> <p>Smit, David W.</p> <p><i>The End of Composition Studies</i></p>	<p><i>“One of the values of cluster reviews is that they offer glimpses into the status of the profession – what disparate scholars see as the significant issues, what they deem are legitimate ways to approach those issues, what counts as standards of proof and acceptable discourse conventions. In other words, such reviews can reveal trends, both positive and negative. My assessment is that the three books examined here suggest that the influence of autobiography has significantly lowered the bar for what constitutes scholarship, for autobiography – directly and indirectly – legitimizes the attenuation of critical reflection on every facet of the scholarly enterprise. As a result, writers may feel relieved of the traditional obligation to support claims with evidence that meets acceptable standards of proof. I believe that this is very dangerous. If unchecked, it will lead to the deprofessionalization of the field” (223).</i></p> <p>CE 68.2, Nov. 2005</p>
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As the comparison in Textbox 3.39 illustrates, the step of situating within the genre of view is only a brief mention, part of a sentence that is followed by a fragment and a couple of other very brief sentences, in the short reviews (See also Textbox 3.14). The same step in the review essays is, however, a fully developed step of multiple, complex sentences situating the books within the genre of review. As the example shows, the genre of review takes on an important focus in this portion of the review essay, and is overtly presented in relationship to its value as a window to the profession, the scholarship of the field, the discourse of the community, and the trends of composition.

As Table 3.16 shows, there is still a significant emphasis on the teaching of composition (57%) for those review essays that situate within composition pedagogy.

**Table 3.16 – Comparison of Short Reviews, Book Reviews, and Review Essays for Step 1A: Situating within Composition Pedagogy**

Review Essays 28	Book Reviews 36	Short Reviews 22
Teaching composition (textbook selection for composition courses has disappeared as a part of this step) 4 – 57%	Teaching composition and textbook selection for composition courses 6 – 40%	Teaching composition and textbook selection for composition courses 8 – 100%
Assessment of writing 1 – 14%	Assessment of writing 4 – 27%	—
Feminist pedagogy 1 – 14%	Critical pedagogy or feminist pedagogy 2 – 13%	—
—	Writing across the curriculum 2 – 13%	—
Reading and writing connection 1 – 14%	Reading and writing connection 1 – 7%	—
Totals 7 – 99%	15 – 100%	8 – 100%

In review essays, the portion of the situating step that involves the selection of textbooks has completely disappeared, however. Writing across the curriculum, which was present in book reviews, is no longer in the situating within composition pedagogy for review essays. The assessment of writing, which represents 27% in book review, is now only 14% in the review essays.

The step of situating within composition pedagogy displays a continued, if evolving presence, exemplified in Textbox 3.40, with the topic of teaching composition and understanding the students who are the writers in composition classes.

**Textbox 3.40– Situating within Composition Pedagogy (Teaching Composition)  
Example in Review Essays**

<p>Situating the books within <b>composition pedagogy</b></p> <p>Review Title: Truth and Method: What Goes On in Writing Classes and How Do We Know?</p> <p>Carroll, Lee Ann.</p> <p><i>Rehearsing New Roles</i></p> <p>Hunt, Doug.</p> <p><i>Misunderstanding the Assignment</i></p>	<p>“What really goes on in first-year writing classes? How do students in them develop as writers, and how does that development continue in other, more complex writing tasks in and outside of the university? These are tough questions to answer, though over the last few years several studies – some longitudinal (such as Marilyn Sternglass’s 1997 <i>Time to Know Them</i>), some case studies (such as Ann Herrington and Marcia Curtis’s 2001 <i>Persons in Process</i>) – have tried. But because the situations of writers vary so drastically across and even inside institutions, and because their lives as writers intersect with their lives as men and women, workers and students, and members of various religious, racial, geographical, other communities, any such study can only give us part of the answer, regardless of how comprehensive it is” ( 335).</p> <p>“If there is a conclusion to be drawn in juxtaposing these two books, it might be that in order to understand what goes on in first-year writing classes, researchers need to be careful, collaborative, and grounded in their theoretical approaches to the teaching of writing. At their best, such studies should be longitudinal, they should derive their theoretical principles from what the researchers observe, and they should account for the discursive, disciplinary, and cultural material – the details in which the devil resides – in which students and teachers are mired. At their best, such studies should also involve a co-construction of knowledge, in which the insights gained through research are shared with those who teaching and learning it might help. Most important, we should be wary of the idea that if we theorize about our students we do danger to them, and that by resisting theory, we can somehow present writers and their discursive practices in an unbiased, unfettered way. In the end, the biggest differences between Hunt’s and Carroll’s studies, insofar as their conclusions and methodologies have implications for the field at large, is that in his book Hunt seems to be trying to produce just such unfettered ‘truth,’ whereas Carroll is attempting to produce, with fellow researchers and her subjects, something more akin to knowledge. In the end, one book isn’t a study but well-written nonfiction prose (or maybe fiction) about four weeks in a first-year writing class,</p>
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	and the other is a lucid, useful longitudinal study that tells us something important about the consequences of first-year writing” (342-343). CE 66.3, Jan. 2004
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As this example illustrates, except for the last couple of sentences, which are clearly evaluative – a mix of criticism and praise – situating within composition pedagogy, as it relates to the classroom and the teaching of composition, is still occurring in the review essays. The focus has distinctly shifted from that of the short reviews, all of which focused on textbook selection for the composition classroom, and book reviews, many of which focused on textbook selection, but also ventured into writing assessment, critical or feminist pedagogy, writing across the curriculum, and the reading and writing connection (See Tables 3.10 and 3.16). The focus in review essays is to an expanding definition and emphasis on what constitutes composition pedagogy.

As Table 3.15 shows, the most frequent step in review essays is situating within issues of the field, which accounts for 70% of the situating that occurs. There are sixteen instances of this type of situating in the review essays in the twenty-three review essays that display situating. As Table 3.17 shows these issues of the field represent a variety of topics ranging from disciplinarity to literacy, from rhetoric to research, and away from the classroom into various social issues.

**Table 3.17 – Comparison of Short Reviews, Book Reviews, and Review Essays for Step 1D: Situating within Issues of the Field**

Review Essays	Book Reviews	Short Reviews
Disciplinarity/Politics 5 – 31%	Disciplinarity 1 – 8%	—
Literacy 3 – 19%	Literacy 4 – 31%	—
Research and writing 2 – 13%	Research and writing 1 – 8%	—
Public Issues (college student identity and social justice) 2 – 13%	Public Issues (public language in the classroom) 1 – 8%	—
Role of Rhetoric 2 – 13%	Role of Rhetoric 1 – 8%	—
Social Construction of Scientific Knowledge 1 – 6%	—	—
—	Use of technology (in the composition classroom) 1 – 8%	—
—	—	Language study shift - 1
Totals= 16 – 101%	13 – 101%	1

As noted in Table 3.17, disciplinarity/politics is the most frequently occurring topic of situating within issues of the field for review essays with five occurrences (31%). Literacy is the second most frequent topic of situating within issues of the field at four occurrences (31%) in book reviews and three occurrences (19%) in review essays. Comparatively, in book reviews, literacy appeared as the most frequent step of situating within issues of the field. The role of rhetoric and research and writing are present in both book reviews and review essays as topics of situating within issues of the field. Their frequency from book reviews to review essays increases slightly from one to two occurrences (8% to 13%). The topics that were present in book reviews but are no longer

demonstrated in review essays are the roles of linguistics (transformational grammar) and the use of technology in the composition classroom (See Table 3.11). Two new topics introduced in review essays are student identity and social justice under public issues and social construction of scientific knowledge.

In Textboxes 3.41 and 3.42, that follow, I present two exemplifications of the situating within issues of the field that occur in review essays. The review essay quoted in Textbox 3.41 opens with the following four situating paragraphs and near the end continues to situate within issues of the field with the last paragraph.

**Textbox 3.41 – Situating within Issues of the Field (Disciplinary/Politics) Example in Review Essays**

<p>Situating the books within <b>issues of the field</b></p> <p>Review Title: Review: Histories of Pedagogy</p> <p>Gallop, Jane.</p> <p><i>Feminist Accused of Sexual Harassment</i></p> <p>Hernandez, Adriana.</p> <p><i>Pedagogy, Democracy, and Feminism</i></p> <p>Miller, Thomas P.</p> <p><i>The Formation of College English</i></p> <p>Mutnick, Deborah.</p> <p><i>Writing in an Alien World</i></p>	<p>“The politics of English departments are often <i>sotto voce</i>, as I was reminded by two recent incidents, both of which occurred while I was still teaching at my former university. The first event took place after a reading by a visiting poet. When I got the opportunity to talk with him, I told him we had a friend in common. Upon hearing her name, he asked, ‘Are you in composition?’ I said yes. Then, with lowered voice and a wink, he issued a would-be compliment: ‘Well, if you’re a friend of hers, you must be one of the literate people in composition.’ I drove home wondering what leads many English faculty to scorn their composition colleagues, this time by praising a single member of the breed while implicitly belittling the rest” (340).</p> <p>“In the second incident, a colleague and I were discussing a series of sessions I planned to offer graduate students who teach introductory composition. Specifically, I would be helping them write about their teaching, a subject which many English departments refuse to see as material for scholarship. Although my colleague smiled on my project, he did feel obliged to warn me about terminology. ‘Whatever you do,’ he whispered, ‘don’t</p>
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<p>Salvatori, Mariolina Rizzi, ed. <i>Pedagogy: Disturbing History, 1819–1929</i></p>	<p>call the meetings ‘workshops.’ You don’t want to make them sound like something the School of Education would do!’” (341).</p> <p>“Despite the lingering snobbery I call comp-bashing, English departments are starting to grant both composition and teaching some cachet. The poet and my colleague spoke quietly, whereas years ago they might have boomed their bias. But progress seems limited when their opinions still thrive, if in muted voice. Furthermore, the two incidents are related. If many English faculty still scorn composition studies, this is partly because writing specialists see pedagogy as a scholarly concern” (341).</p> <p>“To raise the status of teaching and of composition, English departments will have to make material changes. But many of them will also have to change their thinking. For one thing, they will have to historicize pedagogy, recognizing how concepts and practices associated with it have altered over time. In addition, they will need to consider how pedagogy may involve more than just purveying established truths. As Ann Berthoff has often remarked, a classroom may be a “‘philosophical laboratory.’ Just as important, it may shape conduct in the world at large” (341).</p> <p>“This issue [of cultural diversity and its place in the university] has become especially intense in basic writing programs. At their worst, they advance cultural domination, indoctrinating some students and driving others out; at their best, they put academic discourse in question, helping their students critically analyze it and perhaps even transform it. To be sure, an increasing number of composition theorists regard all such programs with rue, seeing the very term ‘basic writing’ as an instrument of administrative control, a way to keep potential subordinates in line. At the same time, plenty of basic writing faculty continue to believe – or hope – that their work liberates” (343).</p> <p><i>CE</i> 61.3, Jan. 1999</p>
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As this example illustrates, the books are situated or contextualized within disciplinary and political issues related to the field of composition. The situating calls into the review essay genre the political, social, and disciplinary environments surrounding composition and the English department in which composition is housed. This extended example clearly illustrates the broadened focus of the situating within review essays as compared to the short reviews and the book reviews. Later in the review, in the last paragraph of the example excerpt in Textbox 3.41, there is further situating that focuses specifically on basic writing and its place in the rhetorical tradition of the academy. The review essay steps outside of the previous bounds of the review genre to expand the genre in an effort to reflect the expansion of the field of composition.

The situating within issues of the field in Textbox 3.42 focuses specifically on literacy, which continues as a topic in the review essays, although it is not as dominant as it was in book reviews.

**Textbox 3.42 – Situating within Issues of the Field (Literacy) Example for Review Essays**

<p>Situating within <b>issues of the field</b></p> <p>Review Title: Review Essay: Literacy, Affect, and Ethics</p> <p>Daniell, Beth.</p> <p><i>A Communion of Friendship</i></p> <p>Greer, Jane, ed.</p> <p><i>Girls and Literacy in America</i></p>	<p>“ We don’t think of literacy any more as that which lies at the other side of the ‘great leap’ from oral culture, namely the ability to use written signs to communicate, an ability generally learned through formal and informal schooling but which, in Ong’s work, was at least in part culturally innate. In the years since Sylvia Scribner and Michael Cole’s <i>Psychology of Literacy</i>, we’ve begun to pay attention to the specific contexts in which discursive practices are learned, not just in school communities but also outside them: in families, in peer and work groups, in the military, and in religious communities. Literacy, in other words, is seen as practice, ‘as repeated action [. . .], as an event [. . .] complying with the structures of society and [. . .] resisting those structures’ (Daniell 3). Or, as Deb Brandt puts it in <i>Literacy as Involvement</i>, literacy is discursive knowledge, ‘knowledge embodied in doing, a knowledge in which what is made is not separate from the</p>
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<p>Huot, Brian, Beth Stroble, and Charles Bazerman, eds.</p> <p><i>Multiple Literacies in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</i></p>	<p>making of it' (89)" (169-170).</p> <p>"...Just how liberating is literacy? The second important consequence is that questions of literacy are invariably questions of ethics. If literacy is the study of who does and doesn't have the ability to speak, it will have to involve questions of community membership, of polity, and of the material constraints on communities and those who would join them. What might be the preferred route to community membership, and what choices must be made along the way, are questions of ethics as much as they're questions of language. If language is instrumental to ethics—an open question—then the extent to which language moves its users to forge connections with others, and the nature of those engagements, has to be considered" (170).</p> <p>CCC 51.1, Sept. 2005</p>
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This example of situating within issues of the field, specifically literacy, demonstrates the depth to which situating is developed in the review essay genre. The situating uncovers definition, contextualization, and prior research in the field of literacy as it moves toward posing difficult questions surrounding the topic. The situating goes well beyond placing the books within a simple context toward placing the overarching topic of the books within a broader disciplinary framework.

Situating in reviews demonstrates development and complication that evolves over time as witnessed through the genre analysis of short reviews, book reviews, and review essays. The development of situating, as witnessed by the expansion and contraction of the move of situating and the expansion and contraction of the steps of situating, point to genre progression that is moving toward ever-increasing consideration of the disciplinarity of the field. Composition, as a discipline, stretches its boundaries to respond to the continually posed question: "Is composition studies still so nearly invisible as a discipline in its own right?" (398, *CE* 69.4, Mar. 2007). Situating, and in

particular the expansion of situating within issues of the field, provides the environment and opportunity to expand the horizons of not only the review essay genre, but to also represent and reflect the expansion and complication of the field of composition.

#### **Move 4: Theorizing in Review Essays**

In review essays, theorizing, which I define as the development of the reviewer's own perspective on a particular theoretical concept in the field, first appears. Theorizing uses the review genre as a springboard for exploring knowledge building, conceptualizations, interpretations, argumentations, and ideology, sometimes in composition theory, sometimes in critical theory, and sometimes in both. Theorizing differs from situating: situating places the book within a disciplinary context; theorizing uses the review genre as a launch pad for the exploration of a theoretical concept or the development of a theoretical argument. Whereas situating focuses the book within the context of composition and related issues of the field, theorizing focuses on concepts within theory, broadly defined.

Reviewers use the beginnings of the review essays, not to introduce the books under review, but to get started on a theoretical enterprise. Reviewers then use the middle of the review essay to construct arguments and to develop theory. Table 3.18 outlines eight theoretical concepts that are explored in these review essays. Each of the concepts occurs only once, except for affect, which is addressed in two review essays.

**Table 3.18 – Eight Theorizing Concepts present in Twenty-eight Review Essays**

Move 4: Theorizing: Eight Concepts Explored in Review Essays	Number of reviews with theorizing concept
Affect	2
Tribalism/Pluralism	1
Self-Reflection/ Indigenization	1
Black Nationalism	1
Psychoanalytic Theory/ Mourning	1
Feminist Theory	1
Scientific Theory/ Rhetorical Theory	1
Marxism	1
Totals: 8 concepts	9 reviews

Following are the four steps of the theorizing move that I identified in review essays, and which occur in all nine of the reviews, in varying frequency essays:

#### STEPS OF THEORIZING

Step 4A: Explaining /defining the theoretical concept of interest

Step 4B: Advancing the reviewer's perspective on the concept

Step 4C: Connecting the theorizing of the concept to the books under review

Step 4D: Referencing the theoretical concept through an in-text citation and in a works cited list at the end of the review

Often it appears that the reviewer's main purpose is to promote a theoretical argument and not to review the books. What we will see is that the review of the books becomes a mere step in the review essay. Interestingly, in review essays that theorize, there is a shift in how description and evaluation is used. Description from the books under review is used to support and promote the theorization. At the same time, description from the literature of the field that is referenced within the review is also used

to support and further the theorization. Each of the nine review essays that display theorizing includes some in-text reference to literature of the field, and seven of the nine review essays include a works cited list at the end of the review essay (Step 4D). In the review essays that display theorizing, most of the works cited lists contain five or six sources. Surprisingly, one of the nine review essays that demonstrates theorizing contains no less than fifty-nine entries in the works cited list that are used as sources within the review. Additionally, the praise and criticism in the reviews that theorize are also levied in a way that upholds and advances the theorization.

A closer look at an example of one review essay in Textboxes 3.43-3.47 shows how theorizing differs from situating and demonstrates the steps of theorizing. Each of the examples in the following textboxes also contains the Step 4D.

After an anecdotal beginning about a church sermon during the presidential election of 2004, which is meant to illustrate “a certain ‘drawing on the gut’ for rhetorical effect,” the review moves to an exploration of affect in composition theory (318). The perspective on affect is not drawn from the books under review but from the reviewer’s own working out of the concept. Textbox 3.43 shows the reviewer drawing generally from the literature of the field rather than from the books under review. This portion of the extended example illustrates Step 4A: Explaining/ defining the concept.

**Textbox 3.43 – Theorizing Example for Review Essays (Affect)**

<p>Review Title; Review Essay: Affecting Rhetoric Brennan, Teresa. <i>The Transmission of Affect</i></p>	<p>“It seems, at least, a reasonable starting place for characterizing what could be called ‘visceral force,’ or the push and pull of the body—the affective or ‘gut’ mediation in rhetorical swells. Consider, for further illustration, a highly politicized (and now long familiar) example from within the field, in the form of Edward P. J. Corbett’s examination of ‘The Rhetoric of the Open Hand and the Rhetoric of the Closed Fist,’ which evinces the potential</p>
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<p>Crowley, Sharon. <i>Toward a Civil Discourse</i></p> <p>Riley, Denise. <i>Impersonal Passion</i></p>	<p>punch of visceral force (and the relevancy of this for the field) in a couple of ways. First, in describing these forms he explains, ‘The open hand might be said to characterize the kind of persuasive discourse that seeks to carry its point by reasoned, sustained, conciliatory discussion of the issues. The closed fist might signify the kind of persuasive activity that seeks to carry its point by nonrational, non-sequential, often non-verbal, frequently provocative means’ (Corbett 288). The closed fist, especially, rings of the gut to the extent that it is nonrational (extra- or maybe pre-conscious) and comparatively <i>provocative</i> (read also synonyms ‘arousing’ or ‘incendiary’). Regarding the nonverbal aspect, he acknowledges that ‘Aural, visual, and tactual images have an immediacy, an intensity, a simultaneity about them that words strung out one after another on a page can hardly achieve,’ underscoring what George Steiner disavows as ‘retreat from the word’ in popular rhetorical communication, and the potential force of thusly derived ‘body rhetoric’ (292). Second, in describing the coercive ability of the closed fist, not only does Corbett practically evoke ‘gut force’ directly, paraphrasing Leland Griffin, but ‘rhetorical activity [does] become coercive rather than persuasive when it resorts to the non-rational, when it is dependent, as he puts it, on ‘seat of the pants’ rather than on ‘seat of the intellect’ (293); but he does seem dearly to fear the closed fist, or at least apprehend its muscle: ‘But it would be a simple task to demonstrate just how quickly the everyday world would unravel if man, the rational animal, were to abandon logic’ (296)—that is, were to fight closed fist with closed fist, provocation with requisite provocation. The questions stand to be asked: What’s to be gained in attending to visceral force in rhetorical production? Or to bodies in inventional practice? Or what if we acknowledge Corbett’s distant prognosis that ‘Any new rhetoric that develops will certainly have to give increasing attention to non-verbal means of communication’ (292), holds exigent for the political sphere today? (318-319).</p> <p>CCC 59.2, Dec. 2007</p>
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The argument continues in this review essay, as illustrated in Textbox 3.44, with the reviewer arguing, through the use of theoretical literature on affect. In this example, the reviewer is continuing to develop his perspective on affect related to the open hand,

closed fist connection to composition theory. Thus, the following portion of the extended example illustrates Step 4B: Advancing the reviewer’s perspective of the concept.

