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Writing instruction in western Canadian universities: a history of nation-building and professionalism

Kevin Alfred Brooks
Iowa State University

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Writing instruction in western Canadian universities:

A history of nation-building and professionalism

by

Kevin Alfred Brooks

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Rhetoric and Professional Communication

Major Professor: David R. Russell

Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

1997

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~~Committee Member~~

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Committee Member

Signature was redacted for privacy.

~~Major Professor~~

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For the Major Program

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ABSTRACT

Writing instruction in western Canadian universities between 1908 and 1957 was seen as a necessary technology of nation-building and the proper jurisdiction of English departments. After 1957, specialization in western Canadian universities enabled English departments to claim literature as the proper disciplinary object of their field and exclude writing instruction from their jurisdiction. Only recently has writing instruction returned to western Canadian university curriculums, but not in any systematic fashion.

This study challenges the standard account of writing instruction in Canada: that the traditional first-year literature and composition class favored literature at the expense or even exclusion of composition. This study also challenges the idea that higher education and English departments in western Canada were primarily influenced by the University of Toronto, rather than American universities and English departments. American influences on western Canadian education were prevalent during the first half of this century.

The contemporary difference in the practice of writing instruction in the two countries can be traced to a Canadian rejection of American values and practices during the Cold War. The Canada Council (1957) was particularly effective in solidifying the professional role of English departments as protectors and disseminators of high culture. While literary studies in the US also benefited from Cold War funding of the late 1950s and early 1960s, the growth of composition as a legitimate academic field was a far more significant development of this era.

The past does not offer us something better to return to, but knowing that English studies in North America throughout this century has largely been tied to the work of nation-building, we must now assess the work of English studies and writing instruction in an era in which the role of the nation-state is changing radically and the function of higher education is up for grabs.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION: NATION-BUILDING AND PROFESSIONALISM

Despite periodic alarms about the pernicious effects of American's poor writing, the nation's secondary- and higher-education systems, its vast industrial plant, cultural activities, and governmental structures have never been crippled by poor writing; indeed, for the last half century America has been the cultural, educational, and scientific center of the world, as well as the dominant world power. Somehow, enough Americans learned to write in the ways they needed to in order to carry on, and rather well at that. The experience of other industrialized nations (few of whom have composition courses in higher education) would suggest that students can and do learn to write as a regular part of their education or of their work in a discipline or a profession.

David R. Russell, *Writing* 19

In light of Russell's description of the success of America and its skilled workers, we might ask why college and university students in the US still regularly take composition classes and other forms of writing classes, e.g. business and technical writing courses? Sharon Crowley, like Russell, does not see American students as particularly needy. The universal requirement of composition, she argues "has nothing to do with what students need and everything to do with the academy's image of itself as a place where a special language is in use" (233). Crowley's explanation seems sound until we ask the question: are American universities the only universities in the world that use a special language? Why don't most other industrialized nations have composition courses?

The industrialized nation we can reasonably expect to be most like the US is Canada, but just as Russell suggests, composition is seldom a universal requirement, and at many Canadian institutions it is not offered at all. The present study draws on archival and published materials to compare the history of writing instruction in western Canadian universities with histories of writing instruction in the US. Western Canada as an economic and cultural region is similar to the American Midwest and Great Plains, and the universities of western Canada have been influenced by American institutions in those regions. If any region in Canada can be expected to have been strongly influenced by American educational practices, it is western Canada. While many western Canadians during the first half of this century were politically loyal to the British Empire, American know-how and technology, including pedagogical

technologies, were welcome and adapted to the pioneering communities of this region. The American influence on education and English studies in western Canada declined in the 1950s and 1960s, the very time at which American influence on most facets of Canadian life increases. The best explanation for this surprising trend can be found in an examination of the role of English studies in nation-building, and in the related issue of the professionalization of literary studies.

In the first section of this introductory chapter, I outline this argument in more detail and explain the two key terms of this study: nation-building and professionalism. In the second section of this chapter, I identify four tasks of this study and suggest how those tasks contribute to my larger study of nation-building and professionalism. In the third section of this chapter, I describe the archival materials I have drawn on, and discuss the method of my work. The appendix, "Reviewing and Redescribing 'The Politics of Historiography': Octalog 1, 1988," provides a more substantial treatment of the problems of historical interpretation, representation, and authorization than I can address in this introduction.