**Textbox 3.44 – Theorizing Example for Review Essays (Affect)**

<p>Review Title: Review Essay: Affecting Rhetoric</p> <p>Brennan, Teresa.</p> <p><i>The Transmission of Affect</i></p> <p>Crowley, Sharon.</p> <p><i>Toward a Civil Discourse</i></p> <p>Riley, Denise.</p> <p><i>Impersonal Passion</i></p>	<p>“Or what, now, could comprise ‘body rhetoric?’ Consider, as gesture toward an answer, Brian Massumi’s suggestion that aspects of cognition, of knowing, happen in the body rather than the mind: ‘The body doesn’t just absorb pulses or discrete stimulations; it infolds <i>contexts</i>, it infolds volitions and cognitions that are nothing if not situated’ (Massumi 30). He further distinguishes, more complexly than can be aptly captured here, the important distinction between affect and emotion, suggesting, ‘Affect is autonomous to the degree to which it escapes confinement in the particular body whose vitality, or potential for interaction, it is. Formed, qualified, situated perceptions and cognitions fulfilling functions of actual connection or blockage are the capture and closure of affect’ (emotion) (34). Affect then is emotive but pre-emotional, a volitional intensity produced and circulated between and among bodies and environmental factors, whereas emotion ‘is the most intense (most contracted) expression of that <i>capture</i>—and of the fact that something [momentary affect] has always and again escaped’ (35). Affect not only preconfigures emotion; it also comprises an interesting sensory aspect: ‘For affect is synesthetic, implying a participation of the senses in each other. . . . Affects are <i>virtual synesthetic perspectives</i> anchored in (functionally limited by) the actually existing, particular things that embody them’ (35). What then if we consider affect’s emotive and sensory aspects in the shade of the closed fist of which Corbett speaks? Or in the evocation of beliefs (as in the opening example)? To what extent could or should visceral force, in such cases, be mobilized? What happens when we take into account Richard Marback’s complicated charge in response to composition’s exclusion of closed-fisted rhetorics, that ‘composition institutionalizes and internalizes social and political hierarchies and conflicts that complicate democratic negotiation by excluding contestatory rhetorics motivated by race, class, and gender inequities’ (Marback 196)? To what extent can or does body rhetoric yet “muscle” social change? And if body-affect does warrant rhetorical experiment, how should this inform traditionally cognitive</p>
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approaches to rhetorical invention?" (319-320). CCC 59.2, Dec. 2007
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All this, and the books under review have not yet been mentioned; the reviewer's main focus is not on the books, nor on the review of the books, but instead on presenting her conceptualization of affect, which is characteristic of a review essay that theorizes. The entire review essay from which this extended example is drawn illustrates four comprehensive, well-developed paragraphs theorizing the concept of affect. The review essay genre is thus mined for opportunities that include the book, or circle around the book under review, but certainly go well beyond a focus on reviewing the book.

When the books under review are eventually mentioned (two and half pages into the review), the mention is almost parenthetical to the continued step of advancing the reviewer's perspective of the concept. Textbox 3.45 shows Step 4C: Connecting the theorizing of the concept to the books under review, with italics added to highlight the step, and underlining demonstrating the specific phrasing that connects to the books under review.

**Textbox 3.45: Theorizing Example for Review Essays (Affect)**

Review Title: Review Essay: Affecting Rhetoric  Brennan, Teresa.  <i>The Transmission of Affect</i>  Crowley, Sharon.  <i>Toward a Civil Discourse</i>	<i>"The texts identified here resonate with recent criticism refuting Cartesian subjectivity as the condition of language and knowledge production and forge interventions by way of phenomenological theory of the body, continental philosophy, postmodern theories of embodiment, and even scientism and its kin. Specifically, each undertakes to explore the root of affect in and about the "infolding" social body as it comprises and constructs registers of the everyday, from the sensation of feeling untruthful even as you utter a truth (as Denise Riley explores in chapter 6 of her book) to the "resound" of the prospect of apocalypse for certain Christian fundamentalist factions (as Crowley explores in chapters 4 and 5 of her book). In attempting to answer what's to be gained in attending to affective tenor in rhetorical production, we drift between the texts, exploring each one's particular</i>
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<p>Riley, Denise. <i>Impersonal Passion</i></p>	<p><i>conception of affect (its work and character) and of affective transmission (or the mechanisms by which affect moves or acquires volition); as well as the way in which each puts pressure on the concept of “self-contained subject”—that is, the extent to which affective force exceeds the subject to engage the social or political world. In examining each, we return to what any of this might bespeak for rhetorical practice” (320)</i></p> <p><i>“Of the three authors, Teresa Brennan in <i>The Transmission of Affect</i> gives us the most complete picture of affect’s character and the mechanisms for its transmission (the title rings). Drawing heavily on social science, psychoanalytic theory, and, to a limited extent, scientific explanation (especially neuroscience), Brennan suggests most cogently the “contagious” aspect of energy, the chemical-specific connectivity between bodies with each other and respective physical and social environments. Specifically, she characterizes affect as the physiological shift that accompanies a judgment (Brennan 6). She distinguishes this from feelings, saying, “What I feel with and what I feel are distinct,” and that the latter are articulable, “sensations that have found the right match in words” (6) (320).</i></p> <p>CCC 59.2, Dec. 2007</p>
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The evolution toward further sophistication and complexity is nowhere more apparent than in the theorizing move. This culmination of review moves is illustrated in the following brief excerpt (Textbox 3.46) that highlights the scope of this move.

#### **Textbox 3.46 – Theorizing Concept: Marxism**

<p>Review Title: Review: The Politics of Radical Pedagogy: A Plea for “A Dose of Vulgar Marxism”</p> <p>Giroux, Henry A. <i>Border Crossings</i></p> <p>Graff, Gerald. <i>Beyond the Culture Wars</i></p>	<p>“So before I move to the politics I see in current radical pedagogy, let me describe briefly what I mean by a dose of vulgar marxism. First of all, the notion of vulgar marxism I will be using does not advocate a return to the mechanical determinism of so much orthodox marxism. I use vulgar marxism rather as an ironic label and a self-conscious attempt to reposition marxism in relation to contemporary critical theorizing—to rehabilitate a marxist politics for the present without appealing “in the final analysis” to doctrinaire economism but without bracketing off marxism as one of the post-discourses either. Vulgar marxism as I understand it is a necessary</p>
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Hurlbert, C. Mark, and Michael Blitz, eds. <i>Composition and Resistance</i>	corrective to the tendency in postmodernist and postmarxist theorizing to see social experience as discursive and thereby to neglect the material conditions of life. As Cornel West says in a passage from which I derive the latter part of my title, "a dose of vulgar marxism is often necessary to keep us sober and 'on the ground' in these days of cultural textualism (691)" (195).
Shor, Ira. <i>Empowering Education</i>	
Education Group II. <i>Education Limited</i>	<i>CE</i> , 56.2, Feb. 1994

This example of theorizing points to the evolution of moves within the review genre and the evolution of disciplinarity within the field of composition. The theoretical framework of the review essay that exemplifies the move of theorizing handily illustrates the expansion of the field well beyond its early beginnings of purely a service course where faculty's main challenge involved selection of a textbook. Marxism and "the politics of radical pedagogy," as the concept of this theoretical move/step in Textbox 3.46, demonstrate the maturity and increased complexity of not only the review genre but also the field of composition.

In order to establish a clearer sense of the scope of theorizing within the review essays and to illustrate all four steps of the move of theorizing, an additional extended excerpt is provided in the following Textbox 3.47. The four steps of theorizing are labeled using bold font.

**Textbox 3.47 – Example of Theorizing (Self-Reflection/Indigenization)**

Review Title: Review: Counterstatement: Autobiography in Composition Scholarship  Ede, Lisa. <i>Situating Composition</i>	<b>Step 4A: Explaining/defining the theoretical concept of interest:</b> "Many factors influenced a return to anecdote, but perhaps the two most salient were the various difficulties people trained in English departments had with social science empiricism <b>Step 4D: Referencing the theoretical concept through an in-text</b>
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<p>Tingle, Nick. <i>Self-Development and College Writing</i></p> <p>Smit, David W. <i>The End of Composition Studies</i></p>	<p><b>citation and in a works cited list at the end of the review:</b> (see Williams, <i>Preparing</i>) and the rise of extreme individualism linked to the emergence of our liberal democracy <b>Step 4D:</b> (see Williams, “Rhetoric”). <b>Step 4A:</b> In this environment, indigenization—not just in terms of race and ethnicity, as <b>Step 4D:</b> Samuel P. Huntington has argued, but also in terms of gender, sexual orientation, religious group, profession, and ideology—led to a shrinkage in the radius of trust <b>Step 4D:</b> (Fukuyama) and significant isolation on social islands within the larger community” (209).</p> <p><b>Step 4B: Advancing the reviewer’s perspective on the concept:</b> “This isolation seems to underlie the craving for recognition, in the Hegelian sense, that has characterized American society over the last forty years, a craving that has led to the “confessional activities” that <b>Step 4D:</b> Foucault argues motivate people to “divulge their innermost feelings” (61). But Foucault’s assessment seems too limited. Although he describes confession as an act of self-liberation that leads to greater self-knowledge, he also notes that it reflects an obsession within the self, and, more darkly, is an act of “self-policing” that serves to enforce discipline. <b>Step 4D:</b> Even Lois McNay, who notes that confession is “a voluntary act of disencumberment or liberation from psychical repression” (220), does not touch on a conclusion that appears inescapable—that confession today is a form of autobiography that aims to gain personal recognition in the face of ever-growing isolation, while simultaneously it is a means of self-validation in a world in which social validation is increasingly rare. <b>Step 4C: Connecting the theorizing of the concept to the books under review:</b> It is in this context that the three books under review here can be understood, although, of course, there are other contexts and other filters that would serve equally well, each offering its own unique evaluative frame and nuggets of</p>
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	<p>understanding” (210).</p> <p><b>Step 4C:</b> Of the three, Lisa Ede’s <i>Situating Composition</i> is the most clearly autobiographical. Chapter 2, for example, is entitled “Situating Myself—and My Argument,” and here Ede provides readers with detailed information about her professional life as a teacher, writing program administrator, and scholar. The rationale for the autobiography is explicit: “In a work that inquires into the politics of composition’s location in the academy, it seems particularly important that I acknowledge my own situatedness in the work of composition, and the ways this situatedness influences my perspective” (21). This stance will strike some as familiar: <i>Situating Composition</i> is located within a feminist framework that is emphasized by Ede’s frequent shifts from issues of composition per se to issues associated with feminism, yet I would be reluctant to characterize the text as an exercise in feminist rhetoric. <b>Step 4D:</b> Instead, I see it as an actualization of Gesa E. Kirsch and Joy S. Ritchie’s argument that feminist scholars not only should use personal experiences as sources of knowledge and explication but also should affirm their multiple and contradictory locations within society and the academy” (210).</p> <p>CE 68.2, Nov. 2005</p>
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This example illustrates the complication of the review essay genre, the intricacies of the steps in the move of theorizing, and by extension, the corresponding complication of the field of composition.

### Conclusion for Review Essays

The main findings for this analysis of review essays include the increasing sophistication of the move of describing; the persistence of the move of evaluating; the expansion and contraction of steps in situating; and the emergence of the move of

theorizing. Review essays demonstrate a move from simply describing and evaluating books to using books and the review genre as a forum for the development of argument and theory. Indeed, the review essay demonstrates a movement within the genre from review, and its corresponding characteristics and qualities, to essay and its inherent genre-dictated features and individuality. Hence the designation “review essay” is particularly descriptive of the genre shift and the genre designation. The review essays all together point to the deepening and complicating of the review genre over time as well as to the increasing complication of the representation and reflection of the field of composition over time.

### **Discussion**

“If there is an undisputed truth about disciplinarity, it is that disciplines change” (Davidow, Shumway, Sylvan 186). The changes that disciplines display are connected to a complex set of broader forces that influence their development, evolution, and progress. “Disciplines are dynamic structures for assembling, channeling, and replicating the social and technical practices essential to the functioning of the political economy and the system of power relations that actualize it” (Davidow, Shumway, Sylvan 72). The same can be said for genres used within disciplines: genres change, as “...all genres are embedded in their sociohistorical contexts” (Swales *Research* 135). The genre analyses of reviews over time in this chapter clearly demonstrate changes the review genre has undergone in the two journals *College English* and *College Composition and Communication*. While Hyland explained the descriptive and evaluative natures of reviews, this study demonstrates two other important moves: situating and theorizing. These moves illustrate composition’s preoccupation with disciplinarity.

By focusing on the four moves defined and exemplified in this chapter – situating, describing, evaluating, and theorizing – some of the changes in the genre are apparent. First, describing, while an expected and omnipresent move in all forms of the reviews has changed over time. The early describing move in short reviews is confined to a minimal recounting of characteristics of the books such as sections and chapters of the textbooks under review. In book reviews, describing expands in length but remains mostly a recounting of characteristics of the still primarily textbook selections. Contrastingly, in the review essays, the describing is expanded to include content summary and argument summary. The describing in review essays is displayed in two ways: a general description of the books under review that serves to illustrate the book’s situating within the field along with its contribution to the field and specific description of the invoked literature of the field that serves to support and promote the theorizing move espoused by the reviewer.

Evaluating, again an expected and omnipresent move, is minimal in the short reviews, broadened in the book reviews, and again shifts in the review essays. The somewhat surprising aspect of the move of evaluating is the predominance of praise versus criticism over time in the reviews. The critical feature of evaluating, for the most part, plays a secondary role in the reviews, as praise dominates to the point of constructing epideictic discourse in reviews in the field of composition. The epideictic nature of reviews is apparent across short reviews, book reviews, and review essays in the prevalence of praise. As defined by Susan Lawrence, “the rhetorical category epideictic...was the species of rhetoric delivered on ceremonial occasions; its functions were praise and censure” (qtd. in Johnstone 116). Lawrence further argues that “twentieth

century rhetorical scholars have theorized its capacity to unite an audience by engendering a commitment to common values” (qtd. in Johnstone 117). The praise in reviews serves this function for the discipline of composition, a way in which to establish, enhance, and emulate community within the discipline, to unite, in a manner of speaking, a somewhat disparate discipline by “specific and situated uses of language,” in this case praise (Lawrence qtd. in Johnstone 118). Evaluation in the review essays that theorize represents a shift in the genre to the use of praise to denote a positive perspective on the theory that is being promoted and the use of criticism to denote a negative perspective on the theorizing.

Situating, as a move, demonstrates some of the unexpected qualities of reviews in composition. The first unanticipated aspect of situating is its very early occurrence – fleeting, confined to phrase threads, and in its infancy in short reviews. Situating in book reviews points to the field, expands in length and development, and migrates from issues related to composition pedagogy to issues related to the field of composition, thus demonstrating composition’s ever-increasing expansion out of the classroom and into more scholarly, political, and theoretical arenas. Situating, unlike describing and evaluating, which primarily focus on the book under review, invokes the field and the contribution of the book(s) to or within the field. The changes in situating that are evidenced over time are reflective of the new genre formation in review essays and of a resurgence of attention to the genre. Situating dominates in the review essays in a dramatic expansion of length over time from the brief phrases and fragments in short reviews, to sentences and short paragraphs in book reviews, to fully developed

paragraphs and passages in review essays. While situating as an important move continues and expands in review essays, what changes is the emergence of theory.

Theorizing, as a move, emerges in the review essays as the focus of the review shifts from the book and its contextualization within the field of composition to a topic and its conceptualization within the theory, writ large. When theorizing is present, the reviewers develop theory that dominates the review essay thereby reviewing the book(s) under question as the secondary purpose of the genre. The emergence of theorizing illustrates a shift in the genre from review to essay, from a narrowed field to an expanded field, and from a pedagogical emphasis to a theoretical one. As Geertz argues, “there has been an enormous amount of genre mixing in intellectual life in recent years... [leading to the] destabilization of genres and the rise of ‘the interpretive turn’” (19-23). The mixing of the review genre and the essay genre is reflective of the fact that articles in journals “remain the ‘number one’ genre” (Swales *Research* 16). The shift in the genre of review demonstrated in the review essay is reflective of the increasing emphasis on theory in composition and on the expanding representation of the field of composition. Reviews migrate from the textbook and the classroom toward theoretical representations and implications of composition and rhetoric as evident in the trajectory of the review forms of short reviews to book reviews to review essays. Just as the field of composition is ever-changing, so too is the representation of the field, evidenced in the reviews of its book publications.

The research question addressed in this chapter --- textually, how do genre trends in reviews reflect the development of changing research and scholarship in composition - -- is answered by the expansion of the moves and steps of describing, evaluating, and

situating in reviews over time. Describing is fully developed to move beyond recounting of details internal to the book under review to connecting concepts from both the books under reviews and the literature of the field central to the theoretical perspective. Additionally, the emergence of the move of theorizing in review essays primarily reflects the changes in the review genre that are indicative of the changes in the research and scholarship addressed by the field of composition. The move of theorizing illustrates the move of the field of composition from a constrained pedagogical framework to an expanded theoretical framework. The history of the field of composition, as illustrated in the work of Berlin, Crowley, Connors, Olson, and others, is reflected in the genres of the field of composition, including even the supposedly minor genres such as reviews.

Genre analysis is an effective method to analyze and conceptualize the review genre and to draw textually-supported conclusions about the reviews themselves and about the field the reviews reflect, in particular, composition. Genre analysis creates the opportunity to delve into the rich features of the language of the review, to study “linguistic features that point to the relation between a text and its context,” and to explore the historical trajectory of a corpus of reviews over time (Barton 23). This qualitative, interpretive method provides a framework for the exploration and discovery of textual data involving holistic reading, systematic coding, and interpretive inference. The genre analysis of reviews over time opens the door to presenting a historical trajectory of the genre moves in the context of the field of composition.

In Chapter 4, I examine editorial perspectives through a review of editorials and editorial transitions within the journals. I also present the results of an interview study with some of the current and past editors of the two corpus journals, *College English* and



*College Composition and Communication*, with an eye toward addressing the third research question of this dissertation: Professionally, how do journal editors contextualize the review genre and the development of reviews in the field of composition?

## CHAPTER 4: EDITORIAL PERSPECTIVES ON REVIEWS

### Introduction

In Chapter 2, I outlined the historical trajectory of reviews in composition through the analysis of six categories: form of reviews (short reviews, book reviews, and review essays); space devoted to reviews; length of reviews; type of books; and theoretical and pedagogical frameworks of reviews. I found that the history of the review genre parallels the history of composition studies and that the development of the review essay manifests a more scholarly approach to reviews, reflective of the more scholarly approach of the emerging discipline of composition. In Chapter 3, I completed a genre analysis of the three forms of reviews, finding that the reviews all display the following three moves: situating, describing, and evaluating; additionally, the review essays display a fourth move: theorizing. In Chapter 3, I also found that the review essays demonstrate a shift in the genre that is characterized by a movement from the traditional genre conventions of description and evaluation to using the review as an essay for building disciplinary arguments and theoretical frameworks. In this chapter, I contextualize the genre analysis in two ways: first, from an examination of editorial features and commentary in the journals and second, from an editorial perspective provided by an interview study conducted with past and current journal editors.

### Editors' Perspective Background

I first frame the editors' perspectives within the literature based on the work of Tony Becher and Paul Trowler in academic disciplines and on the work of Maureen Goggin in post World War II scholarly journals in composition. I then argue that editors make decisions about their publications based on their perspectives of the discipline and

on their vision for disciplinary direction, and that these decisions are also reflected in the reviews.

Academic disciplines are surrounded by academic cultures, and academic cultures support academic disciplines. The tribes – scholars, researchers, and practitioners – define and disseminate the territory – knowledge, discourse, theories, methodologies, and practices (Becher and Trowler). The tribes are in charge of authoring and controlling the knowledge flow, mitigating work with criticism, as exemplified in the review genre, and ultimately, writing the discipline. As Tony Becher notes, “the professional language and literature of a disciplinary group plays a key role in establishing its cultural identity” (24). The editors of the main flagship journals in a discipline provide an influential type of filtering mechanism for the dissemination and flow of disciplinary knowledge just by the very nature of the task before them: to select, edit, and publish scholarly articles and reviews of publications submitted to the journal. The editors contribute to the academic discipline by contributing to the discourse of the discipline and to the discipline’s culture. As Maureen Goggin argues in *Authoring a Discipline*, “...academic journals and ... those who directed them, and those who contributed to them helped to shape, and were in turn shaped by, the field of rhetoric and composition” (2). It makes sense then to seek the perspectives of the journal editors in order to address the question of how these influential professionals in the field contextualize reviews.

In Goggin’s study of post World War II scholarly journals in composition, she “...examine[s] scholarly journals, [and] their editors ...because these provide an important window on disciplinary discursive practices. Professional literature and the apparatuses that maintain it are important objects of inquiry because among the functions

that academic journals serve, perhaps the most important, yet least understood, is that of gatekeeper – of authorizing and authoring intellectual and institutional pursuits” (xv). The journals and their contents and the editors and their editorial decisions regarding the publication of reviews provide an opportunity to examine what was published and perhaps why it was published. “Understanding the social organization of any discipline requires an examination of who has been authorized to speak to, for, and in the discipline” (Goggin 147).

Becher and Trowler have established the complex social construction and interaction of academic tribes, providing the backdrop for the disciplinary interaction played out in the genre of reviews. A precedent for interviewing and surveying editors of journals was established by Goggin in her examination of “the disciplinary formation [of composition] through the lens of one of the most important vehicles for this field, its scholarly journals” (xiii). Goggin further argues that “... journals serve as an important locus of disciplinary power, shaping the discipline even as they are shaped by it...” (xvi). As a part of her historical study, Goggin establishes the importance of “...disciplinographers; those who write the field...editors, who by virtue of being appointed to or by succeeding in establishing a journal have been authorized to authorize others in the discipline; and to the contributors, who by virtue of being published in the pages of the journal have been authorized to speak in, to, and for the discipline” (148). Goggin surveyed 21 past editors of journals and acknowledges that in spite of her desire “to let the editors speak in their own voices,” there is the “inevitabl[e] filter[ing]” of the researcher that enters into the discourse” (xvii), and such is the case in this study as well. Goggin’s study ends in 1990, just prior to the full appearance of the review essay genre,

providing a rich historical perspective, but it does not address the significant shift in the genre of reviews in composition, which is the focus of my interview study and this chapter.

### **Editorial Features and Commentary**

Originally and historically, reviews were written by the editors and editorial boards of the journals themselves, many times without signature but also at times with editors' initials or names. For example, in the December 1957 issue of *College Composition and Communication*, Vol. VIII, No. 4, the first time that a new feature titled "Among New Texts" appears, it is prefaced with the following: "Reviews bearing initials only have been written by members of the Editorial Board; unsigned notices are provided by the Editor" (253). One feature of the *CCC* journal, which disappears in 1959, is "Some of the Years' Work in Composition and Communication, notices of useful articles in periodical touching upon our field..." (272). Noted in the *CCCC* Bulletin section of the journal, there is an explanation that the new editor is not able to continue this section, because even with a committee he cannot keep up "...the voracious reading done by Editor George Wykoff, who began the department" (272).

In the December 1960 issue of *CCC*, (Vol. 11.4), there is a report of more reviews with "book reviews increas[ing] prodigiously from 13 last year to 31 this year. Indications are that the pressure for more reviews is continuing to mount..." (244). Marking the transition from Cecil Williams to Ken Macrorie in December 1961 (Vol. 12.4), Williams reports that "the accumulation of book reviews is perhaps the largest to date...53 for this report" (247-248). During William Imscher's editorship starting in

1968 and continuing through Corbett's editorship up to 1977, the February issue was a special issue devoted mainly to the review of books.

*College English* also publishes reviews consistently throughout its publication history, though often with much less specific mention or acknowledgement of editorial authorship, comment, or intervention. As far as reviews are concerned, editors in *CE* play a much more anonymous role and are not as present in the pages of the journal to the extent that the *CCC* editors are present. *College English* transitions from year to year are understated, marked mainly with long alphabetical listings of names and institutional affiliations expressing thanks for the "generosity of time and expertise" (*CE*, July 2003, 65.6, 679-680) of the referees for reviewing articles. Transitions between editorships are marked by short blurbs in "Announcement and Calls for Papers" at the back of the journal; for example: "John Schilb, associate professor of English at Indiana University, has been named the new editor of *College English*. His first issue will appear in September 2006" (*CE*, 68.2, Nov. 2005, 226). Along with this announcement, there is usually a brief sentence of praise and appreciation for the previous editor. There is no mention of review writers or review editor contributions, and only occasionally will there be a brief announcement of a new feature to the journal.

Conversely, in *CCC*, the editorial transitions are sites of disciplinary self-reflection and arguments for moving the field forward in a particular pedagogical or theoretical direction. As was demonstrated with reviews in the genre analysis in Chapter 3, such situating within composition studies is central to the field's motivation and trajectory. These editorial transitions demonstrate the field's preoccupation with explaining, justifying, and rationalizing its legitimacy as an academic discipline. The

editorial transitions provide another arena for contextualizing composition studies, for establishing pedagogical philosophies and practices, and for arguing and theorizing the discipline. For these reasons, the remaining examples in the next section of this chapter are all from *College Composition and Communication*.

In the *CCC* feature “Editor’s Notes,” initiated by Richard Larson in 1980, commenting on reviews becomes part of a tradition that continues to the present day. In these journal issue commentaries, reviews are often explicitly connected to the themes or topics of the journal articles themselves. Some examples of this acknowledgement of the importance of reviews in the *CCC* journal publication during Larson’s tenure are exemplified in Textboxes 4.1 and 4.2. Textbox 4.1 shows Larson summarizing the articles in the issue, including an article written by Robert Connors, “Textbooks and the Evolution of the Discipline,” on the history of composition textbooks and then connecting this article to a review of James Berlin’s *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth Century American Colleges*, also written by Connors in the same issue.

#### **Textbox 4.1**

“Robert Connors then, looks at the history of textbooks for courses in writing, noting the connections (or lack of them) between texts and scholarly advances in the field. (Connor’s review, p. 247, of a monograph on the history of instruction in writing is also pertinent here)” (145).

*CCC* 37.2, May 1986

Textbox 4.2 is an excerpt from one of Larson’s editorials as he effects the transition to Richard Gebhardt in the December 1986 issue.

**Textbox 4.2**

“As I near the close of my editorship, I have tried to bring together reviews of several important professional books from the last few years – books about influential theories of writing and important problems, and books by influential theorists. A dozen such books...are reviewed in this issue, and as far as space allows, the December issue will carry more such reviews” (275).

*CCC 37.3, Oct. 1986*

As these examples demonstrate, reviews play a central enough role in the journal to elicit editorial commentary, making connections to the scholarly articles within the same issue.

During Joseph Harris’s editorship, reviews include both “Recent Books” described as “notices...written by the editorial staff” and “long ‘Review Articles’...assigned by the editor” (*CCC 45.1, Feb. 1994, 120*). The articles from the issues noted in Textboxes 4.3 and 4.4 focus on the personal in composition and on the theme of writing and diversity, respectively. It is during Harris’ editorship (1994-1999) that review essays fully emerge, demonstrating a shift in the review genre from focusing primarily on the book to focusing more specifically on the discipline. Harris makes explicit references to reviews and their connection to the issues’ articles in his “From the Editor” section, in glossing the September issue’s articles, as is noted in Textboxes 4.3 and 4.4.

**Textbox 4.3**

“And the review essays in this issue continue this focus on the personal, asking what sorts of work it opens up for us as scholars and what its ethical limits or dangers might be” (7).

*CCC 51.1, Sept. 1999*



**Textbox 4.4**

“An expanded review section continues this focus on writing, teaching, and difference, with a set of essays looking at recent books by Marilyn Sternglass, Cheryl Glenn, Susan Wells, and Susan Miller” (168).

CCC 51.2, Dec. 1999

Marilyn Cooper marks the transition from Harris’s editorship to her own not only with thanks and praise for her predecessor, but also, fittingly perhaps, with a review of his book, as noted in Textbox 4.5, taken from the feature, “From the Editor.”

**Textbox 4.5**

“Joe’s work with the journal – as well as his book *A Teaching Subject*, which I review in this issue – is a powerful argument that scholarship is not a matter of finding time for ‘our own’ work, but of recognizing and articulating the knowledge we make together in our teaching, our writing, and our professional service” (365).

CCC 51.3, Feb. 2000

In a later volume, Cooper editorializes on three separate individual reviews and their writers, commenting on the relationship of the articles on teaching writing to the reviews of books on the same theme published within this issue, as exemplified in Textbox 4.6.

**Textbox 4.6**

“The three books reviewed in this issue offer further perspectives on teaching writing. John Trimbur reviews the New London Group’s *Multiliteracies*, which, he says, gives ‘new life to the old modernist belief that education can make a difference, that the way we design curriculum and pedagogy actually can actually embody our designs for social futures’ (662). Stuart Swirsky reviews Candace Spigelman’s *Across Property Lines*, which in focusing on the dialects of textual ownership offers a ‘sensible middle ground’ between social constructionist and expressionist approaches to teaching writing. And Diana George reviews Bruce McComiskey’s *Teaching Composition as a Social Process*, which also attempts to pull together ideas from various approaches – in this case, expressivism, rhetorical theory, and cultural studies” (520).

CCC 52.4, June 2001

More recently, as the examples in Textbox 4.7 illustrate, in the “From the Editor” section of the journal, Deborah Holdstein provides several instances of editorial comment regarding reviews, tying them to the articles within the issues and commenting on reviews’ customary inclusion in journals in order to feature important publications in the field.

#### **Textbox 4.7**

<p>“And in an intriguing counterpoint, Susan Miller’s essay reviewing two current books suggests that the future of our field ‘involves analyzing both historical and contemporary evidence that reveals acts of writing as particularly crucial cultural work’” (554).</p> <p><i>CCC 56.4, June 2005</i></p>
<p>“The book reviews offer a similar, rich set of contexts: Michael Bernard- Donals, David Bleich, and Carrie Steenburgh all discuss volumes ultimately concerned with forms of literacy and the various context in which they might flourish – or not – ‘reorienting’ (to use Bernard-Donals’ word), reminding, and affirming that the practices of literacy reside within contexts of power” (10).</p> <p><i>CCC 57.1, Sept. 2005</i></p>
<p>“Last but never least, Janet Eldred reviews three books on technology in ‘To Code or Not to Code, or, If I can’t Program a Computer, Why Am I Teaching Writing?’ As it happens, Eldred folds together an inadvertent but prevailing preoccupation in this issue with myriad concerns of ‘social concerns and public services’ alongside institutional contexts and pedagogies involving new media” (10).</p> <p><i>CCC 58.1, Sept. 2006</i></p>
<p>“David Jolliffe reviews important publications in reading, teaching, and links between college and secondary classrooms; and Jim Sosnoski examines books that portend the future of rhetorical education” (324).</p> <p><i>CCC 58.3, Feb. 2007</i></p>

These four examples are provided to illustrate the presence and recognition of the role that reviews play in composition journals. Reviews are used as an additional emphasis on various themes, topics, arguments, theories, and disciplinary knowledge-building.

Occurring at the end of the journals and at the end of the “From the Editor” section, the reviews serve as the final word, as the punctuation on the volume of scholarship.

Lastly, focusing on a current issue of *CCC* and the current editor, Kathleen Blake Yancey also comments on reviews as part of her transition in her first editorial, as noted in Textbox 4.8.

#### **Textbox 4.8**

“During the next five years, I’ll continue the practice of publishing excellent articles and, rather than single book reviews, review essays” (406).

“Our final set of texts will compel your reading as well. In ‘Activity Systems, Genre, and Research on Writing Across the Curriculum,’ Vicki Tolar Burton provides us with a review of the many recent releases testifying to the ways that WAC continues to thrive” (412).

*CCC* 61.3, Feb. 2010

Thus reviews are an essential piece of the scholarly composition journal and make a significant contribution to the continued conversation and discourse of the academic and scholarly discipline. As the above examples illustrate, the editors are not focusing on simply the describing and evaluating in the reviews, as one might expect with this genre. Instead the focus shifts, representing a shift from book reviews to review essays, in order to emphasize disciplinary reflection. The focus of the reviews, from the editors’ perspectives, is on disciplinarity in the field of composition, which is articulated by the editors drawing connections from the peer-reviewed scholarly articles to the reviews in the issue and vice versa. In the above examples, three points are made about reviews that were also made in the genre analysis of Chapter 3.

First, the tradition of the review, as noted in the phrase “last but never least” and similar phrases from other editorials – “custom of closing,” “customary,” and “round out

the issue,” – established the convention and contribution of reviews to journals and to the discipline’s publications and knowledge base. This positioning supports the value argument from the genre analysis, establishing the importance of the review genre within the discipline. Second, the significance of the books under review, as noted in the phrases “important publications” and “will compel your reading,” along with similar phrases from other editorial commentaries emphasizes the reviews’ contribution to the field and its role in advancing the scholarship of the discipline. Third, the role of the review in the continuing disciplinary dialogue of “counterpoint[s],” “debates,” “concerns,” and “thorny issues,” along with the role in establishing the context of arguments and theoretical deliberations, illustrates the significance of the review in knowledge formation. This role supports the genre analysis finding that situating and theorizing are evolving moves within the review genre of composition studies which lead to increasing disciplinary theory and knowledge building.

Thus, my genre analysis in Chapter 3 is supported by the commentary of *CCC* journal editors that the review is a genre with its own importance, its own contributions, and its own specific role in the disciplinary discourse of composition studies. As a continuation of the genre history in Chapter 3, and as exemplified in the editorial comments presented here, the review genre has changed over time in these two main English journals, beginning with extensive lists of annotated bibliographies, moving to short reviews, then to book reviews, finally culminating, at least up to this point, in the review essay, demonstrating the metamorphosis of the genre from its initial appearance in the journal.

Evaluation is foregrounded directly in reviews and indirectly in the editorial perspectives within *CCC*. For example, in an “Editor’s column” by Richard Gebhardt in December 1991, Gebhardt writes of “The Value and Frustration of Reviews,” in terms of the role of evaluation. The value, he states, is for “busy people hungry for information and critical judgments about the scholarly publications and textbooks...-- numbers too great for anyone to keep up with” (423). He also writes of the value of reviews for authors and publishers and how these values “often conflict” because the expectations of the readers may clash with the authors’ and publishers’ expectations. Readers find the reviews may often be “unrealistically-rosy pieces or summary-only reviews” and the authors find the reviews to demonstrate “limited treatment of the scholarly background,” “failure to adequately treat subtle points, or “tendency to leave out things that don’t fit the reviewer’s thesis.” Gebhardt also writes of the limitations of reviews due to time and space and timeliness related to publication requirements, deadlines, and lack of enough editorial oversight. While this treatise on reviews is almost twenty years old, many of these frustrations and limitations still exist within the review genre as is confirmed by my interview study.

### **Editors’ Interview Study**

The 2010 information posted on the NCTE website about reviews in *College English*, indicating that books for review are to be sent to the journal editor, reads as follows:

*College English* book reviews are short critical essays treating 3-5 recent books of interest to the field of English studies. These cluster or field review essays are solicited by the editor. Reviews generally reveal the

reviewer's own philosophical and theoretical positions as well as those of the authors under review. Frequently, *CE* review essays aim to support undergraduate and graduate instruction in English Departments.

The 2010 information posted on the NCTE website about reviews in *College Composition and Communication*, indicating that “all book reviews are solicited by the editor,” and that “[i]f you wish to review a book, please contact the editor before writing a review,” is set within the larger context of the purpose of the publication, which reads as follows:

*College Composition and Communication* publishes research and scholarship in rhetoric studies that supports college teachers in reflecting on and improving their practices in teaching writing. The field of composition draws on research and theories from a broad range of humanistic disciplines – English studies, linguistics, literary studies, rhetoric, cultural studies, gay studies, gender studies, critical theory, education, technology studies, race studies, communication, philosophy of language, anthropology, sociology, and others – and within composition a number of subfields have also developed, such as technical communication, computers and composition, writing across the curriculum, research practices, and history of composition, assessment, and writing center work.

The reviews in *College English* and *College Composition and Communication*, throughout their histories (over 70 years for *CE* and 60 years for *CCC*) have been a part of the disciplinary landscape that makes up composition studies, and as such should be

studied from various vantage points. In this section, I examine reviews from an editorial perspective through interviews with past and current editors. How do editors shape and direct the work of the review within the journals they edit? How does the field shape and direct the reviews that are selected and published within the journals? The main research question for this chapter is approached through interviews: Professionally, how do journal editors contextualize the review genre and the development of reviews in the field of composition?

### **Methods**

After the genre analysis in Chapter 3 was completed, I conducted a small interview study with the approval of the Wayne State University Institutional Review Board. Participants were contacted via webmail and requested to respond to a series of questions. The participants were provided with the opportunity to maintain confidentiality of their identity. If the participant was willing to respond, he or she completed the interview questions and returned the responses via email. One editor preferred to respond to the interview questions by phone, and I provided that opportunity, transcribing the responses from the phone interview. I analyzed the interview responses for themes, compiling the responses from the different journals, the different time periods, and the different editors, looking for patterns that help interpret the genre analysis in Chapter 3. As this dissertation is also a historical study, and as such, a narrative on the trajectory of reviews in composition studies, interviewing provides an opportunity to obtain multiple perspectives from one group of people who are (or were) most directly involved in the publication of the reviews in the two journals. To present a rich historical perspective of reviews over time, it is important to seek the perspective of

those who selected and published the reviews. The function of reviews in academic discourse may be viewed in two main arenas: within the reviews themselves and within the perspectives of the disciplinary professionals involved in their publication.

Over the course of the journals' more than seventy-year history for *College English*, there have been nine different editors. For the sixty-year history for *College Composition and Communication*, there have been thirteen different editors. The editorships, institutions, and dates are noted in Table 1, with the names in bold indicating, of the twelve living editors, the six who participated in the interview study.

**Table 4.1: Journal Editors and Years of Service as Editor**

<b>Journal and Years of Editorship</b>	<b>Editor</b>	<b>Institution(s)</b>	<b>Participation</b>
<i>College English</i>			
1932-1955	W. Wilbur Hatfield	University of Chicago	d. 1976
1955-1960	Frederick L. Gwyn	University of Virginia (1955-1958) Trinity College (1958-1960)	d. 1965
1960-1966	James E. Miller, Jr.	University of Nebraska (1960-1962) University of Chicago (1962-1966)	declined participation
1966-1978	Richard M. Ohmann	Wesleyan University	no response
1978-1985	Donald Gray	Indiana University	no response
1985-1992	James C. Raymond	University of Alabama	declined participation
1992-1999	Louise Z. Smith	University of Massachusetts, Boston	declined participation
<b>1999-2006</b>	<b>Jeanne Gunner</b>	<b>Santa Clara University</b> <b>Chapman University</b>	<b>participated</b>
2006-present	John Schilb	Indiana University	no response



<i>College Composition and Communication</i>			
1950-1952	Charles W. Roberts	University of Illinois	d. 1968
1952-1955	George S. Wykoff	Purdue University	d. 1995
1956-1958 and 1959-1960	Francis. E. Bowman	Duke University	d. 1981
1959 and 1960-1961	Cecil B. Williams	Oklahoma State University Texas Christian University	d. 1991
1962-1964	Ken Macrorie	Western Michigan University	d. 2009
1965-1973	William F. Irscher	University of Washington	d. 2007
1974-1979	Edward P. J. Corbett	Ohio State University	d. 1998
1980-1986	Richard L. Larson	Herbert H. Lehman College, CUNY	d. 2006
<b>1987-1993</b>	<b>Richard C. Gebhardt</b>	<b>Findlay College (1987-1989) Bowling Green State University</b>	<b>participated</b>
<b>1994-1999</b>	<b>Joseph Harris</b>	<b>University of Pittsburgh Duke University</b>	<b>participated</b>
<b>2000-2005</b>	<b>Marilyn M. Cooper</b>	<b>Michigan Technological University</b>	<b>participated</b>
<b>2005-2009</b>	<b>Deborah H. Holdstein</b>	<b>Governors State University Northern Illinois University Columbia College Chicago</b>	<b>participated</b>
<b>2010-present</b>	<b>Kathleen Blake Yancey</b>	<b>Florida State University</b>	<b>participated</b>

The main interview questions that were asked of the participants and responded to by the five *CCC* editors and one *CE* editor are noted in the instrument provided here.

1. My dissertation is entitled *Composition in Review: Disciplinary Trajectory of Reviews in Composition Studies*. I am interested in the ways that book reviews function as part of the field of composition. Can you tell me about your experiences with book reviews as an editor of *College English* or *College Composition and Communication*?
2. Generally speaking, how did/do you select the books for review?
3. Generally speaking, how did/do you select the reviewers? For example, did/do you select reviewers on the basis of style as well as expertise?
4. Do you think book reviews reflect(ed) and shape(d) the field of composition studies during the time you are/were editor? Please explain—how or why?
5. For the fifth question, I provided three very brief excerpted passages<sup>1</sup> from the decades of reviews in *College English* and *College Composition and Communication* and asked the editors to comment on their features and functions.

### **Findings of the Interview Study**

As a method of organization for the interview responses, I identified a theme for each of the collective responses to the interview questions and then provide some specific examples from each question/theme. The themes that I identified are

- articulation of goals,
- variation of book selection processes,

<sup>1</sup> These passages will be provided later within the thematic contexts for the responses provided by some of the editors.

- attention to reviewer selection processes,
- and the impact (or lack thereof) of reviews on the field.

The first theme of articulation of goals was mainly addressed in response to interview question one. Each of the editors who responded provided their overarching purpose for reviews. For example, Jeanne Gunner (*CE* 1999-2006) wrote, “The main goal ...was to have in-depth critical review essays characterized by breadth of knowledge and a clear historical/theoretical/methodological perspective,...cover[ing] a range of topics across English studies.” Richard Gebhardt (*CCC* 1987-1993) shared, “...a goal I had in mind when I was named editor: to try to publish lots of reviews and to do so in the year of publication or the next year,” while Joseph Harris (*CCC* 1994-1999) indicated, “There were two things I wanted to accomplish in the review section of *CCC*: (1) I wanted to at least note recently published books of interest, even if I was unable to review many of them; and (2) I wanted to have what seemed more important books reviewed at length by senior members of the field.” Marilyn Cooper (*CCC* 2000-2005) also commented on the large number of books she received for review in relationship to the amount of space in *CCC*, and that she “decided to not review textbooks, given the rise in scholarly books in composition and rhetoric.” Holdstein (*CCC* 2005-2009) stated, “In general, I think book reviews are very, very important to the profession. I think that they help to bring new and important research to our various audiences... And it’s such an important service to the profession, particularly in a multiple book review, where say someone writes a book review that’s almost a scholarly essay in and of itself, a book review essay with two or three different books that are being reviewed at the same time...” While Yancey’s editorship is new (*CCC* 2010-present), she indicated her decision, “ [f]or two reasons—

page count limitations and a desire to include more books—...to featur[e] review essays rather than book reviews,” also asserting “they are different genres.”