The Argument and Key Terms

The argument of this study is that the four provincial universities of western Canada—the Universities of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia—did in fact teach writing much as their American counterparts did until mid-century. Writing instruction, particularly composition, was seen as a necessary technology of nation-building and the proper jurisdiction of English departments. This study then explains why those same institutions for many years refused to teach writing, and only recently have re-committed themselves to that work. After 1957, specialization in western Canadian universities enabled English departments to claim literature, and not composition, as the proper disciplinary object of their field. It is unlikely that Canadian institutions will ever again offer composition as a universal requirement

as it is offered in American universities, but writing in the disciplines and professional fields may become an increasingly important feature of postsecondary education in western Canada.

The structure of my argument consists of an oscillation between chapters that survey educational trends in North America and chapters that analyze the junior curriculum in English—the first and second year courses—in western Canada universities. The work of nation-building and the professionalization of English departments cannot be seen through an examination of local practices only; those practices must constantly be evaluated in the context of national developments. Chapter 2 provides an overview of education and English studies in North America at the turn of the century. The western Canadian universities were able to look to eastern Canada and the US for uniquely North American models of education and English studies, rather than look to Europe as their predecessors had. Mass education played a vital role in the development of these two countries, and the fact that state universities in the Midwest provided the most viable model for western Canadian universities suggest the continental, rather than national nature of education in North America. Chapter 3 argues that this pattern of American influence on Canadian education applied to English departments in western Canada as well. They looked to American state universities and Harvard for guidance in the ways of training and culturing their youth. The early faculty in western Canada defined themselves professionally through teaching, a concern that was consistent with the goals of nation-building.

Postsecondary education in both countries matured between the wars, and the early utilitarian emphasis on nation-building was challenged by a general education movement concerned with educating the whole person rather than just training young men and women for participation in the new economies of North America. In chapter 4, I will summarize the history of general education in the US, with an emphasis on the two plans that most influenced western Canadian universities: the Chicago Plan of the early 1930s and the Harvard Plan of 1945, more commonly known as The Redbook. These plans had great appeal for scholars of

English in western Canada because the plans appeared to redress what the Canadians considered the overly utilitarian nature of university education that had evolved in the first thirty years of the century. The plans also represented what sociologist Daniel Bell considers two general attitudes towards education: an aristocratic, elitist attitude (Chicago) and a more democratic, egalitarian attitude (Harvard). While these terms and their institutional affiliations are somewhat problematic—Harvard as democratic!—these same attitudes are also evident in some of the composition textbooks from the 1920s. I will re-examine these terms in chapter 4, then in chapter 5 analyze attitudes towards writing instruction in western Canadian universities between 1937 and 1957. Those teachers subscribing to democratic values generally exhibited more commitment to writing instruction than did the those scholars who believed in the notion of a natural aristocracy, or what is sometimes called Jeffersonian democracy.

Until mid-century, the differences in education and English studies in western Canada and the US were not significant, and American ideas and innovations, for the most part, were welcome in Canada.¹ Post-war national identities changed significantly, however, as the US emerged as a super power in geopolitics and Canada's new sense of autonomy and cultural maturity was overshadowed by the giant to the south. Chapter 6 identifies 1957 as a pivotal year in Canada-US relations, and in the direction of English studies in the two countries. Sputnik was launched, sending Europe and North America into a Cold War crisis about education (among other things); the Canadian federal government introduced its \$100,000,000 endowment of the Canada Council for the support of the Humanities, Social Sciences, and the Arts, shifting the professional identity of Humanities faculty from teacher to researcher; the Association of Canadian University Teachers of English (ACUTE), the first national professional organization for English teachers only, was founded; and Northrop Frye published *Anatomy of Criticism*, a work that proved to Canadian scholars in English that one of their own could have an impact internationally. Chapter 7 traces the very tangible effects of this new professional identity on the shape of the English junior curriculum in western Canada

between 1957 and 1976. Relieved of the task of nation-building through writing instruction and having the money to back the process of national-culture building, scholars of English began to clearly and firmly draw the lines of their discipline around literature, excluding composition. During this period, scholars of English in western Canada defined their work in the junior curriculum very differently than did their American counterparts who were beginning to accept composition as a legitimate field of research. Even faced with the same challenges as American universities—rapidly growing enrollment, a more diverse student body—western Canadian English departments were either successful in refusing to teach writing, or successful in determining their own terms for writing instruction, often very different than how external forces wished writing to be taught.