All of these responses argue for the conscious and concerted decision to feature reviews of books that are meaningful and important to the field, and that demonstrate moves that go beyond simply describing and evaluating the books under review. The importance of reviews extends to a sense of the need for critical reviews written by knowledgeable practitioners, scholars, and researchers in composition studies. The responses point to the moves of situating and/or theorizing as defined in the genre analysis of Chapter 3.

The second theme of the variation of book selection processes was articulated in response to interview question two and brought out some of the inherent challenges of the genre including space, authorship, commissioning and proposals, logistical concerns, and decision-making. The responses to the selection processes from Gebhardt and Harris addressed the often “chaotic rather than systematic” nature of the processes, with “books sent... by publishers or authors, “books found in ads by the editor or associate editors, books “scouted ....[at] the book exhibit at CCCC or MLA,” and books provided by reader suggestions. The responses from Gunner, Cooper, and Yancey indicated accepting “individual proposals for critical review essays,” “books that would be of value to the broad range of scholars in rhetoric and composition,” or “being guided by (1) a critical mass of books on a set of topics... (2) perceived interest in a topic on the basis of manuscript submissions; and (3) topics that inform or challenge the field.”

In responding to question two, each of the editors mentioned the problems with limited journal space as compared to the vast number of potential books for review.

Holdstein provided an interesting and comprehensive perspective on the factors she considered in selecting books for review:

[Selecting books] would depend [on several factors]; sometimes it would be a matter of having a book that I knew should be reviewed, and trying to find a person to do it, because of the significance of the topic, or the significance of the person who wrote it, or the fact that the person who wrote it was perhaps was an up and coming person and wrote a significant book on a significant topic. I often would try to get books reviewed that way. Sometimes people in the profession would bring books to my attention that had recently been published because they had not been sent to me for one reason or another...so it was a mix of various considerations.

Each of the editors' responses regarding book selection processes illustrates the variety of elements considered in making decisions as well as the desire, on the part of the editors, to assure that the reviews were meaningful to the profession. This question elicited responses that exemplify some of the limitations and constraints of the review genre. With the advent of the review essay, it is apparent that there is a more concerted effort to relate the selections to the themes of a particular journal issue and to review publications steeped in the current issues and controversies of the field. This more focused selection process results in reviews that reflect the field's scholarship and not just the field's pedagogy, which may have been the case in the earlier short reviews and books reviews mainly on textbooks. The review essay shifts the genre to center on disciplinary argument

and theory, and not only the dissemination of publications, pedagogical practices, and disciplinary knowledge.

The third theme of attention to reviewer selection processes was mainly addressed in question three, but also articulated partially in the answers to questions one and four. Gebhardt, Gunner, Harris, Cooper, and Holdstein all addressed the common conundrum of finding reviewers – the desire to publish meaningful and valued reviews, but facing the ever-present challenge of getting scholars interested in publishing a non-peer reviewed article. Gebhardt points out that “since [he] was the editor who established *CCC* as a refereed journal, one of [his] early tasks was developing a fairly large pool of ‘consulting readers’ with a wide range of backgrounds and interests--since *CCCC* is a very broad-based organization.” In gathering this pool, he “asked people to indicate a number of focuses of strength (out of a list of maybe 20)” and these “information sheets...were used to suggest possible readers.” Gunner made the conundrum of reviews clear in her statement that, “...not all scholars jump at the opportunity to write a review; the genre is often perceived as less than ‘scholarly,’ because the review essay does not itself go through peer review, even as the qualifications to write one have to be substantial.” Gunner also made it clear that she wanted “thoughtful, interesting writers/scholars/practitioners...with well-established publication records...[and] expertise...[as] always the first requirement.”

Interestingly, Harris spoke of dividing the review section into two parts: “Recent Books,” which “featured unsigned paragraph length reviews, usually written by advanced graduate students (though sometimes faculty) from his institution” and “a full-length ‘Review Essay’...usually by a senior scholar.” Harris also wrote about the common

practice of commissioning reviews and the challenges this presents for publication. He spoke of “be[ing] on guard against giving away space to reviewers with special interests or grudges;” he also spoke of “select[ing] reviewers who were (a) knowledgeable about the kind of work...; (b) able to write a clear and stylish piece; and (c) able to turn in that piece on deadline.” Gebhardt also addressed the importance of knowing “how reliable people were in meeting deadlines.” Cooper writes that she “assigned reviews to established scholars, rather than graduate students, as they could better assess the value of the books to the profession,” and that while style was not a key selection criterion, “fairness” was. Yancey indicated that “both style and expertise” were considered but the “hope” was “that they will bring a capacious set of contexts to the task.”

Holdstein provided an in-depth assessment of the selection processes for reviewers:

I did not select reviewers on the basis of style... [but rather] ...based on just the fact that I felt they would be competent. Because I selected someone or someone selected or brought himself or herself to my attention, it didn't mean the review would automatically be published. I had to take a look at it first. And I like a variety of styles, but that was not a consideration in selecting reviewers. The most important thing was expertise, and the other thing was that there seems to be a misconception at some places in the profession about who should be writing book reviews because I would get very well-meaning inquiries from graduate students, saying my professor tells me I should write a review, and I'd love to do a review on such and such, and I would write back and would

say, I would love to have you write a book review; however, if I am a professor at an institution, and I need reviews of my book when I come up for tenure or promotion, the review has to be by someone who is fairly senior in the profession; it cannot be a graduate student. So, on the one hand, that's unfortunate, but on the other hand, you can see why that would be. Again, it's one of the aspects of the universe that is shaped by the profession itself.

Holdstein also went on to discuss the challenges inherent in the review process itself as well as in the selection of reviewers.

... There is a difficulty in getting enough books reviewed in a timely way to actually be useful. There are several problems. There are some people who are afraid to write anything but a positive review. And that's problematic because...you don't want to be put in the position of putting reviews out there that are only favorable, particularly when there is constructive criticism that should be offered about a particular book. The other problem is that it's very difficult to get people to write book reviews period, because there is often little reward for a scholarly book review at people's home institutions...writing a book review is considered a very important service to the profession, but in many departments, it is not considered scholarship. So a lot of faculty members are reluctant to take the time to do it... *College Composition and Communication*, as you know, is the premier journal in composition and rhetoric, and so you would think that people would love to be published in *CCC* and they do;



they love to be published in *CCC*. The problem is, of course, as I said, the system of reward at most institutions; however, I could often get very solid people to do reviews, again as a service, or because their institutions made a distinction between a review that was just of one book and a critical review essay, that as I said earlier, might be considered in and of itself a form of scholarship.

Holdstein provides here a new perspective on the review essay as valued by some academic institutions, singling them out from other reviews, and placing them in a similar category as the journal article as far as consideration for evidence toward tenure. This is a significant distinction supporting the importance of the genre shift to review essays.

Holdstein's responses here are very much in keeping with a "From the Editor" piece she wrote in the Sept. 2008 *CCC* 60.1 edition:

And as many of you will be aware, and as I've written previously, journal editors as a group often have difficulty persuading colleagues to write *evaluative* book reviews. While undoubtedly of tremendous service to our field and the profession as a whole, book reviews – especially reviews of a single book – do not "count" in tenure and promotion evaluations at many institutions. The latter, particularly those done very well, often do contribute to a strenuous department evaluation of "scholarly productivity;" on the other hand, the single-book review is more readily completed, and often counts as "service." As a result, I've received both types and for those reasons. However, there are many more books to review than we can publish... (9-10)

These responses indicate the importance, for all of the editors, of selecting reviewers with appropriate scholarly and professional traits, but also the challenges of securing those with the desired professional backgrounds to publish in the review genre. The challenges associated with the review genre and the perceptions regarding the genre are foremost in the editors' minds. The review essay, while not yet wholly recognized as qualified scholarly writing (as is the case with the peer-reviewed article or scholarly book publication) suitable for tenure consideration at all institutions operates on the margins of those more highly regarded genres.

The fourth theme of the impact (or lack thereof) of reviews on the field garnered a range of responses from interview questions four and five. First, I discuss the responses to question five as they are oriented to specific excerpts from the genre analysis. Then I discuss the more general responses to question four as they are oriented to the field of composition. Only four of the editors were able to offer any meaningful responses to this question as the other two cited "lack of context" for the excerpts, which they indicated made it difficult to respond. Gunner, Gebhardt, Holdstein, and Yancey, however, responded with some insightful, considered, and meaningful comments. The first excerpt provided to the editors was from a review of *Essentials of Composition for College Students* by R. W. Babcock, R. D. Horn, and T. H. English written by Mary E. Burton: "The value of this book will be in its use with students who need little drill in the essentials, and who want to learn to write well. Here is a text in Freshman English that is equal in difficulty to college texts for Freshmen in other subjects. Such books are few" (*CE* 1.2, Nov. 1939, 188). Gunner wrote in response, "Here we see a classic attitude toward composition as primarily a matter of drilling boneheads and elevating the more

(likely belletristically) competent. The reviewer is...suggesting a disciplinary agenda ...and valuing possibly intellectual challenge... The review function is ...in large part to assist/encourage textbook adoptions.” Gebhardt, while indicating the handicap of not having complete context for the excerpts, wrote, “...makes a value judgment on the book – something that a book review should do...”

The second passage for which I asked the editors’ comment on form and function is from a review of *Prospects for the 70s* by Harry Finestone and Michael F. Shugrue and *Explorations in the Teaching of Secondary English* by Stephen N. Judy written by Paul T. Bryant: “Restoring the natural but neglected links between English studies and other academic disciplines...must be genuine reintegration of knowledge and renewed interaction of ways of knowing” (CCC 26.1, Feb. 1975, 111). For this passage, Gunner surmises a “shift from the practical, classroom-based focus ... and begins to address disciplinary and cross-disciplinary matters.” Gebhardt responds that the review “...has a content focus...” either on the book or on the “perspective the reviewer brings to the book. Either would be appropriate.”

The third excerpted passage is from a review of *The Transmission of Affect* by Teresa Brennan, *Toward a Civil Discourse* by Sharon Crowley, and *Impersonal Passion* by Denise Riley written by Cory Holding: “Or what, now, could comprise ‘body rhetoric?’...What then if we consider affect’s emotive and sensory aspects in the shade of the closed fist of which Corbett speaks?”(CCC 59.2, Dec. 2007, 319-320)). For this passage Gunner writes, “...we see the effect of two decades of theory---rhetorical, feminist, and post-structural...the function is scholarly, specialized discussion.” Gebhardt observes that it “...seems as if the review essay may be stressing reviewer

framework/perspective,” and he goes on to state, “In multi-title reviewing... [this reviewer framework/perspective] sometimes strikes me as problematic...In some review articles it...seems that the writer’s purpose is developing an article of intellectual substance for specialist readers, at the expense of content information and quality judgment...” Yancey’s comments are on all three excerpts more generally, “All of the reviews reflect concerns and attitudes of the time... a focus on student work... anxiety about the relationship between composition studies and English (an issue still important today, but less anxiety-producing)...[along ] ... with more theoretical matters.”

Holdstein provided the most detailed comment in regard to all three of the excerpted review passages:

... What I like... is that they are genuinely attempting to be constructively critical... I know that there are other editors who believed...that book reviews should be basically...almost expository: Here’s a book and here’s what it’s about. I, personally, do not believe that those are of tremendous service to the profession. I think we need to have a more constructively, appropriately critical stance: whether the book is good or whether the book is not good. I think that is the most useful to the profession or else why review a book... If you read the *New York Times Book Review*, not that that’s the same kind of thing, every single book, every single review in there is not positive, right? They range...but they’re constructive; they’re not burn and slash reviews. So what I think these three... acontextualized excerpts you’ve given me have in common is that they attempt to be useful. So for instance, in the one from 1939, (Holdstein

reads the excerpt "... the value of this book....Such books are few"). You know, that's good. Here's something that's really useful, and we need more books like this. And the second one from the 1970s... this is very good... Bryant talks about the fact that this is important because it restores...links between English and other disciplines..., but I think that's a constructively useful point, and what's nice about that point is that it's not necessarily an obvious point, that it makes for the audience...what I like about it [the third excerpt] is that it attempts to reach back into other forms of knowledge that it assumes that the reader has. So it assumes, and it demands, a kind of intellectual comprehensiveness on the part of the reader, and I think that's what we should demand... each of the three attempts to be not only useful but ...forces us to reach into our own store of knowledge, and if we don't have that store of knowledge, it encourages us to go back to see...what... the person is talking about because I do believe that book reviews should educate us.

Thus, while these editors' responses support the argument that reviews do contain meaningful discussion about the field and about disciplinarity, I also acknowledge that the lack of complete context for the excerpts in question five limited the responses to this particular question. I provided brief excerpts rather than the entire review or extended excerpts in an attempt to be judicious with the interviewees' time for reading and writing in the format of a webmail response. My intention was to provide some brief examples of the moves of situating and theorizing in order to discover the perceptions the editors would have about these passages without providing the context of the genre analysis

moves. For those four editors who responded to the excerpts, I think the argument can be made that they expressed the value reviews have as reflections of and contributions to the disciplinary discourse of composition. For the two editors who were reluctant to comment, indicating there was not enough context available for them to have a reaction, one of them compared the question to “an essay exam,” which may be interpreted as creating an uncomfortable situation to venture into based on decontextualization.

The editors provided a variety of perspectives on the fourth question regarding the impact of reviews. Yancey, indicating that she was just working on her second issue, understandably stated, it is “way too early to know what difference these essays will make.” Cooper affirmed that while reviews “reflected” the field, she qualified their impact “given the small number of books that [she] could have reviewed.” Cooper also stated that she did not think reviews shape the field as she “thought of this feature as purely informative...[even] toy[ing] with the idea of simply listing all the books [she] received.” Gebhardt was of the opinion that “this is hard to say, and an editor probably is the last person to make the judgment anyway.” Gebhardt goes on to say that he “consciously tried to put into place an approach to reviewing that [he] thought...and still think[s] fits the image of a broad-based journal like CCC...[that is], more reviews (rather than fewer) and reviews published fairly soon after publication.” Gunner and Harris both acknowledged the limited role that reviews play, with Gunner thinking, “...we all likely rely on reviews as a guide in a very crowded marketplace” and use them to manage the “steady stream of new books [that] demand so much time and money.” Harris thinks, “...most reviews are read by the authors of the books being discussed, friends of the author, and tenure and promotion committees.”

Holdstein's views were mixed in response to the question about reviews reflecting and shaping the field.

I'd say yes and no; I would kind of straddle that answer; I really think it's a yes and no. I really think that one can shape the profession. I'm not always sure it happens as well as it could happen. I think other things shape the profession sort of in a holistic way... essays that make it through a very difficult and exacting review process and are published, along with reviews, I think can make a difference . I think it is all of it together, frankly...I think it is everything taken together because I also wrote an essay of my own for every issue called, 'From the Editor,' where I also hoped that I was shaping what we were seeing by virtue of my commentary, and my commentary on not only the articles within that particular issue but also perspectives I hoped I was adding to the profession.

Additionally, Holdstein alluded more than once to her belief that reviews should be important and significant to the field and should contribute to the knowledge formation and dissemination within the discipline: "And it should do that. And again, that's why I say, however it happens, even if it is inadvertent, we either should be forced to do more reading because we're wondering what the person is alluding to or we don't know what the person is referring to or those larger, as you say, professional conversations should come out of it."

In their own editorial experiences, Gunner, Harris, and Holdstein all recalled instances of reviews that went beyond their utilitarian function. Gunner writes, "I think

several of the critical review essays published during my editorship caused some continuing conversations, often as a result of the reviewers' challenge to dominant models. Geoff Sirc, Kate Ronald, Jim Williams – they wrote reviews that surprised, angered, and/or excited readers.” I searched for review essays by the reviewers named and provide as an example James D. Williams' review essay, “Politicizing Literacy,” in which he critiques Jay L. Robinson's *Conversations on the Written Word*; Patrick L. Courts' *Literacy and Empowerment*; and Andrea Lunsford, Helene Moglen, and James Slevins' *The Right to Literacy*. Williams addressed the books on various levels including datedness, lack of contexts, disjointedness, political motivation, skirting issues, and denial of teacher power in the classroom setting (*CE*, 54.7, Nov. 1992, 833-842). The review is critical enough of the authors, the books, and the politicization of literacy that it elicits an interchange in a subsequent issue.

One of the authors, Patrick Courts writes of his “distress [over Williams' review for the] inaccuracies and misleading statements” and presents several specific examples in which he shows that the reviewer himself may be disjointed and inaccurate in his portrayal of the book under review. Williams then responds to Courts partially by indicating that the review genre itself may be the blame for some of the problem. “I don't entirely disagree with this assessment [e.g. decontextualized quotations and unsubstantiated observations], because I recognize that space limitations can make even skillful reviews seem unfair. Most reviews, including mine, can give readers only a sense of a book to help them determine whether they should examine its details on their own” (*CE*, 54.7, Nov. 1992, 922). Williams goes on then to rationalize all of the critical statements with further criticism of Courts and his writing, now both in the book under



review and in the comments that followed. While Williams apologizes for his accusation of sexism based on pronoun usage, and actually goes back to the text and finds he was in error, he still brings up the notion that Courts' pronoun usage may not be "congruent with NCTE guidelines" (*CE*, 54.7, Nov. 1992, 923). Further response from Williams only goes deeper into critiquing Courts, questioning his knowledge and his claims. Perhaps the harshest criticism is the ending of the response in which Williams brings up a theory from cognitive science that would have supported the argument that Courts, in Williams' estimation, fails to make in any effective manner. This extended example that Gunner alluded to exemplifies one of the results of reviews, that is, to continue the dialogue and discourse about theory, research, scholarship, and practice in composition studies.

Along those same lines of reviews that reached beyond their utilitarian role, Harris gives the following specific examples:

Two exceptions do come to mind – one a positive experience and the other probably the worst experience I had as an editor. The good experience was the first review I commissioned, in the Feb. 1994 issue, by John Trimbur on "Taking the Social Turn: Teaching Writing Post-Process." I'm pretty sure that this review both coined the term social turn and popularized the notion of post-process. I've seen Trimbur's piece cited many times. The negative experience centered on Kurt Spellmeyer's 1996 review essay, "Out of the Fashion Essay," which focused on a number of books linking cultural studies and composition. I picked Kurt for the review both because he was well-read in critical theory and because I admired his penchant for taking strong and surprising positions. Well, boy, did he ever.

His review sparked a number of fierce responses and counter-responses, both in the pages of the journal and in private. Things got really ugly. If I had to do it over again, I wouldn't. Indeed, the experience has made me doubt the usefulness of negative reviews. If you really think a book isn't any good, then maybe you should just not talk about it.

I examined the Kurt Spellmeyer review of several books including, Karen Fitts and Alan W. France's *Left Margins*; Kathryn T. Flannery's *The Emperor's New Clothes*; Kathleen McCormick's *The Culture of Reading and the Teaching of English*; Mike Rose's *Possible Lives*, and Robert Varnum's *Fencing with Words* (*CCC*, 47.3, Oct. 1996, 424-436). Spellmeyer indicts cultural studies, and most of these books under review, as not going far enough, and indicts as well as the entire field of composition for not going far enough in acknowledging the elitist, privileged, and condescending role of some academics in regard to their "scarcely veiled contempt for their own students" (*CCC*, 47.3, Oct. 1996, 427). In this version of the theory versus practice wars, Spellmeyer uses the site of the review essay to lambast those in the field that he views as trying to "convince resistant students – the only people subject to their power, after all – that the paradigm is Truth itself, whereas the students' own experience, insofar as it might deviate from that Truth, has been a kind of illusion" (*CCC*, 47.3, Oct. 1996, 427).

What is ignited here in this review, exposing the dark side of cultural studies, is played out further in a later issue of *CCC*, 48.2, May 1997 in an "Interchange" among Alan W. France, editor of *Left Margins*, Donald Lazere, writer within *Left Margins*, and Kurt Spellmeyer, the reviewer. Here France refers to the review genre to assist in his counter attack on Spellmeyer: "It is, of course, the business of the reviewer to make

judgments about merit, but in composition studies – a field that has always been pluralistic – reviewers are conventionally obligated to represent a reviewed work accurately” (284). France goes on to write about Spellmeyer’s discussion of the conflict between theory and practice as instead a form of “two different versions of professional authority” (*CCC*, 48.2, May 1997, 285). The comments from France end with this statement, “I hope *CCC* readers will resist Kurt Spellmeyer’s theoretical border-policing and take a look at what we on the left are trying to do in *Left Margins*” (*CCC*, 48.2, May 1997, 288).

Donald Lazere lends his voice and support of the book under review with this statement, “I am not quick to take offense at criticism of my work, but Kurt Spellmeyer’s attack on my article in ... *Left Margins* went beyond the boundaries of professional civility in its *ad hominem* insults and arrogant assumptions” (*CCC*, 48.2, May 1997, 288). Lazere denies the “veiled contempt for ...students” accusation from Spellmeyer, but then seems to prove the point by characterizing his institution as having “one of the country’s most homogeneous student bodies,” many of whom are “from prosperous rural and suburban Republican backgrounds...a large number of self-professed Limbaugh ‘dittoheads’ ...who are profascistic” (*CCC*, 48.2, May 1997, 290). He goes on to argue that Spellmeyer and others should not engage in “denigrating” the “responsible ways of dealing with these daunting realities (meaning the “ethnocentric conditioning” of the writing students) unless they can “present their program for dealing with them” (*CCC*, 48.2, May 1997, 292).

Finally, in his response to the two commentaries from the France and Lazere, Spellmeyer argues that “[r]ather than producing tolerance...cultural studies in English

has given us warrant to indict our fellow citizens – especially the ones held captive in our classes – as incompetent readers, as victim of mystification, or as psychological casualties” (CCC, 48.2, May 1997, 292). Spellmeyer rues the “rushing headlong into ‘politics’ as disinterested champions of the oppressed” as he views these politically motivated writing teachers. He argues that “[t]hose who benefit from the current division of intellectual labor can be counted on to enumerate, in their own defense, the pathologies of one group or another...[to] find protofascists hidden in the composition class” (CCC, 48.2, May 1997, 293). Spellmeyer poses a possible solution for the perceived problem of student beliefs that the writing teacher “begin with restoring...a measure of the freedom... [the students] have lost, if only the freedom in a composition course to think and write about their lives without coercion and disparagement” (CCC, 48.2, May 1997, 296).

Holdstein also revealed that she, as a reviewer, had a similar experience:

What comes to mind for me is that I had that experience as the author of a book review. In *College English* many years ago...I wrote a pretty critical review of books on technology and composition studies, and it engendered an equally uncharitable response from one of the authors, but I felt it was really important. And the editor of *College English* at that time didn't seem to object. She published the review. I went through a bunch of revisions. I think if she felt it was a slasher and scorched earth kind of review she wouldn't have published it. Because I think she was a very accountable and very, very good and attentive editor. So that is what comes to mind first.

Holdstein invited me to look up the review, and I present it here as another example of the impact reviews may have. “Technology, Utility, and Amnesia” appeared in the September 1995 *College English* 57.5 and addressed Richard Lanham’s *The Electronic Word*; Paul LeBlanc’s *Writing Teachers Writing Software*; Cynthia L. Selfe and Susan Hilligoss’s *Literacy and Computers*; and Myron Tuman’s *Word Perfect* and *Literacy Online*.

Holdstein critiques these books and the approaches of the authors to “unit[ing] composition and technology” with a cautionary tale of the dangers of “not contextualize[ing]” this scholarship within the “inevitable institutional, political, and professional constraints that particularly affect faculty choosing to work in emerging areas of interest within composition programs” (*CE*, 57.5, Sept. 1995, 587). Whereas Holdstein characterizes LeBlanc’s book “as a selective history of computers and composition” (*CE*, 57.5, Sept. 1995, 590), LeBlanc in his response commentary views the “objective [of his work]...to offer an overview of the state of software development within our profession” (*CE*, 58.3, Mar. 1996, 361). As is the case with many of these post-review interchanges, LeBlanc accuses the reviewer of “making claims that are simply not true,” but not first without a personal attack: “Holdstein is guilty of a common error: working so long in the field, she is now out of touch with the many colleagues struggling with the issues she dismisses” (*CE*, 58.3, Mar. 1996, 362). LeBlanc also takes the opportunity to point out a more favorable review of his book, “I can accept the give and take of scholarly dialogue and I can take my lumps in a negative review, just as I can enjoy the positive ones, such as the one in *College Composition and Communication* (December 1994: 535-47).” LeBlanc closes his response with a point that again argues

for reviews as being a part of composition's disciplinary dialogue, "My point is that we as colleagues make our contributions to an ongoing discussion; books like mine and reviews like Holdstein's are part of a professional conversation that can certainly be frank and critical, but that exchange is poorly served when infused with unnecessary insult and personal attack" (*CE*, 58.3, Mar. 1996, 363).

Holdstein's response to LeBlanc includes a denial in kind of not being properly understood or represented, "Yet much of his response seems deliberately to miss the focus of the essay or attribute to me qualities that aren't reflected in the reality of my work" (*CE*, 58.3, Mar. 1996, 363). In this same response, Holdstein talks about "an Internet based-discussion of her review," which is also brought up by LeBlanc, and while the two disagree on the context for those comments, they both acknowledge that the review prompted "several lively discussions" (*CE*, 58.3, Mar. 1996, 363). Holdstein speculates about the concern that "reviewers of a given text" are not always provided with "access to the kind of information that circulates outside the book itself" and questions whether such information is "ultimately relevant to the review of a published book" (*CE*, 58.3, Mar. 1996, 364). Holdstein counters LeBlanc's charge that her "review essay in any way cuts off dialogue" by pointing out that a colleague indicated "the review essay has generated 'tons' of necessary conversation, on-line and off" (*CE*, 58.3, Mar. 1996, 360). Holdstein's observations and this interchange again support the argument that review essays can make a significant contribution to the disciplinary discourse of composition. Holdstein makes the point that the us-versus-them mentality of this exchange needs to stop and that this, as Holdstein's colleague put it, "was not an attack; it was an invitation" (*CE*, 58.3, Mar. 1996, 365). Holdstein ends the response, with the

following: “Truly open, uncensored invitations to dialogue and the dialogues themselves aren’t always pleasant; but they can be useful...his book is worthy of discussion. That in itself is significant and merits our attention” (*CE*, 58.3, Mar. 1996, 365).

So, while the editors in the interviews did not think that reviews necessarily shape the field of composition, they do believe that there were some reviews, more so than others, which contributed to the disciplinary discourse. These include controversies within the field as exemplified by reviews that spark additional commentary in response, counter responses, and interchanges in subsequent journal issues. As a final example, we might consider the firestorm created by Stephen North’s book *The Making of Knowledge in Composition* and the subsequent reviews of the book. While there may be even more, I located at four reviews of this book. One appeared in *Rhetoric Review* 6.2 in Spring 1988 written by David Bartholomae. Three appeared in *College Composition and Communication* 40.1 in February 1989, written individually by James Raymond, Richard Larson, and Richard Lloyd-Jones.

Additionally, the book and the subsequent reviews sparked at least three articles: one by Elizabeth Rankin in *Rhetoric Review* 8.2 Spring 1990 titled “Taking Practitioner Inquiry Seriously: An Argument with Stephen North,” one by North himself titled “On Book Reviews in Rhetoric and Composition,” published in *Rhetoric Review* 10.2 in Spring 1992, and the third, by Mark Wiley, “How to Read a Book: Reflections on the Ethics of Book Reviewing,” which was published in the *Journal of Advanced Composition* 13.2 in 1993. Rankin writes in regard to the reviews by Raymond, Larson, and Lloyd-Jones, “It isn’t often that a new book in composition studies merits three substantive reviews, by three well-known figures, in a single issue of a professional

journal” (*JAC*, 13.2, 1993, 60). All three reviewers “were unanimous in their assessment of [the book’s] importance, particularly in relation to North’s identification of “three major ‘methodological communities in composition studies’: practitioners, scholars, and researchers (Rankin 260).

However, Rankin and Bartholomae express “reservations” about North’s “the imperialist’s representation of the native” (Bartholomae 225). Rankin also identifies the need for “reevaluation of practitioner inquiry” by “draw[ing] stronger parallels between the ways practitioners, scholars, and researchers construct knowledge within their own communities” (261). Rankin also argues for “develop[ing] a dialectic habit of mind” and cautions compositionists about North’s disconnect between the teacher-practitioner operating within isolated classrooms and the “researcher-ly” and scholarly mode of operating within contextualized frameworks and knowledge claims. In writing about this controversy, which played out between North and his reviewers, in particular David Bartholomae, Mark Wiley finds that, “both parties are also engaging in a territorial dispute over control of disciplinary territory” in the dialogue over the book and the review (*JAC*, 13.2, Winter 1993). He goes on to write “that the book review partakes of a general ecology of critical reading practice that helps constitute composition and rhetoric as a discipline” (*JAC*, 13.2, Winter 1993). Wiley further “argues that the review is itself a form of inquiry into criteria for sound scholarship, research, and practice, and as such, it is ethical because the review attempts to adjudicate better means toward achieving disciplinary ends” (*JAC*, 13.2, Winter 1993). Wiley closes his article by asserting that reviews are at best an “inquiry in a discipline’s identity” (*JAC*, 13.2, Winter 1993).



This well-known book, the subsequent reviews, the set of interchanges, and the ensuing articles, are taken up again, ironically, in a review essay entitled “What Do We Want from Books?” written by Peter Mortenson in the Sept. 2008 issue of *CCC* in which he reviews three books: *Situating Composition* by Lisa Ede, *Crossing Borderlands* by Andrea Lunsford and Lahoucine Ouzgane, and *Geographies of Writing* by Nedra Reynolds. In this review, Mortenson writes that while North and Wiley both agreed that reviews “should be accorded more value,” they disagreed about “what book reviews should do for the field” (194). Mortenson goes on to make the argument that reviews are important to the field of composition studies because of the ever-increasing yet complicated role of books themselves in establishing the disciplinarity of composition, and that much remains to be worked out about the role of the scholarly book and the scholarly article in composition’s disciplinarity and the professionalization of the field.

Thus, Gunner, Harris, and Holdstein all use these controversial reviews as exemplars to argue that while not all reviews reach this level of inquiry, certainly there are those such as Sirc’s, Ronald’s, Williams’, Trimbur’s, Spellmeyer’s, Holdstein’s, and the series of reviews and articles on North’s book that do influence disciplinary discourse, or at least extend the discourse beyond the boundaries of the expected descriptive and evaluative characteristics into professional, philosophical, and theoretical arguments. Editors of journals provide the space and environment for disciplinary argument and theoretical exchanges, not only within the pages of the refereed articles, but also within the pages of the review essays. The often times genteel and moderated commentary on a colleague’s work, overwhelmingly filled with praise can, at times,

demonstrate highly critical, controversial, and contentious observations that address not only the author's perspective but also a disciplinary perspective.

### **Discussion of Interview Study**

The interview study undertaken here was a limited one involving the editors of *College English* and *College Composition and Communication* only, and not editors of all composition journals or of journals that do not publish reviews. Nevertheless, the editors of these two specific flagship journals do provide insight and valuable perspectives on the review genre as it relates to their publications and the time period in which they were editors. Editors of the two journals expressed a broad range of themes in articulating their views on review essays. The editors who were interviewed seem to agree that review essays are important to the field. They reflect the direction in which the discipline is going – from critiquing textbooks to constructing theory. The editors agree on this importance despite the fact that their selection process for reviewers is challenged by the profession's lack of recognition for the scholarly value of the review essay as evidence for tenure at many institutions. Throughout the editorial perspectives obtained from the published editorials and through the interviews, a common defining theme is the trajectory toward the critical review essay. As previously stated *College English* defines book reviews as “short critical essays”; Gunner states that her main objective was “in-depth critical review essays”; Gunner, Cooper, and Yancey all point to accepting “proposals for critical review essays”; and Holdstein reiterates several times the significance of the “critical review essay” as it is distinguished from the single book review.

The critical aspects of the review essays in composition, as evidenced in the genre analysis, foreground disciplinary stances that while addressed in the books under review, are not presented in a way that solely delves internally into the books themselves. Instead the review essay is used by the reviewer as a launching point for developing disciplinary arguments and theory. With the emergence of the review essay in about 1995, the nature and scope of the genre shifted to open a space for disciplinary exchanges, a space for the field to critique itself and its disciplinary practices, theories, and knowledge. The editors' reflections bear out the argument that the review essay genre, with its emphasis on the moves of situating and theorizing, is a repurposing of the review genre to not only look at the books under review but to engage in disciplinary contextualizing, argument, and theory.

Interestingly, the location of the review genre on the borderland or margins of scholarly writing in the discipline reflects the often self-perceived positioning of composition studies within the academy. The preoccupation and obsession that composition studies has with defining itself as a discipline, with repeatedly outlining its disciplinary history, with arguing for its various adopted and adapted methodologies and theories, and with its constant struggle both internally and externally to define its practices, purpose, and object of study are all foregrounded on the stage of the review essay. While the review essay is not yet, nor may it ever be, considered mainstream scholarly writing, there is a long history of the review genre in the two journals used in this study. And while the presence of the review genre in the journals is expected and recognized, the genre itself is only marginally valued by the profession as a whole.

What is it about the review genre that, while it reflects the publication record of the field and as such contributes to the dissemination of knowledge, is not recognized or valued in the same way as books themselves or journal articles? Ironically, in composition studies, a field that has long struggled for academic recognition, for full disciplinary status, for legitimacy as an academic institution, the profession itself is guilty of holding certain writing outside of its disciplinary borders.

The editorial perspective on reviews in composition journals provides support for the argument that review essays are a sophisticated genre with highly charged spaces for evaluation, critical perspectives, disciplinary situating, and argumentative discourse leading to theory construction and knowledge contribution and dissemination. The editors' views sustain the genre and speak to the expansion of the field of composition and to the ever-increasing publications to shape and disseminate the knowledge in the discipline. Peter Mortenson quotes Jaspar Neel in his recent review about books in composition (*CCC*, 60.1, September 2008), "The academic rage in humanities these days is to write a book, particularly a 'scholarly' book published...by a university press. One can define one's location in the academic pecking order by the number *and status* of books required for tenure" (194-195). Mortenson's review argues for the profession to question what it wants from books and to study "how books currently contribute to the circulation of disciplinary knowledge" (196). He answers the question briefly at the end of the review by writing, "...the writerly work of creating scholarship of lasting value, and the readerly work of locating it meaningfully in our traditions of thought, will still take time and cannot be rushed. That is what we should want from books, irrespective of their form: ample space and time to think together about the questions that define – and,

yes, challenge, our collective stake in the work we choose to do together” (220). If composition is still questioning what it wants from books in regard to disciplinary knowledge, how can it even begin to define what it expects from the reviews of those books? Taking up Mortenson’s questions regarding academic book publishing, I further address the positioning of reviews within publications, broadly defined, in the concluding chapter.

The interview study in this dissertation was limited to six editors out of a possible twelve living editors. All five living editors from *College Composition and Communication*, both the four past and the current editor, participated in the interview study; only one editor from *College English* participated. Three *CE* editors did not respond to the request for an interview, and I would not venture to speculate as to the reason for no response. Three *CE* editors declined to participate either without giving a reason or with comments about specific life circumstances. All of the editors who participated wished me well with my studies and expressed interest in my study, requesting that I share the results with them. I could venture to speculate that the editors may have participated because of their support of student writing, because of their support of graduate students and graduate studies in composition, or because participation in this interview fits with the reflective nature of composition as a field.

Another limitation of the interview study has to do with the decision to limit the interviews to the editors of the two corpus journals. Certainly, a broader picture of editors’ perspectives would have been possible if I had interviewed editors of journals that publish various types of reviews, editors of other composition journals or composition-related journals, or editors of journals that do not publish reviews such as

*Research in the Teaching of English* or *Written Communication*. While this may have been interesting, the scope of this study did not allow for extended interviewing.

The methods of genre analysis and interview study together are particularly fitting ways in which to examine the contributions of review essays to the discipline of composition studies in revealing the emphasis on situating and theorizing within the field. The review genre, as evidenced by the review essay in composition, has been repurposed to feed the field's endless reflection and obsession with its own disciplinarity and academic discourse. Writing is central to the discipline of composition and central to its perceptions regarding itself and its disciplinarity. Given this centrality of writing, in the final chapter, I return to my hypothesis and research questions to conclude by arguing that review essays represent writing that is reflective of the discipline, and as such, are valuable to the epistemological mix that is composition.

## CHAPTER 5: REVIEW CONCLUSION

### Introduction

Reviews are an underappreciated and undervalued genre in a discipline that often views itself as underappreciated and undervalued. Reviews operate on the margins of scholarly writing much like composition studies often historically operated on the margins of the academy. Even more recently, when composition enjoys a “heightened status...in the academy,” (Smit 5) there is still discussion of its place in the academy. For example, the 2003 edited collection, *Composition Studies in the New Millennium: Rereading the Past, Rewriting the Future*, contains several essays on disciplinarity reflection and a “professional identity crisis” (Bloom, Daiker, and White). David Smit’s *The End of Composition*, published in 2004, argues for “putting an ‘end’ to composition studies as a distinctive academic discipline...[and] reenvisioning the profession as truly interdisciplinary” (13-14). In December 2009, Elizabeth Flynn, wrote an article in the “The Extended CCC,” titled “Beyond College Composition,” which examines “the problem of the marginalization of composition studies” in relationship to conflicts with cultural studies (CCC 61.2, 391). Similarly, more recent reviews, in years after the dissertation corpus, such as John Clifford’s “Review: Rhetorical Ideals and Disciplinary Realities,” a review of Steven Mallioux’s *Disciplinary Identities: Rhetorical Paths of English, Speech, and Composition* (2007) published in *CE* in January 2008, and Donald Lazere’s “Review: Stanley Fish’s Tightrope Act,” a review of Stanley Fish’s *Save the World on Your Own Time* (2008) published in *CE* in May 2009, continue to take up the questions of “disciplinary imperialism” (312). In a field that is historically and continually self-reflective about disciplinarity, reviews provide a means to reflect upon its

publications. The Feb. 2008 CCC Vol. 59.3 issue publishes Kristen Kennedy's Conference on College Composition and Communication talk, "Perspectives in CCC: The Fourth Generation," which discusses "...the professional identity crisis endemic to our field...and the current trend to make research a more self-reflexive practice" (527-28). Kennedy questions where "all this reflection and identity seeking has brought us," and quotes John Trimbur, who wrote, "I think composition studies is often plagued, as an emerging discipline, with a painful self-consciousness and a nearly narcissistic fascination with self-scrutiny" (528). In a field whose object of study is writing and whose preoccupation is often self-reflection, the review genre, a form of writing used by English journals for over 70 years, provides another environment for further self-examination, critique, and theorizing. While the genre has not been examined within the field itself, as an object of research or scholarly academic scrutiny, it continues to contribute to the historical and textual record of the field.

To conclude this dissertation, I first present new research by Hyland and others in *Academic Evaluation: Review Genres in University Settings*, which was published after I completed my genre analysis. Then I present historical, textual, and professional arguments for the significance of the review genre as reflective of and contributory to the endless disciplinary conversation about the legitimacy of composition as an academic field and speculate about the genre's future. Finally, I reflect on this study of the review genre along with its limitations and other possible related future studies.

## **Background**

In an edited collection of English for Academic Purposes scholarship, Hyland continues his focus on evaluation in reviews. He argues that "what academics mainly do



is evaluate” and that “evaluation is central to a constellation of related activities, which we label review genres” (Hyland and Diani 1). This new collection defines evaluation “as a broad cover term for the expression of the speaker or writer’s attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feeling about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about” (Thompson and Hunston quoted in Hyland and Diani 5). Both Hyland and Giannoni, in earlier studies, found that “academic reviews overall...contain more praise than blame, that is positive evaluation predominates” (Shaw quoted in Hyland and Diani 220). In my genre analysis with a disciplinary focus on reviews in the field of composition, I reached a similar conclusion: reviews in composition contain more praise than criticism. Specifically, evaluation is foregrounded in short reviews and book reviews, but backgrounded in the review essays. Praise and criticism as traditional features of reviews appear, as expected, in the earlier two forms of the genre, but do not play a central role in a genre shift which raises questions about the traditional and contemporary role of the review genre in composition.

Ken Hyland and Giuliana Diani’s collection covers disciplinary variation in the review genre through investigation of English language book reviews in linguistics, history, and economics; through a gender study of rhetorical identity in philosophy and biology reviews; through phraseology and epistemological studies of history and literary criticism reviews; through cross-cultural studies of reviews in English and comparative languages; and through a lexical analysis of academic book reviews in economics. This collection also studies the review genre, broadly defined, with a focus on reviews in applied linguistics, science, applied PhD theses, and back cover blurbs. These studies all use discourse analysis methods to focus on very specific language features: classes of

evaluative acts, reporting verbs, gender pattern markers, concordances, positive and negative clusters/acts of evaluation, frequency measurement of critical comments, and keyword analysis.