Chapter 8 functions as a review of the key tasks and as a speculative conclusion. Little has changed in western Canadian English departments since 1976, but the role of federal government in education has significantly declined. Since 1957, the Canadian federal government has indirectly supported scholarship in the humanities, but federal funds for postsecondary education in Canada has been significantly reduced in recent years. The Canadian and American governments are increasingly turning higher education over to the free market economy, and the North American Free Trade Agreement raises the possibility that Canada (and Mexico) will increasingly become neo-colonial extensions of the US, not only via culture and economy, but through education. In other words, western Canadian universities may again be forced to emulate American higher education in order to educate competitive workers for the twenty-first century. Composition may never become part of the institutional structure in western Canadian universities the way it has become part of the American university, but with increasing frequency business and technical writing courses or writing-in-the-disciplines courses may be grafted on to existing curriculums.

As this overview suggests, nation-building and professionalism are the two key terms for my history of writing instruction in western Canada. In a general sense, the primary

function of the modern universities of Europe and North America has been nation-building, a point clearly developed in Bill Readings's *The University in Ruins*. In a more specific sense, the universities of North America have engaged in the process of educating settler colonies and building national cultures. For English departments, these two functions of nation-building have been accomplished through the teaching of "high culture," which social theorist Ernest Gellner defines as an orderly system of ideas and not simply an aesthetic standard. Traditionally, English departments have also contributed to nation-building through the character-building work they do on their students. Ian Hunter has most fully explored the role of English (and I would add writing instruction) as a pedagogical technology for shaping the character of students, and hence the character of the nation. I will elaborate on the work of Readings, Gellner, and Hunter in this introduction, and refer back to them throughout this study.

Professional educators willingly contributed to the nation-building in North America throughout the first-half of this century, and well into the 1970s and 80s in Canada. But professionals in higher education and especially the humanities have increasingly distanced themselves from national governments and nation-building projects. For the concept of professionalism, I draw primarily on the work of Andrew Abbott and his notion of professions as always part of a system of professions in which the jurisdiction of work is constantly re-negotiated and re-defined.

Nation-building

The modern European university, says Bill Readings, was conceived at the same moment as the modern European nation. The German University in particular has served as a model for the American university, and to a certain extent all the modern universities of Europe. Kant envisioned a university guided by universal reason, but he also recognized that one of the functions of the university was to produce technicians for the state (Readings 58).

The institutionalization of reason proposed by Kant threatened its autonomy and universality, and he left the German Idealists who followed him with the problem of explaining how, if at all, the university could be guided by reason. Their response was not to abandon reason altogether, but to shift the guiding principle of the modern university to culture. Culture, Readings explains, could still support reason, but also produce technicians:

On the one hand, culture names an *identity*. It is the unity of all knowledges that are the object of study; it is the object of *Wissenschaft* (scientific-philosophical study). On the other hand, culture names a *process of development*, of the cultivation of character—*Bildung*. In the modern University, the two branches of this process are research and teaching, and the particularity of the Idealists was to insist that the specificity of the University comes from the fact that it is the place where the two are inseparable. The high school practices teaching without research; the academy practices research without teaching. The University is the center of the educational system, because it is where teaching and research are combined, so that in Schelling's words, the "nurseries of science" must also be "institutions of general culture."
(64)

The German university was the first to conceive of culture in particularly ethnic or nationalistic terms. The post-revolutionary French "legitimat[ed] the state through an appeal to the idea of the people" and the British modernized their university system only "when the pressures of empire force[d] an articulation of nation, state, and modernity" (60). The modern university in all three of these countries, and in North America, has adopted nation-building in a broad sense as its primary function, and it is the more specific function of literature and writing instruction for nation-building that I focus on in this study.