Two of the contributors to Hyland's evaluative study, Giuliana Diani and Marina Bondi, in analyzing the language features (reporting verbs and lexical keywords) of what they term the book review article, assert that reviewers use the opportunity of the review genre to build their own arguments, share their own views, and construct their own theories. "The reviewer is clearly interested in giving voice to his or her own position in the field" (Bondi in Hyland and Diani 193). Through my genre analysis, I found this to be the case with the review essays; it quickly became clear that the evaluative review of the books was of secondary importance to the reviewer's presentation of his or her contextualizing, arguing, and theorizing within the discipline. Extending that argument, the reviewer positions himself/herself either in opposition to, or in agreement with, the authors' theoretical base. My genre analysis of review essays in composition demonstrates that the books are mentioned much later in the review essay structure and used as supporting evidence or counter evidence to forward the reviewer's theoretical claims.

However, none of the Hyland collection studies is a genre analysis, per se; the authors study the genre through discourse analysis, which provides a different focus and perspective on the review genre. The discourse analysis methods in Hyland and Diani's collection draw close connections between the language of the reviews and the evaluative statements made about the books themselves. In contrast, my genre analysis methodologically focuses on genre features through a more holistic approach based on

moves and steps rather than on specific language features. For example, whereas Diani provides frequency tables of specific reporting verbs such as *argue*, *suggest*, *propose*, *conclude* to illustrate argument across various reviews, I analyzed reviews for genre-related moves and steps that encompass larger chunks of meaning and significance. For example, I looked at the move of situating and found that while situating is present throughout both historical and current reviews, its pervasiveness, development, and frequency have increased over time. The situating culminated in another finding of this study: that argument and theorizing, while not present in the past genres forms of short and book reviews, are central to the review essay. Thus, while Hyland's collection centers on evaluation and the evaluative nature of reviews, my study centers on critical and theoretical migration in the genre of composition reviews. Description and evaluation are the ever-present expected moves in the review genre, but their primary functions have changed in the review essay in composition to meet the demands of the emergent importance of argument and theory in the discipline.

I present the newly published literature on the review genre as a contrastive backdrop to argue for the importance of the review essay in composition, revealed as a shift in the genre toward theorization in the field. The review essay provides a space for humanities-based theoretical arguments to forward the legitimization of a discipline often caught up in its own self-reflection. Thus, while the review genre is not specifically mentioned in most histories of composition, the review genre makes increasingly more important contributions to composition studies as it reflects the trajectory of the discipline, as the discipline is reflected and shaped by its publications, and as the discipline is continually reflecting on its own academic legitimacy. In the genre analysis,

what I found focuses on moves of the genre and on the externalization of the review essay to the field and to the discipline. The review genre in composition studies provides a space for professionals in the field to interact in order to describe, evaluate, situate, and theorize disciplinary knowledge and scholarship. This interaction plays out in the genre of the review, with disciplinary knowledge interest as well as socially-charged disciplinary interest, externalized to the field as self-reflection on composition's contested disciplinarity.

### **Research Questions**

Ultimately, the overarching question of this dissertation remains as set out in Chapter One – what are the value and role of reviews in composition as they relate to the legitimacy of composition as a discipline? I will address this question by returning to the three original research questions:

1. Historically, how do reviews reflect the disciplinary trajectory of composition studies?
2. Textually, how do genre trends in reviews reflect the development of changing research and scholarship in composition?
3. Professionally, how do journal editors contextualize the review genre and the development of reviews in the field of composition?

This historical and genre analysis study confirms the working hypothesis that reviews reflect the historical, textual, and professional development of composition's struggle for disciplinary legitimacy. In this conclusion, I argue that reviews in composition studies, as a genre, have shifted over the course of the historical trajectory of composition as it moved from a service course, which is reflected in the short reviews; to a field of study,

which is reflected in the book reviews; to an academic discipline, which is reflected in the review essays. This shift in the genre reflects composition's struggle for disciplinary legitimacy and its preoccupation with itself as an evolving field. The identity crisis of composition plays out in review essays that are not able to agree on a single object of study, on a single theoretical construct, or on a distinct methodological approach. The major finding of this dissertation study is the repurposing of the review genre, creating a mixed genre, the review essay, that serves a new purpose: positioning theoretical and disciplinary arguments that overshadow the original purpose of reviews as describing and evaluating.

### **Historical Trajectory**

Using historical study as a method in this dissertation allowed me to place the reviews within a larger contextual and historical framework of composition. The history of composition studies, with no clear lines of demarcation, grew out of pedagogical exigency, and reconnected to an invigorated rhetorical tradition (Berlin; Crowley; Connors). The history of composition like the history of rhetoric has been problematic and complex due to multiple interpretations, co-existing contingencies in literature and composition, and ever-changing focuses of practice perspectives and theory perspectives (Connors). The history of composition presents a narrative that focused on marginalization, and composition tends to keep one foot in marginalization today.

The history of composition is steeped in its origins as a service course focused on teaching and responsible for freshman composition. The field's primary function was to identify error in student writing and to correct, not only the writing errors, but the perceived causes of those errors, understood to be a deficit in the students themselves,

their thinking, their knowledge, and their ability to communicate in their own language. With this charge and accountability, it is easy to see why the early reviews, reflective of the field, focused on textbooks. The short reviews (1939-1965) and early book reviews (1965-1975) reflect the field's occupation at the time of focusing solely on the freshman course and concerned textbook selection for that course. These short, service-related reviews briefly described and evaluated the textbooks as they related to classroom use. For example, a *College English* short review from 1939 begins with the following statement, demonstrating a reincorporation of rhetoric:

I hope Donald Davidson will not be angry when I call *American Composition and Rhetoric* a conservative textbook. What with tear-out books, alphabetical indexes to Freshman composition, and the protocols of I.A. Richards, these must be the times that try publishers' souls. Professor Davidson's book is, if not a return, an adherence to the traditional methods of teaching Freshman English. Frankly and unashamedly a rhetoric, it is in the main stream of college composition and one of the trimmest craft to ply those sluggish waters. (*CE*, 1.3, Dec. 1939, 279)

The initial appearances in the reviews of situating within composition were very succinctly represented within the original confined axis of freshman composition instruction, mainly focused on current traditional pedagogy: correctness, structure, and product.

The move to book reviews (1975-1995) reflects an evolving field of study, still primarily pedagogically focused, but now expanding that pedagogical base beyond current traditional pedagogy into particular pedagogical frameworks in addition to

rhetoric. Here the field identifies particular pedagogies such as process, social construction, feminism, critical literacy/critical pedagogy, post-process, and others. Scholarly works begin to appear in support of the pedagogies, and reviews of textbooks start to wane. For example, a book review from *College Composition and Communication* in 1985 ends with the following:

Yet, despite its limitations, I recommend the Fulwiler and Young collection for workshop settings where pronouncements can be tempered and implications explored. If singleminded, it is as well pedagogically rich, offering a treasure trove of things to actually try on the classroom. (Fulwiler, for example, offers seven ways for students to use journals and suggest that teachers keep them too.) Freisinger and Burkland note that “students are coming from classes which are using but not teaching writing. With an array of concrete suggestions work trying across the curriculum, *Language Connections* makes credible a promise that if faculty in the disciplines, who cannot or will not teach writing, at least encourage their students to go through “expressive” stages, the very act of playing with ideas and events might so improve the students’ grasp of material that they will, after all, produce better transactional writing. (CCC, 36.2, May 1985, 245)

Situating within a context of the field of composition becomes essential in the review genre and in the field. One of the objects of study, student writing, begins to be researched in broadening ways, focusing on the study of writing processes over the final writing product.

The genre shift to review essays (1995-present) reflects the continually evolving nature of the wide contemporary field of composition. The classroom is of secondary importance as writing, in a variety of contexts, becomes the focus. Scholarship is almost solely theoretical and situating is within specific theoretical approaches that lead to specific pedagogical practices and also reach beyond the classroom into social, political, and economic arenas. Theorization begins to appear in reviews, reflecting the dominant theoretical nature of the discipline. In a review essay in *CCC* from 1995, the reviewer ends with the following theoretical perspective:

I would like to acknowledge also a sense of uneasiness about the politics of discussions about both feminist pedagogy and critical pedagogy. This unease arises because the discussion of differences seems currently so powerless to make useful distinctions, complicating, and exposing the multilayered effects of a feminist analysis. The danger that feminist inquiry continues to confront is not that disputes among feminists could weaken feminism – to the contrary, feminism has gathered strength as it has continued to acknowledge and describe the significance of differences, notable turns in its history as it opened up to the evidence of its inadequacy enforced by the testimony of women around the world...No, the danger is that reactionary and "backlash" movements continue to enforce a kind of massification on "feminism." Ellen Goodman has written about the "straw feminist" effect. We have all debated "essentialism." The truth is that essentialism is not so much a



danger within as without, the danger of reductionism imposed by unfriendly writers... (CCC, 46.1, February 1995, 121-122)

Theory dominates and composition is theory-driven, with publications reflecting these myriad perspectives. The field of composition has evolved into a highly politically and socially charged academic discipline. Argument is the vehicle for critiquing or promoting positions within the field, and this is reflected in the review essay. The genre analysis of the review essay provides evidence of this expanded interest in theoretical approaches, and the variety of approaches is evident in the competing nature of the arguments.

As an exemplification of the historical trajectory of reviews reflecting the disciplinary trajectory of composition, I present here an imaginative exercise: working backward, I begin first with an excerpt of an actual review essay as it appeared (Textbox 5.1), project back to a what a book review excerpt may have looked like based on a back cover blurb of today, and then follow with a hypothetical short review excerpt created from information available through the amazon.com website. The actual review essay was written by James D. Williams in *College English* Volume 68, Number 2, November 2005. The review is titled “Review: Counterstatement: Autobiography in Composition Scholarship” and covers the following books:

- *Situating Composition: Composition Studies and the Politics of Location*. Lisa Ede. Southern Illinois UP, 2004. 240 pp.
- *Self-Development and College Writing*. Nick Tingle. Southern Illinois UP, 2004. 144 pp.
- *The End of Composition Studies*. David W. Smit. Southern Illinois UP, 2004. 256 pp.

**Textbox 5.1**

“Many factors influenced a return to anecdote, but perhaps the two most salient were the various difficulties people trained in English departments had with social science empiricism (see Williams, *Preparing*) and the rise of extreme individualism linked to the emergence of our liberal democracy (see Williams, “Rhetoric”). In this environment, indigenization—not just in terms of race and ethnicity, as Samuel P. Huntington has argued, but also in terms of gender, sexual orientation, religious group, profession, and ideology—led to a shrinkage in the radius of trust (Fukuyama) and significant isolation on social islands within the larger community” (209).

“This isolation seems to underlie the craving for recognition, in the Hegelian sense, that has characterized American society over the last forty years, a craving that has led to the “confessional activities” that Foucault argues motivate people to “divulge their innermost feelings” (61). But Foucault’s assessment seems too limited. Although he describes confession as an act of self-liberation that leads to greater self-knowledge, he also notes that it reflects an obsession within the self, and, more darkly, is an act of “self-policing” that serves to enforce discipline. Even Lois McNay, who notes that confession is “a voluntary act of disencumberment or liberation from psychical repression” (220), does not touch on a conclusion that appears inescapable— that confession today is a form of autobiography that aims to gain personal recognition in the face of ever-growing isolation, while simultaneously it is a means of self-validation in a world in which social validation is increasingly rare. It is in this context that the three books under review here can be understood, although, of course, there are other contexts and other filters that would serve equally well, each offering its own unique evaluative frame and nuggets of understanding” (210).

CE 68.2, Nov. 2005

As evidenced by the historical and genre analysis of this study, the review of these books in prior years would have looked much different. For illustration purposes, I present the actual back cover blurb of Ede’s *Situating Composition* (Textbox 5.2) as a construct of a book review excerpt. The book review would have most likely covered only one book and would have been focused on the book itself and praise of the book.

**Textbox 5.2**

<p><i>Situating Composition: Composition Studies and the Politics of Location.</i></p> <p>Lisa Ede.</p> <p>Southern Illinois UP, 2004.</p> <p>240 pages</p>	<p>“In this outstanding work, Lisa Ede presents a major reconsideration of the process movement and its continuing influence in a field that has started to describe itself as post-process. With its unique perspective on the politics of location, <i>Situating Composition</i> will take its place among the well-established interpretive studies of composition as a field.”</p> <p>from John Trimbur’s book blurb for Ede’s work</p>
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Going back even further, the short review would have confined itself to mostly factual information about the description of the book. It is important to note that the physical features of the book including number of pages, paper or hardcover format, and price would have been included in the review. An excerpt of the short review of these books may have looked something like the example in Textbox 5.3, which I wrote based on information available from amazon.com.

**Textbox 5.3**

<p><i>Situating Composition: Composition Studies and the Politics of Location.</i></p> <p>Lisa Ede</p> <p>(Southern Illinois UP, 2004. 240 pp., hardcover \$60, paper, \$30).</p>	<p>The book is divided into three parts. Part One is “Composition in the Academy” and defines composition and the role of the composition instructor. Part Two is “Rereading the Writing Process” and discusses the process movement and subsequent pedagogies. Part Three is “Thinking Through Practice” and broaches the theory and practice split.</p>
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It is ironic that some of the previous functions of reviews, description and evaluation, have been subsumed into commercial websites such as amazon.com, google.com, and booksinprint.com. Within these types of sites, the description that was

formerly available in the short reviews and book reviews has been completely subsumed into these electronic book sites. The evaluation that is available through these sites is strictly praise and promotion of the book. Again, keep in mind that the only actual review is the first review essay, with the book review and short review being created from information available on a commercial book selling website. Perhaps this is a telling sign of what has shifted in the genre and where reviews may be headed in the future. Reviews in composition no longer seem to function primarily as evaluation and no longer seem to function as a partial descriptive record of the publications of the field. Instead, review essays have morphed into a pseudo-article genre, not achieving either full status as a scholarly piece worthy of tenure consideration nor fulfilling its original purpose of descriptive and evaluative critique of published scholarship. While this is not necessarily a negative move, it does represent a genre shift from previous review forms. The functions of description and limited evaluation are now available to us through Internet websites, book publishers, and book sellers. These sites, while informative, do not necessarily represent the perspectives of the scholars in the discipline as do the review essays. The summary and descriptive information available about publications is now redistributed across various sites, no longer confined to just the printed page within the scholarly journal. In the journal, evaluation is secondary to the function of description and summary, and situating and theorizing occur in the review essay alongside scholarly evaluative comments.

Additionally, technology and electronic records of text may change the landscape of reviews, and indeed, some evidence of that has already been displayed. During Marilyn Cooper's and Deborah Holdstein's editorships, articles and reviews were often

briefly previewed in the printed version of *CCC*, with the full text being available through the NCTE website. However, the current editor, Kathleen Yancey, announced in her first issue, Vol. 61.3, Feb. 2010, that she would discontinue “the practice of hybrid publication” (406) while committing to “increasingly be[ing] connected to *CCC Online*...[not as a] mirror site” but as a “virtual space [for] peer-reviewed multimedia texts that will help shape the direction of rhetoric and composition research and pedagogy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (410). The future of reviews may also lie in the electronic environment, as predicted and provided by a recent *CCC* web editor, Todd Taylor, who in 2002 in announcing the new *CCC Online* book database, wrote, “Journals in growing disciplines like ours are no longer able to keep pace with the immense number of scholarly books published annually. Yet, book reviews serve a critical function for the promotion and health of any discipline...[to that end, the editor assigned the] creation of an electronic book forum, somewhat like a virtual version of a conference book exhibit” (592).

Historically, then, reviews are an ever-present element in composition journals, and thus contribute to the publication record of the field. Interestingly, however, unlike scholarly articles or books themselves, the presence and publication of the reviews rely on previous publications and disciplinary interest in those publications. Books are published without reviews, but reviews do not exist without books. Published reviews are not part of the occluded genres of composition, but they are connected to occluded genres such as requests for reviews, commissioning of reviews, review submissions, and revision and editing of reviews. Published reviews become a part of the historical and textual documentation of the field even while maintaining their secondary or even tertiary

status. The future of the review genre is intimately tied to the future of book publication, in general, and what remains to be seen is the extent of electronic publishing of books, and then its corresponding impact on reviews. Additionally, the textbook market for composition titles continues to grow, while scholarly and research titles are less frequent.

In summary, historically, the disciplinary trajectory of composition studies is reflected in the reviews as they provide a physical record of the publications in the field, featuring the dominant book genre of the time, whether that is textbooks, reference books, or scholarly publications. “During the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, composition theory and pedagogy were overwhelmingly shaped by one great force: textbooks” (Connors, “Textbooks” 100). Later textbooks are overshadowed by an ever-increasing emphasis on scholarship, research, and theory, even when that scholarship, research, and theory were steeped in pedagogy. The historical record of reviews also reflects the form of reviews, whether short reviews, book reviews, or review essays, as the genre shifts and adjusts to the types of books reviewed and the role of books and reviews in the field. As an ongoing concern for journal publications, the historical study reveals the space decision, with a surprisingly consistent average of 10% of journal space devoted to reviews. The trajectory of length shows increasing word counts over time with review essays containing an average of over 4,000 words as opposed to short reviews with an average of about 450 words. One of the interesting historical trajectory revelations through the reviews, of the range of composition pedagogy and theory, is the reflection of the variety of pedagogical and theoretical frameworks existing at any given time and over time in composition studies. As with all

historical studies, the findings of this historical analysis are interpretive, partial, and incomplete (Connors).

### **Textual Trends**

Textual analysis, specifically genre analysis, as a method for studying the review genre is invaluable in that it assists in “simplify[ing] the material and impos[ing] order on it” (Grant-Davie in Kirsch and Sullivan 272). Just as historical methods are interpretive, so too is genre analysis; coding text is “a way of reading” that allows the researcher to engage in close reading strategies to unlock the text for interpretation (Grant-Davie in Kirsch and Sullivan 284). Specifically, in this study, the texts were read and coded for moves and steps to reveal patterns, to position the text within various categories, and to unlock chunks of texts for interpretation (Swales). This textual analysis is an important but often overlooked method for composition studies research whose primary object of study is writing, thus texts. As Barton and Stygall argue, discourse analysis offers “composition scholars methods of research that provide insight into the linguistic aspects of writing...constitut[ing] an enriched view of the context for the production and interpretation of writing” (2). This methodology provides an opportunity for “deep investigation of the production of writing” (Barton and Stygall 2), serving to reveal elements of a text that can inform “both a theory of language in use and a methodology with which to formulate and test insights about social interaction and structural analysis” (Barton and Stygall 9). My genre analysis of reviews in composition opens up possibilities to investigate the social interactions of professionals within the discipline of composition as they relate to the publication and use of the books and the reviews. This

methodology also reinforces the contribution that close reading and textual analysis can make to understanding written discourse, in general.

The genre analysis here serves to reveal a field, which, while accepting of its charge and responsibility of teaching writing, is not completely satisfied to stay within the confines of only those aspects of its endeavors. The review genre, mirroring composition as a discipline, continually expands, pushing against the boundaries and the limiting possibilities of composition narrowly defined.

The moves of situating and theorizing, or at least the ways in which the moves are framed in review essays, may be unique to composition in that they are responsive to composition's need for academic confirmation and legitimization. Other disciplines do not often engage in continual self-reflection and obsessive ruminations of legitimacy, as shown in the Hyland and Diani review collection. Other disciplines do not continually reflect on their place, their purpose, and their justification within the academy. The move of situating – always evaluating place, location, and context – coming to full fruition in the move of theorizing – establishes boundaries, borders, and arguments to justify the discipline that are consistent with composition studies' concern with disciplinarity. While self-reflection has its place in disciplinary investigation, if it is reflection for reflection's sake, without a clear outcome, purpose, or intention, it may serve to stall disciplinary movement rather than forward it. A discipline caught up in introspection may become insulated from the communities in which it can exert influence. Theorizing acts as a force to push the boundaries wider to encompass a broadly defined and more inclusive composition discipline. As composition's disciplinary history and development illustrates, and as this is reflected in the historical trajectory of reviews, the



theory/practice split served to move the field away from its singular focus on the classroom and textbooks toward a broader scope of writing research.

The epideictic nature of reviews (praise of the book, praise of the author, praise of the ideas, and praise of the field) is particularly poignant when contrasted with the occasional critical attacks that occur within reviews of highly charged pedagogical, theoretical, or political books. The cacophony within the discipline of composition studies has increased in strength and volume over time, and while there are often calls for unifying theories and unifying pedagogies, the reality is that composition, as is true of writing itself, is complex, complicated, and confounding. As Douglas Park wrote in 1979, and which I argue is still true today,

What composition studies now offer is a potpourri of theory, research, speculation, some of it close to pedagogy, some far removed, some of it speculative and contemplative, some scientifically and experimentally oriented, some of it jargon-ridden and pretentious, enough of it so provoking and stimulating that the pervading sense of excitement and challenge seems justified. What composition research does not offer is a shapely coherence that makes it definable as a discipline. (47)

This complexity of composition pedagogy and theory along with its complicated past generates a field often preoccupied with self-reflection and justification struggling to eke out and maintain an identity that encompasses all of its myriad disciplinary elements. Review essays point to this same complexity and complication, ever seeking to be “more than,” ever justifying the discipline.