The historical relationship between university education and nation-building is particularly relevant in the late 1990s because that relationship is eroding. The function of the university itself is eroding, producing what Readings calls “the university in ruins”:

since the nation-state is no longer the primary instance of the reproduction of global capitals, “culture”—as the symbolic and political counterpart to the project of integration pursued by the nation-state—has lost its purchase. The nation-state and the modern notion of culture arose together, and they are, I argue, ceasing to be essential to an increasingly transnational global economy. This shift has major implications for the University, which has historically been the primary institution of national culture in the modern nation-state. (12)

Readings suggests that we dwell in those ruins, and not try to re-build the modern(ist) university (168). This history, accordingly, is not seeking a past to return to, but attempts to understand the pieces of the structure that still surrounds us.

The universities of this study were established, as the future president of the University of British Columbia, F. F. Wesbrook, said in 1913, as part of a “nation-building mechanism” (1). They are all publicly funded institutions, one emerging from church institutions, the others being founded more or less in conjunction with the founding of its supporting province. The University of Manitoba, located in Winnipeg, was established as a non-teaching, non-research, but degree-granting institution in 1877. It became a teaching institution in 1904 when it took up instruction in the sciences; the English department was not established until 1909-10. Saskatchewan and Alberta joined the Dominion of Canada in 1905, and planned from the start to found provincial universities. The university at Edmonton was opened in 1908-09, and the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon opened a year later. English was one of the five founding departments at each institution. British Columbia became a province in 1872, and higher education quickly followed, but not until 1915 was the provincial university opened in Vancouver. The western Canadian provinces were sparsely populated when higher education

was founded, but political leaders in these provinces had few doubts that education was important for building their provinces and country.

Among the many accounts and models of nation-building suggested by scholars in a variety of disciplines, Ernest Gellner's description of the transition from "agro-literate societies" to "advanced industrial" nations makes the most sense of the rapid growth and modernization of North America before and after the turn of the twentieth century.² Select members of an agro-literate society possessed the ability to write, and an air of mystery, rather than intelligibility, surrounded writing. Mass education made reading and writing accessible to most members of North American society, and the air of mystery was replaced by the cult of clarity (102). With this change came a re-definition of "culture":

It is only in the transition from agrarian to industrial society that culture ceases to be the device which defines specific social positions and allocates individuals to them, and becomes, instead, the boundary-demarkation of large and internally mobile social unity, *within* which individuals have no fixed position, and are rotated in the light of the requirements of production. (103)

Mass education and writing were at the heart of the nation-building process, but even the notion of preserving what came to be construed as national culture was co-opted by the forces of capitalism in advanced industrial societies:

The importance of universal education—presupposed by the very basic organization of society—goes far beyond woolly and pious commendations of the broadening of cultural horizons (assuming this takes place at all). . . . A high culture is an orderly, standardized system of ideas, serviced and imposed by a corps of clerics with the help of writing. (107)

English departments in Canada and the US were particularly prone to making woolly and pious commendations for the broadening of cultural horizons as an attempt to overcome their New World inferiority complexes, but Gellner is suggesting that in fact their greatest service to the

development of their nations is the ordering and standardizing of ideas, imposed by writing and decoded through reading.³

The insistence upon grammatical correctness and standard English in university English classes was a particularly integral disciplinary tool for establishing a high culture in Gellner's sense throughout North America. Gellner's analysis, however, does not discuss instruction in language and literature explicitly, and must be supplemented by Ian Hunter's description of the disciplinary role of English as a school subject in the British context:

we must revise our view of English as the (true or false) manifestation of literary culture. Instead, we must look at it as largely the outcome of the autonomous development of a special pedagogical technology which, under certain specifiable conditions, found in literature a device which focused and supported the functions of moral supervision. (36)

Writing instruction was not an explicit part of education in the colonial center of the British empire, but in its colonies—particularly Scotland, the US, and Canada—writing instruction supplemented the moral supervisory role of literature. Although much of the archival material I employ discusses the need for English in woolly and pious terms, I largely adopt Gellner's and Hunter's accounts of education in high culture generally and English specifically as pedagogical technologies for shaping the character, skills, practices, and beliefs of an emergent middle class in North America.⁴

Professionalism

The professionalization of English studies itself throughout the twentieth century is a sign of the development of national cultures in Canada and the US. But in this study I am primarily interested in the ways in which the professional scholars of English—*professionals* are defined by Abbott as “an exclusive occupational group applying somewhat abstract knowledge to particular cases”—negotiated their work (8). Abbott's *The System of*

Professions provides two closely related concepts that are vital to my analysis: (1) “Jurisdictional boundaries are perpetually in dispute, both in local practice and in national claims”; and (2) jurisdictions are defined by the work a profession does, work which is established through the interplay of forces external and internal to the profession (2; 90-97).