As Goggin argues,

The major journals in rhetoric and composition have helped to create the conditions that have made these transformations possible, and have in turn also reflected those changes... shifting from representing a marginalized, dispersed, and largely localized service-oriented enterprise toward supporting a disciplinary and professional one, the periodicals have been both agents and agencies of change. In becoming more sophisticated and rigorous disciplinary instruments, they have provided both a measure of and a catalyst for the field. (186)

The complicated relationship of composition studies to the English department in which it is often housed is reflected in the complicated relationship of review essays to the journal articles and books under review. The power struggles between literature and composition and the power struggles played out in the review essays mirror the "...journals [which] serve as an important locus of disciplinary power, shaping the discipline even as they are shaped by it...play[ing] one of the most important roles in fostering the field of rhetoric and composition" (Goggin xvi).

While contributing to shaping the field of composition studies, the review essay also conversely provides a site of tension and professional interaction between sometimes competing and sometimes co-existing theories and pedagogies. The Turf Wars of the 1950s, dividing the field between composition and communication, and the Theory vs. Practice Wars of more recent times, dividing the field between operating from a stance of theory versus a stance of pedagogy, are not confined to the pages of the refereed journal articles or to the extended pages of the scholarly volumes, but also spill over into the review essay. While there is the possibility and need for coexistence of theory and

practice, each informing the other and playing its own role in establishing and maintaining the discipline, the tension between the two and the tension between the variety of theoretical and pedagogical approaches often carries over to the more innocuous genres such as the review. At its best, “[t]heory seeks to create analytic maps and models of all that takes place in writing. Pedagogy seeks to stimulate, to liberate, to exercise the powers of synthesis and creation. Pedagogy obviously must draw on the analytic understanding provided by theory...theory can provide us with much clearer understandings of our goals in teaching...theory should help define the limits of pedagogy” (Park 51). At its worst, the tension has been guilty of rending apart a discipline which was often precariously positioned within the academy.

The review stands as a genre that lends insight into the often self-perceived precarious position of composition within the academy. On the one hand, the study of writing is critical to the field and to the academy as a whole, similarly as reviews serve an important function for the field in sorting and disseminating its knowledge and publication of that knowledge. On the other hand, writing is often confined to only its function of critique for the right to enter, persist, and flourish in the academy, similarly as reviews are often confined and relegated to a second class genre position or ignored altogether. Through critique and theorization, reviews often play a gatekeeper’s role as it relates to the inner circle of scholarship and disciplinary attention (Hyland and Diani). Just as the field of composition, with its various movements, theoretical perspectives, and pedagogical perspectives, has shifted over the course of its textual and publication history, so too has the review genre shifted. I argue that the review essay, while representing an evolution from the short annotated bibliographic reviews of the earliest

publications to the longer, more evaluative book reviews, is a genre that attempts to encompass all of composition within its relatively short borders: theorizing and situating as the main purposes while still allowing for some of the evaluative and descriptive features of the previous genre forms.

### **Professional Perspectives**

Interviews, as a method used in this study, serve to contextualize the history and textual analysis within a framework of the professionals involved in the discipline. Interviews present a limited ethnographic component in a study that could easily be dehumanized through using only historical and textual analysis. By asking questions of those professionals who have been “authorized to authorize others” as the gatekeepers and speakers for the discipline (Goggin 148), there is an opportunity to add to the interpretive nature of the study. The interviews in this study serve to both confirm and deny historical and textual interpretations, creating another layer of evidence to support the arguments forwarded regarding the review genre.

Professionally, the struggle continues for journal editors and compositionists, in general, in a field that is sometimes devalued through a general lack of recognition within the institution. Professionally, the editorship of the review genre reflects the amount of work compositionists are willing to take on, the challenges facing the creation and production of those reviews, and the lack of appreciation of the contribution of those reviews to the discipline. The early editors wrote the reviews themselves, feeling compelled to catalog and report on almost every publication in a newly created field, trying to keep up with the flourish of publications in the mostly textbook-driven environment, and trying to distinguish and separate from English and from literature. In

the middle years, the professionals in the field were busy doing the work of the field, including reflecting the tension that was building between the dichotomies of practice versus theory, while often artificial and misrepresented, nevertheless influential in its grasp on the direction of the field.

In more recent years, 1995-2010, the professionals are highly sophisticated in their approaches to the multitude of highly charged controversies in a field that has emerged and expanded, yet at times, still feels compelled to justify its existence. At the same time, reviews demonstrate composition doing it to itself what the academy has done to composition, which is, limiting, confining, and at times, devaluing. The field has not kept up with the genre shift in reviews in that the field, as a whole, does not recognize the move to critical argument and theorizing in the scholarly review essay to the point of valuing the review essay as scholarly writing suitable for tenure and promotion consideration. So the field is left with the conundrum of its professionals being evaluated for tenure based on peer-reviewed articles and book publication, but not valuing the critical review writing that addresses those publications. Reviews, then, are relegated to confined spaces, deemed less significant than scholarly writing, and discounted as necessary but not central to the field. Ironically, this relegation to confined spaces, this labeling of less significance, and this necessary but discounted nature aptly describes what composition has experienced itself at times throughout its history. As attested to by the editors, even though reviews have emerged to demonstrate significance to the profession – serve the field's need for information regarding the use of its publications, serve the field's need for discrimination of value regarding its publications, and serve the field's need for critique of theoretical positioning in its publications – the review genre

remains on the outskirts of full disciplinary recognition and inclusion. While the previous forms of the genre, short review and book review, are clearly not of a scholarly nature, there are examples of some review essays that go beyond evaluative thinking and writing into theoretical arguing and positioning. The review essay still mainly situates and evaluates a book's contribution to the field, and in some instances uses the book as a launching point for theorizing. However, the theorizing and positioning, at least at this point, have not been judged by the field to reach the sophistication and level of scholarship displayed in the peer-reviewed article.

One of the interesting findings of the interview study is the tension between the editors' expressions of their guiding principles – their intent to publish more reviews to better represent the field's publications – and the actuality that fewer reviews are published. Many of the editors as well as the editorial features in the journals themselves expressed a frustration in not being able to review enough books to keep up with the field's growing publications. On the other hand, the newest editor, Kathleen Blake Yancey, in her first issue is promising only one review per issue, again a shift in editorial perspective to lessen the number of reviews. Another example of this tension is that the interviews and the "From the Editor" feature reveal that the editors are seeking reviews that contribute to the discipline in epistemological ways, yet often the reviews are perceived to fall short of that goal. The editors also reveal that the reviews are important enough to be written by seasoned scholars and not relegated to graduate students. Yet, professors in the field often encourage graduate students to write reviews as part of their initial publication submissions. Holdstein pointed out this "misconception" of the field

when she discussed having to turn down graduate student submissions in favor of well established scholars.

The messages are mixed when it comes to reviews, their importance, their value, and their appropriate scholarly ranking. For example, the NCTE website for *College English* in the link for reviews indicates that “frequently CE review essays aim to support undergraduate and graduate instruction in English Departments.” What this means is somewhat ambiguous and may apply to literature and not composition. Does it mean that reviews support undergraduate and graduate instruction by reviewing books used for this instruction or does it mean that reviews support undergraduate and graduate instruction by providing opportunities for publication? My guess is that it is the former. Interestingly, the link for *College Composition and Communication* makes no such claim but simply states that reviews are solicited by the editor and to contact the editor prior to writing a review. At a conference in 2006, Jane Freeman shared the following observation, “I once heard quite a senior professor in the English department giving instructions to a graduate student who was going to be doing a book review for her first publication and ...the professor said...don’t evaluate too heavily because no one really cares what you think yet because you’re not known in the field.” Freeman interpreted this to mean “...your status in the field is related to your right to evaluate...,” which may be the case in composition as well.

Another principle expressed by the editors was in relation to the role reviews should play in assisting the teachers of composition and in informing pedagogy. The review essay genre, as this study points out, no longer focuses on textbooks, as in the short reviews, and no longer focuses on pedagogies, as in the book reviews. Essentially,

there are no reviews of publications that directly assist the composition teacher. Theory has taken over pedagogy within the review essay, thus serving to devalue pedagogy, leaving the practitioners with few resources to inform their teaching. In the face of an expanded market of textbook publication, disciplinary and editorial decisions eliminate a forum for the evaluation of those textbooks, foregrounding instead only the theoretical publications, which, ironically, account for fewer numbers in the field's publication record today.

Professionally, then, the editors of the journals are left with the complicated task of trying to manage the disciplinary discourse in a field straddled with complex identity issues. Convinced of the importance of making sense of the disciplines' publications, overwhelmed with a field that is able to publish only 6-10% of its submissions, and faced with ever-increasing book publications calling for review, the editors are asked to manage all of this in a profession that devalues the review genre while simultaneously valorizing the book genre. The institutions that house composition studies demand publication of books and scholarly articles for tenure and promotion, but de-value the review processes and products necessary to critique, evaluate, filter and promote the valued publications.

In conclusion, historical analysis, genre analysis, and interview studies, as demonstrated in this dissertation study, are three viable and valuable methodologies available to composition study research that lend themselves to working effectively with written texts of various genres. Composition would benefit from re-invigorating studies employing these interpretive methodologies. Historical analysis, as a method, affords the opportunity to research writing over time, setting the writing within its specific historical



contexts and providing an occasion to study development, stages, and eras (Connors; Crowley; Berlin). Genre analysis, as a method, affords the opportunity to research texts through close readings, to code for various defined categories, and to make interpretive statements based on the commonalities noted within the particular genre (Swales; Bhatia; Barton; Huckin). Interview studies, as a method, afford the opportunity to set research within various contexts of the writers and the readers of particular texts, allowing for insights into philosophies, processes, practices, and decisions regarding the production and use of the texts (Goggin). All three methodologies are applicable to a wide variety of writing: scholarly books, journal publications, student writing, and many other written genres. These methods are adaptable, revealing, and versatile, and in a discipline focused on writing provide a valuable set of processes for studying text.

### **Implications and Future Research**

Peter Mortenson's question, "What Do We Want From Books?" in a Sept. 2008 *CCC* review is a significant question, but one that is beyond the scope of this dissertation study. However, a repurposed question, "what do we want from reviews?" is important to this study. Mortenson, interestingly, frames his review with a beginning and an ending which address historical perspectives on "book reviews in the field of rhetoric and composition" (193). In citing both North and Wiley regarding their earlier visions for improvement and changes in review publication and function, Mortenson writes "reviews should be accorded more value" and that reviews are "overlooked because of flaws in the field's book reviewing practices" (194). Pointing out "the gap between what we often say we want from books and what we really do with them" (Mortenson 197) could certainly be applied to the review genre as well, as demonstrated in this study. Many years earlier,

North argued for reviews to act as a necessary “bridge between ... authors ... and prospective readers” (Mortenson 216). Mortenson goes on to argue that

...no genre aside from the review was so well adapted to the work of sorting books according to topic and quality, an essential function if the volume of book publication were to increase, as it did. But the book review genre was not built for speed... “the slow pace of the whole review process” held back the field’s exposure to new knowledge” (216).

As demonstrated in this study, the publication of reviews today still lags well behind the publication of the books under review, and the volume of reviews cannot possibly keep up with the volume of book publications. As also demonstrated in this study, there are many other electronic resources more readily available to today’s readers that do not have the lag time of reviews. In the almost twenty years since North first called for reform in reviews, we have seen little change in the publication processes and practices surrounding the review genre, as each of the editors noted in the interview study.

So, what do we want from reviews and what are we willing to change or invest to get what we want from reviews? Mortenson argues that the lag in publication of reviews can actually free up the reviewer “from the obligation to herald a book’s arrival,” allowing the “resulting review” to be “more reflective...trac[ing] a book’s development, evaluat[ing] its quality, and apprais[ing] its early reception” (217). However, I would argue that the current review essay genre does not fulfill these reflective functions of highlighting the book’s development, quality, and initial reactions, but rather is focused more on essay than review, more on argument than critical assessment, and at times, more on theory building and knowledge advancement than on making meaning through

defining the books themselves. The result is a genre attempting to present itself with the characteristics of the peer-reviewed articles located in the forefront of the journal. Review essays in composition have begun to abandon the genre's primary descriptive and evaluative functions in an effort to compete with research articles rather than coexist with and enhance scholarship by serving a discriminating function for the plethora of monographs and edited collections. Composition, as a discipline, seems not to know what it wants from reviews, as it does not really know what it wants from the books themselves, as it often does not know what it wants or expects from itself as a discipline. As is often the case, the field is perennially caught up in complicating and critiquing, in engaging in ambiguity and subtlety, and in constantly questioning its identity and its place in research, in scholarship, and in disciplinarity. Individuals within the field of composition may know what they want from books and from the reviews of those books. They may want to know if and how the book contributes to the field, if and how the book might contribute to their own scholarship, and if and how the book might contribute to the development of future scholars and researchers. Reviews, while in short supply, often do fulfill those functions.

A renewed focus on the review genre by composition studies will most likely not result in solving all of the disciplinary issues of the field. As Stanley Fish's 2008 book, *Save the World on Your Own Time*, the subject of journal articles (for example, Patricia Bizzell's "Opinion: Composition Studies Saves the World!" *CE*, 72.2, Nov. 2009) and reviews (for example, Donald Lazere's "Review: Stanley Fish's Tightrope Act" *CE*, 71.5, May 2009), suggests, composition will not be saving the world any time soon, and neither will review essays. More likely, the review genre, if history is a reliable predictor

of the future, will continue in its marginalized role of pseudo-critique and epideictic promotion of the scholarly publications of the field. If current trends in the genre continue, the review essay will continue to seek recognition and shore up its identity by trying to be something it is not: a peer-reviewed scholarly article. Likewise, the legitimacy of composition as a discipline, if current political and economic indicators are reliable predictors, will continue under increased scrutiny, likely in the arenas of assessment and outcomes describing student writing. The pressures of the political world are pushing in on the borders of the academy once again to more narrowly confine, define, and qualify what constitutes an academic discipline, what constitutes a viable field of study, and what constitutes justification for continued support and existence. Facing these threatening pressures, the review genre may be again relegated to a place of minor significance, a role that it is well acquainted with and from which it occasionally rises for recognition. Composition, if it will be able to maintain its position in the academy, questionable and tenuous as that may have been at times in the past, may have to redirect its energies away from self-reflection and narcissistic preoccupation with its legitimacy. Composition will have to stand for the importance of the discipline with its various forms and genres and toward the significance composition, particularly the study of writing, plays as a means of critical thinking, critical discernment, and critical discrimination in the academic, political, social, and economic challenges facing future generations.

As with any research and writing, the findings and reporting of those findings leads to a need and desire for further exploration into related territories. The challenges of remaining focused and narrowed are particularly pertinent in a historical and genre study

such as this one. Reviewing and analyzing a corpus of historical texts over a 60-70 year time period, even when for all practical purposes the corpus has to be limited, in this case to 90 reviews, continually calls for extending the research and pushing beyond the boundaries of the limitations of a corpus. Some of the further studies suggested by this dissertation include, but are not limited, to the following:

- a comparative study of multiple reviews of the same book, as suggested by the genre analysis;
- a study of controversial reviews and the corresponding follow-up interchanges, as suggested by the editorial perspectives;
- a search for reviews of pedagogical texts, as suggested by the short and book reviews;
- a citation study of reviews, as suggested by the historical analysis;
- a study of the future of reviews in electronic media exemplified by the reviews published in *CCC Online*, as suggested by the increasingly technological nature of the field; and
- a historical genre analysis of journal articles and how they relate to the reviews published within the same issue.

The field of composition is uniquely poised to expand its research boundaries and scholarship both internally within its university borders and externally outside the walls of the academy. This expansive territory calls for strategies and structures that will assist in arranging and managing the ever-expanding knowledge bases and help position disciplinary publications, including the review essay, in a critical format. “The contribution of review genres to academic communication should not be underestimated.

They consolidate and synthesize the primary literature, which means that “[s]cholars are dependent on other scholars to have their knowledge claims...certified or rejected” (Giannoni 29). While the contribution of the review genre is humble, secondary, and often not easily measured, it, nevertheless, does provide a reflective textual record of composition’s history and development over time. In a field that is ever-expanding and ever-searching, the review genre is able to contribute through its evaluative, situational, and theoretical functions (Hyland and Diani). Where will the field go in the face of ever-increasing demands for assessment and transparency? Where will the field go in the face of ever-increasing politicization of writing? Where will the field go in the face of shrinking economic resources for scholarship, research, and the academy? Our highly politically, socially, economically, and technologically-charged era promises a future that will call for continued evaluating, situating, arguing, and theorizing in the discipline of composition. The place of books, the role of print technologies, let alone the review of those books and print technologies, is an-ever fluctuating barometer for the discipline of composition.

Finally, the review genre is sometimes seen on the margins of the discipline, seeking legitimization, de-valued, and struggling for identity and recognition in the discipline it reflects. Ironically, the review genre mirrors composition’s historically precarious position in the academy, continually involved in self-reflection, identity crises, and the re-invention of itself. Simply put, the issue is, if we in composition turn our focus outward from our own discipline, and if we assert our hard-fought place in the academy, all writing can be seen as valuable – scholarly writing, pedagogical writing, and reviews

of writing – and all writing can be included in composition research as an object of study for further scholarly interpretation.

**APPENDIX A**  
*College English Corpus*

Year	Month	Vol.	No.	Book(s) Reviewed (page numbers)	Author(s) of Book	Reviewer
				Short Reviews		
#1 - 1939	Nov.	1	2	<i>Essentials of Composition for College Students</i> (187-188)	R. W. Babcock, R. D. Horn, T. H. English	Mary E. Burton
#2 - 1939	Nov.	1	2	<i>A Study of Courses in Technical Writing</i> (188-189)	A.M. Fountain	J. H. McKee
#3 – 1939	Dec,	1		<i>American Composition and Rhetoric</i> (279-280)	Donald Davidson	Herbert E. Childs
#4 - 1944	Jan	5	4	<i>English for Engineers</i> (228)	Sara A. Harbarger, Anne B. Whitmer, Robert Price	A. M. Fountain
#5 - 1944	March	5	6	<i>A Way to Better English</i> (347-348)	Edward Foster	James M. McCrimmon
#6 - 1944	Apr	5	7	<i>Basic Principles of Writing</i> (400)	W. Otto Birk, Frederick William Holmes, Harold Wesley Melvin, Joseph Lee Vaughan	J. H. McKee
#7 - 1948	Oct	10	1	<i>Teaching English Usage</i> (55-56)	Robert C. Pooley	H. L. Mencken
#8 - 1950	Jan.	11	4	<i>American College English</i> (227-228)	Harry R. Warfel, Ernst G. Mathews, John C. Bushman	George S. Wykoff
#9 – 1950	April	11	7	<i>Language in Thought and Action</i> (414)	S.I. Hayakawa	Charles I. Glicksberg
#10 - 1953	April	14	7	<i>Minimal Essentials for Good Writing</i> (422)	A. I. Walker, K. G. Huntress, R. B. Orlovich, B. Mills	George P. Faust



#11 - 1953	Jan	14	4	<i>American English: A Twentieth Century Grammar</i> (246)	L. M. Myers	J.N. Hook
#12 1955	Dec.	17	3	<i>The Writer's Resource Book</i> (191)	John Gerber & Kenneth Houpp	William M. Murphy
1960	Feb.	21	5	Books about Language (294-306)	composite review	Harold B. Allen
1959	March	20	6	"In Wand'ring Mazes Lost": Freshman Composition Texts (313-326)	composite review	Cecil B. Williams
1960	April	21	7	Grammar with Tears: Seventy-One Composition Texts (426-438)	composite review	John C. Sherwood
#13 - 1963	March	24	6	<i>Writing Good Prose, Essentials for Effective Writing, Practice for Effective Writing, Mastering English Composition, Harbrace Guide to Sentence-Building</i> (494-495)	Jones & Faulker, Hooper & Gale, Nina Walter, Hook & Stevens	Lester Hurt
#14- 1963	May	24	8	<i>Dictionaries and That Dictionary</i> (660)	James Sledd & Wilma R. Ebbitt, eds.	Charlton Laird
#15 - 1965	May	26	8	<i>The English Verb: Form and Meanings</i> (654)	Martin Joos	Raven I. McDavid, Jr.
				Book Reviews		
#16- 1964	Oct.	26	1	<i>Research in Written Composition</i> (53-56)	Richard Braddock, Richard Lloyd-Jones, Lowell Schoer NCTE	Jean H. Hagstrom
#17 - 1968	Feb	29	5	<i>The Roberts English Series: A Linguistics Program, Grammar I, Grammar II</i> (415-418)	Paul Roberts, Roderick A. Jacobs & Peter S. Rosenbaum	Clarence Sloat

#18-1968	March	29	6	<i>The Random House Dictionary of the English Language</i> (489-496)	Jess Stein, ed.	Donald B. Sands
#19-1973	April	34	7	<i>The Irrelevant English Teacher</i> (1014-1017)	J. Mitchell Morse	Owen Jenkins
#20-1974	Feb.	35	5	Three British Grammar books (618-624)		Ralph B. Low
#21-1974	Feb.	35	5	<i>Black English</i> (625-629)	J. L. Dillard	James L. Funkhouser
#22 - 1979	April	40	8	<i>Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life AND Red Tape: Its Origins, Uses, and Abuses</i> (950-958)	Sissela Bok AND Herbert Kaufman	Hugh Rank
#27-1979	Dec.	41	4	<i>Word Abuse</i> (448-460)	Donna Woolfolk Cross	Anthony Wolk
				<i>What's Happening to American English</i>	A.M. Tibbetts & Charlene Tibbetts	
				<i>The Reader over Your Shoulder</i>	Robert Graves & Alan Hodge	
				<i>On Further Examination: Report of the Advisory Panel on the Scholastic Aptitude Test Score Decline</i>	College Entrance Exam Board	
#28 - 1984	Feb	46	2	<i>Writing in the Computer Age: Word Processing Skills for Every Writer</i> (128-133)	Andrew Fluegelman and Jeremy Joan Hewes	Francis A. Hubbard
				<i>The Word Processing Book: A Short Course in Computer Literacy</i>	Peter A. McWilliams	
				<i>Writing with a Word Processor</i>	William Zinsser	
#29 - 1984	Feb.	46	2	<i>The Evaluation of Composition Instruction</i> (133-136)	Barbara Cross Davis, Michael Scriven, Susan Thomas	Betty Jane Wagner

				<i>Evaluating College Writing Programs</i>	Stephen P. Witte and Lester Faigley	
#30 - 1984	Feb.	46	2	<i>An International Perspective on the Evaluation of Written Composition (137-139)</i>	Alan C. Purves & Sauli Tokola	James R. Squire
#31- 1989	Feb.	51	2	<i>Facts, Artifacts, and Counterfacts: Theory and Method for a Writing Course (192-200)</i>	David Batholomae & Anthony Petrosky	Nancy B. Conley
				<i>Only Connect: Uniting Writing and Reading</i>	Thomas Newkirk	
				<i>Convergences: Transactions in Reading and Writing</i>	Bruce T. Peterson	
#32 - 1989	April	51	4	<i>Training the New Teacher of College Composition (418-423)</i>	Charles W. Bridges, Toni A. Lopez, Ronald F. Lunsford	Diana George
				<i>Teaching One-to-One: The Writing Conference</i>	Muriel Harris	
				<i>The Practical Tutor</i>	Emily Meyer & Louise Z. Smith	
#33 - 1989	Dec.	51	8	<i>Plato, Derrida, and Writing (875-881)</i>	Jasper Neel	Miriam Dow
				<i>In Defense of Rhetoric</i>	Brian Vickers	
				Review Essays		
#34- 1994	Feb	56	2	<i>Border Crossings: Cultural Workers and the Politics of Education (194-206)</i>	Henry A. Giroux	John Trimbur
				<i>Beyond the Culture Wars: How Teaching the Conflicts Can Revitalize American Education</i>	Gerald Graff	

				<i>Composition and Resistance</i>	C. Mark Hurlbert; Michael Blitz	
				<i>Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change</i>	Ira Shor	
				<i>Education Limited: Schooling and Training and the New Right Since 1979</i>	Education Group II, Cultural Studies, University of Birmingham	
#35 - 1994	Oct.	56	6	<i>A Kind of Passport: A Basic Writing Adjunct Program and the Challenge of Student Diversity (693-702)</i>	Anne DiPardo	Alice Roy
				<i>The Discovery of Competence: Teaching and Learning with Diverse Student Writers</i>	Eleanor Kutz, Suzy Q. Groden, Vivian Zamel	
				<i>Critical Literacy: Politics, Praxis, and the Postmodern</i>	Colin Lankshear; Peter L. McLaren	
#36- 1994	Nov.	56	7	<i>Professional Communication: The Social Perspective 828-840</i>	Nancy Roundy Blyler & Charlotte Thralls, eds.	Alan G. Gross
				<i>Rhetoric, Innovation, Technology: Case Studies of Technical Communication in Technology Transfers</i>	Stephen Doheny-Farina	
				<i>Writing in the Workplace: New Research Perspectives</i>	Rachel Spilka, ed.	
				<i>Norms of Rhetorical Culture</i>	Thomas B. Farrell	
				<i>Philosophy, Rhetoric, and the</i>	Steve Fuller	

				<i>End of Knowledge: The Coming of Science and Technology Studies</i>		
#37-1999	Jan.	61	3	<i>Feminist Accused of Sexual Harassment (340-346)</i>	Jane Gallop	John Schilb
				<i>Pedagogy, Democracy, and Feminism: Rethinking the Public Sphere</i>	Adriana Hernandez	
				<i>The Formation of College English: Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in the British Cultural Provinces</i>	Thomas P. Miller	
				<i>Writing in an Alien World: Basic Writing and the Struggle for Equality in Higher Education</i>	Deborah Mutnick	
				<i>Pedagogy: Disturbing History, 1819-1929</i>	Mariolina Rizzi Salvatori, ed.	
#38-1999	May	61	5	<i>Gypsy, Academics and Mother-Teachers: Gender, Contingent Labor, and Writing Instruction (615-619)</i>	Eileen E. Schell	Roxanne Mountford
				<i>Gender Roles and Faculty Lives in Rhetoric and Composition</i>	Theresa Enos	
#39-1999				<i>Toward a Phenomenological Rhetoric: Writing, Profession, and Altruism (265-273)</i>	Barbara Couture	Sharon J. Hamilton
				<i>The Spiritual Side of Writing: Releasing the Learner's Whole Potential</i>	Regina Paxton Foehr & Susan A. Schiller, eds.	

				<i>Foregrounding Ethical Awareness in Composition and English Studies</i>	Sheryl I. Fontaine & Susan M. Hunter	
				<i>Suffering and the Remedy of Art</i>	Harold Schweizer	
#40 - 2003	July	65	6	<i>Changing the Subject: Discourse and the Constructions of Desire (668-675)</i>	Marshall W. Alcorn, Jr.	Judith Harris
				<i>Risky Writing: Self-Disclosure and Self-Transformation in the Classroom</i>	Jeffrey Berman	
				<i>Writing and Healing: Toward an Informed Practice</i>	Charles M. Anderson & Marian M. MacCurdy, eds.	
#41 - 2004	Jan	66	3	<i>Rehearsing New Roles: How College Students Develop as Writers (335-343)</i>	Lee Ann Carroll	Michael Bernard-Donals
				<i>Misunderstanding the Assignment: Teenage Students, College Writing, and the Pains of Growth</i>	Doug Hunt	
#42- 2005	Nov.	68	2	<i>Situating Composition: Composition Studies and the Politics of Location (209-225)</i>	Lisa Ede	James D. Williams
				<i>Self-Development and College Writing</i>	Nick Tingle	
				<i>The End of Composition Studies</i>	David W. Smit	
#43- 2007	March	69	4	<i>What the Best College Teachers Do (391-399)</i>	Ken Bain	Patricia Donahue
				<i>Life on the Tenure Track: Lessons from the First Year</i>	James M. Lang	
#44 - 2007	Sept.	70	1	<i>An Open Language: Selected Writing on Literacy, Learning,</i>	Mike Rose	Julie Lindquist

				<i>and Opportunity (70-78)</i>		
#45 - 2007	Sept.	70	1	<i>Toward a Civil Discourse: Rhetoric and Fundamentalism (79-88)</i>	Sharon Crowley	Beth Daniell
				<i>Rhetorical Listening: Identification, Gender, Whiteness</i>	Krista Radcliffe	

## APPENDIX B

*College Composition and Communication Corpus*

Year	Month	Vol.	No.	Book(s) Reviewed (page numbers)	Author(s) of Book	Reviewer
				Short Reviews		
#1 1957	Dec.	8	4	<i>Composition, A Course in Writing and Rhetoric</i> (253)	Richard M. Weaver	Robert E. Thorstensen
#2 1960	May	11	2	<i>Seeing and Writing: Fifteen Exercises in Composing Experience</i> (121)	Walker Gibson	Francis Christensen
#3 1960	May	11	2	<i>The Elements of Style</i> (121)	William Strunk, Jr./ revisions by E. B. White	Francis Christensen
#4 1960	Dec.	11	4	<i>How and Where to Look It Up</i> (248)	Robert W. Murphy	Harry H. Crosby
#5 1960	Dec.	11	4	<i>Writing from Experience</i> (248)	Richard A. Condon & Burton O. Kurth, eds.	Frederick Durham
#6 1965	Feb.	16	1	<i>An Introduction to Transformational Grammars</i> (47-50)	Emmon Bach	Richard Gunter
#7 1965	Feb.	16	1	<i>Concise American Composition and Rhetoric AND The Plain Rhetoric</i> (51-52)	Donald Davidson AND S. Leonard Rubinstein & Robert G. Weaver	Kenneth C. Conroy
#8 1965	Feb.	16	1	<i>Structure, Style, and Usage: A Guide to Expository Writing</i>	Hulon Willis	
				<i>College Composition: Rhetoric, Grammar, Research</i>	James G. Hepburn	
				<i>A Short New Rhetoric</i> (52-53)	Hans P. Guth	A.M. Tibbetts
				Book Reviews		
#9 1965	Feb.	16	1	<i>Language, Form, and Idea</i>	T. Benson Strandness, Herbert Hackett, Harry H. Crosby	
				<i>The Personal Voice</i>	Albert J. Guerard, Maclin B. Guerard, John Hawkes, Claire Rosenfield	



				<i>Persuasive Prose</i>	Richard E. Hughes & P. Albert Duhamel	
				<i>The World of Ideas (55-57)</i>	Michael Alssid & William Kenney	J. Sherwood Weber
#10 1970	Feb.	21	1	<i>College Writing Texts: The Rhetorical Approach (55-59)</i>	various books and authors	Regina Hoover
#11 1970	Feb.	21	1	<i>Texts on Composition or Rhetoric (59-67)</i>	various books and authors	Phyllis Brown Burke
#12 1970	Feb.	21	1	<i>Writing Step by Step: Exercises in Structured Creativity (67-69)</i>	Audrey J. Roth & Thelma C. Altschuler	Stephen Judy
#13 1970	Feb.	21	1	<i>How to Write Scientific and Technical Papers &amp; Preparing Effective Reports (71-73)</i>	Sam F. Trelease & Lionel D. Wyld	John H. Mitchell
#14 1975	Feb.	26	1	<i>A New Reading Approach to College Writing</i>	Martha Heasley Cox	
				<i>Patterns: Readings for Composition</i>	James D. Lester	
				<i>Probing Common Ground: Sources for Writing (59-61)</i>	James Burl Hogins	Mildred B. Munday
#15 1975	Feb.	26	1	<i>The Conscious Reader: Readings Past and Present</i>	Caroline Shrodes, Harry Finestone, Michael Shugrue	
				<i>Rhetorical Considerations: Essays for Analysis (61-63)</i>	Harry Brent & William Lutz	Robert Bain
#16 1975	Feb.	26	1	<i>Transformational Grammar and the Teacher of English</i>	Owen Thomas & Eugene R. Kintgen	
				<i>The Study of Social Dialects in American English (96-99)</i>	Walt Wolfram & Ralph W. Fasold	Joseph L. Subbiondo
#17 1975	Feb.	26	1	<i>Prospects for the 70s</i>	Harry Finestone & Michael Shugrue	
				<i>Explorations in the Teaching of Secondary English (110-114)</i>	Stephen N. Judy	Paul T. Bryant
#18 1980	Feb.	31	1	<i>Teaching Expository Writing (91-93)</i>	William Irmischer	Walker Gibson
#19 1980	May	31	2	<i>Empty Pages: A Search for Writing Competence in School and Society (232-234)</i>	Clifton Fadiman & James Howard	Richard Gebhardt

#20 1980	Dec.	31	4	<i>Sentence Combining and the Teaching of Writing</i> (433-437)	Donald A. Daiker, Andrew Kerek, Max Morenberg	Stephen Witte
#21 1980	Dec.	31	4	<i>Critical Teaching and Everyday Life</i> (439-440)	Ira Shor	Robert C. Rosen
#22 1985	Feb.	36	1	<i>Essays on Classical Rhetoric and Modern Discourse</i> (105-106)	Robert J. Connors, Lisa S. Ede, Andrea Lunsford	James J. Murphy
#23 1985	May	36	2	<i>Language Connections: Writing and Reading Across the Curriculum</i> (243-246)	Toby Fulwiler & Art Young	Barbara C. Mallonee
#24 1985	Oct.	36	3	<i>Orality and Literacy: The Technologies of the Word</i> (363-365)	Walter J. Ong	Thomas J. Farrell
#25 1985	Dec.	36	4	<i>Illiterate America</i> (491-493)	Jonathan Kozol	Richard Ohmann
#26 1990	Feb.	41	1	<i>The Culture and Politics of Literacy</i> (92-94)	W. Ross Winterowd	Myron C. Tuman
#27 1990	Feb.	41	1	<i>Strengthening Programs for Writing Across the Curriculum</i> (97-98)	Susan H. McLeod	Thomas D. Klein
#28 1990	May	41	2	<i>The Double Perspectives: Language, Literacy, and Social Relations</i> pp. 231-233 - Reviews	David Bleich	Joyce Irene Middleton
#29 1990	Dec.	41	4	<i>Creating Writers: Linking Assessment and Writing Instructions</i> (478-480)	Vicki Spandel & Richard J. Stiggins	Karen L. Greenberg
				Review Essays		
#30 1995	Feb.	46	1	<i>Women Writing the Academy: Audience, Authority, and Transformation</i> (108-122)	Gesa Kirsch	Suzanne Clark
				<i>An Ethic of Care: Feminist and Interdisciplinary Perspectives</i>	Mary Jeanne Larrabee, ed.	
				<i>Feminisms and Critical Pedagogy</i>	Carmen Luke & Jennifer Gore	
				<i>Feminine Principles and Women's Experience in American Composition and Rhetoric</i>	Louise Wetherbee Phelps & Janet Emig, Eds.	
				<i>Anxious Power: Reading, Writing, and Ambivalence in Narrative by Women</i>	Carol J. Singley & Susan E. Sweeney	

#31 1995	May	46	2	<i>The Literary Structure of Scientific Argument: Historical Studies</i> (291-302)	Peter Dete, ed	Mary M. Lay
				<i>The Literature of Science: Perspectives on Popular Scientific Writing</i>	Murdo William McRae, ed.	
				<i>Understanding Scientific Prose</i>	Jack Selzer, ed.	
#32 1995	Oct.	46	3	<i>Assessing Writing</i> (446-455)	Brian Huot & Kathleen Blake Yancey	Liz Hamp-Lyons
				<i>New Directions in Portfolio Assessment: Reflective Practice, Critical Theory, and Large Scale Scoring</i>	Laurel Black, Donald Daiker, Jeffrey Sommers, Gail Stygall, eds.	
				<i>Teaching and Assessing Writing</i>	Edward M. White	
				<i>Validating Holistic Scoring for Writing Assessment</i>	Michael Williamson & Brian Huot	
#33 1995	Dec.	46	4	<i>Writing Theory and Critical Theory</i> (566-578)	John Clifford & John Schilb	Tom Fox
				<i>Pedagogy in the Age of Politics: Writing and Reading (in) the Academy</i>	Patricia A. Sullivan & Donna J. Qualley, eds.	
#34 2000	Feb.	51	3	<i>Angels' Town: Chero Ways, Gang Life, and Rhetorics of the Everyday</i> (492-494)	Ralph Cintron	Carl G. Herndl
#35 2000	June	51	4	<i>The Young Composers: Composition's Beginning in the Nineteenth-Century Schools</i> (665-668)	Lucille M. Schultz	Shirley K. Rose
#36 2000	Sept	52	1	<i>Kenneth Burke and the Conversation after Philosophy</i> (148-150)	Timothy W. Crusius	Dana Anderson
#37 2000	Dec	52	2	<i>The Struggle and the Tools: Oral and Literate Strategies</i> (297-299)	Ellen Cushman	Deborah Brandt
#38 2005	Feb	56	3	<i>The Realms of Rhetoric: The Prospects for Rhetoric Education</i> (515-522)	Joseph Petraglia & Deepika Bahri, eds.	John Schilb
				<i>Postmodern Sophistry: Stanley Fish and the Critical Enterprise</i>	Gary A. Olson & Lynn Worsham, eds.	

				<i>Beyond Postprocess and Postmodernism: Essays on the Spaciousness of Rhetoric</i>	Theresa Enos & Keith D. Miller, eds.	
#39 2005	June	56	4	<i>Liberating Voices: Writing at the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers (688-700)</i>	Karyn L. Hollis	Susan Miller
				<i>Minor Re/Visions: Asian American Literacy Narratives as a Rhetoric of Citizenship</i>	Morris Young	
#40 2005	Sept	57	1	<i>A Communion of Friendship: Literacy, Spiritual Practice, and Women in Recovery (169-180)</i>	Beth Daniell	Michael Bernard-Donals
				<i>Girls and Literacy in America: Historical Perspectives to the Present</i>	Jane Greer, ed.	
				<i>Multiple Literacies for the 21st Century</i>	Brian Huot, Beth Stroble, Charles Bazerman, eds.	
#41 2005	Dec	57	2	<i>Black Identity: Rhetoric, Ideology and Nineteenth-Century Black Nationalism (364-371)</i>	Dexter B. Gordon	Keith Gilyard
				<i>Literacy and Racial Justice: The Politics of Learning after Brown vs. Board of Education</i>	Catherine Prendergast	
				<i>Latino/a Discourses: On Language, Identity and Literacy Education</i>	Michelle Hall Kells, Valerie Balester, Victor Villanueva, eds.	
#42 2007	Feb	58	3	<i>Subjects Matter: Every Teacher's Guide to Content-Area Reading (470-494)</i>	Harvey Daniels & Steven Zemelman	David A. Jolliffe
				<i>Intertext: Reading Pedagogy in College Writing Classrooms</i>	Marguerite Helmers, ed.	
				<i>Do I Really Have to Teach Reading? Content Comprehension,</i>	Cris Tovani	

				<i>Grades 6-12</i>		
				<i>Teaching Literature as Reflective Practice</i>	Kathleen Blake Yancey	
#43 2007	June	58	4	<i>Relations, Locations, Positions: Composition Theory for Writing Teachers (715-720)</i>	Peter Vandenberg, Sue Hum, Jennifer Clary-Lemon, eds.	Philip Eubanks
				<i>Writing with Authority: Students' Roles as Writers in Cross-National Perspective</i>	David Foster	
				<i>On Austrian Soil: Teaching Those I Was Taught to Hate</i>	Sondra Perl	
#44 2007	Sept	59	1	<i>Dialects, Englishes, Creoles, and Education (128-138)</i>	Shondel J. Nero, ed.	Carol Severino
				<i>African American Literacies Unleashed: Vernacular English and the Composition Classroom</i>	Arnetha F. Ball & Ted Lardner	
				<i>Reading Chinese Fortune Cookies: The Making of Chinese American Rhetoric</i>	LuMing Mao	
#45 2007	Dec.	59	2	<i>The Transmission of Affect (317-329)</i>	Teresa Brennan	
				<i>Toward a Civil Discourse: Rhetoric and Fundamentalism</i>	Sharon Crowley	
				<i>Impersonal Passion: Language as Affect</i>	Denise Riley	Cory Holding

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**ABSTRACT****COMPOSITION UNDER REVIEW: A GENRE ANALYSIS OF BOOK REVIEWS  
IN COMPOSITION, 1939-2007**

by

**SANDRA W. VALENSKY****December 2010****Advisor:** Dr. Ellen Barton**Major:** English (Composition Studies)**Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy

Although reviews have been a part of two flagship composition journals, *College English* and *College Composition and Communication* throughout their publication histories, little attention has been shown to them in any full length research studies. This dissertation study provides a historical genre analysis of reviews to illustrate the role of reviews in reflecting and contributing to composition's struggle for full disciplinary status.

Methodologically, this mixed methods study uses historical analysis, genre analysis, and an interview study to investigate reviews and their functions in the field of composition. A corpus of 90 reviews, 45 from each journal, was analyzed from 1939 to 2007, to study how reviews reflect the disciplinary trajectory of composition studies, the genre trends of reviews as they reflect the development of changing research and scholarship in composition, and the editorial perspectives and contextualization of the review genre and the development of reviews in the field.

The research finds that historically, reviews prove to reflect the development of the field over time; that textually, the review genre displays four moves, describing, evaluating, situating, and theorizing; and that professionally, the editors contextualize the reviews as an important contributor to the scholarship of the discipline. The main findings include a genre shift from short reviews and book reviews to the review essay. The shift is a move from a focus on description and evaluation to a focus on situating the review and the books within composition studies and using the review as a launching point for further disciplinary theorization. The findings also indicate that while reviews are not a primary genre in the field, they do reflect and contribute to the historical publication record of composition in its development as an academic discipline.

## **AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT**

Sandra Valensky earned her bachelor degree from Oakland University after attending the University of North Dakota for three years. She earned her master's degree from Oakland University as well and taught composition and other English classes for many years before taking a position as a program administrator. Her interests include composition history, composition pedagogy, and writing assessment. Outside of academics, she enjoys reading and nature.