Abbott’s first concept suggests that it is necessary to understand the practices of writing instruction in both national and local contexts. Throughout my dissertation I oscillate between what I call the *continental* claims (rather than Abbott’s term, national claims) about education and English studies (even-numbered chapters) and the local practices in order to describe how these boundaries were being defined and re-defined (odd-numbered chapters). More specifically, I argue that scholars of English in western Canada were initially isolated from each other, therefore had limited professional authority, and consequently drew on their own graduate student experiences for a sense of the profession in the continent. Their professional authority increased when they became recognized as full-members of the scholarly community by the national government, when they formed a national, professional organization, and when individual members began to achieve international stature. The professionals in western Canada became more autonomous in their decisions-making about work as their professional authority increased, and this autonomy lead to a decrease in writing instruction.

Abbott’s second concept, that professions are organized primarily by the work they do, provides an important means of defining professionalism in western Canadian English departments. The issue of whether or not to teach writing in first- and second-year English courses in western Canadian universities has consistently been an issue of jurisdiction. External forces—most often other university departments or the public—attempt to influence the English curriculum by demanding practical instruction in writing and often threatening to pull their students from English classes if demands are not met. English departments draw on internal forces—disciplinary traditions, expertise—to resist external forces or simply decide their own curriculum. Early in this century, external forces were strong enough to insist that

writing instruction be conceived of as part of the English department's jurisdiction; after mid-century, some external forces aligned themselves with English departments and faculty members were able to exert their authority within the university community as they never had before. The chapters on education and English studies in North America, consequently, are crucial for understanding how changes to the local practices of the professional educators in western Canada came about.

Nation-building and the profession of English studies, in other words, worked hand-in-hand for the first half of this century, establishing a high culture of standardized information in what was before the turn of the century a geographical region virtually unsettled by Europeans. For a brief period, 1957-76, Canada as a whole defined its national identity through some of the woolly and pious terms of humanistic high culture, allowing the professional scholars and researchers in English to more narrowly define their professional role. As Canada re-articulates its national identity in a post-industrial, information age, the profession of English studies will have to decide whether or not it wants to retain its scholarly autonomy, participate more fully in the (post) national education of its citizens, or establish educational practices that are relevant to their students and yet satisfy their own sense of professional identity. I am not arguing that either the US or Canada has made the right or wrong decisions about writing instruction, but I am arguing that an understanding of the various historical relationships between nation-building and professionalism in English studies is important for making decisions about the direction of our field.

Four Tasks

In the process of making an argument about the relationships among writing instruction, nation-building and professionalism in English studies, this study takes on four related tasks. The first task is simply to provide a detailed history of writing instruction in western Canada. To the extent that there is an established history of English studies and writing

instruction in Canada, it comes from the work of Robin S. Harris, Henry Hubert, and Nan Johnson. Harris and Hubert consider the closing years of the nineteenth century (1884-1900) to have been particularly formative for the twentieth century. Harris describes the Toronto junior curriculum that emerged under W. J. Alexander during this time as focused upon British literature. Composition was included as part of English 1a and 2a, but students were only required to write four compositions a semester and they received only one hour of writing instruction a week (*English* 56-57). Harris says: “the approach to English studies which by 1890 characterized higher education in Canada continued to be the dominant one for the next seventy years—to 1960—and in the 1980s continues to be of great significance” (*English* 3).

Hubert follows Harris’s description of the English curriculum, and elaborates on Harris by arguing that a Hegelian-Arnoldian idealism became the dominant ideology of English departments in eastern Canada at the end of the nineteenth century:

The English studies curriculum that evolved in Anglo-Canadian colleges and universities at the end of the nineteenth century focused so narrowly on literature because of strong ideological pressures that derived from a philosophical idealism, that, in the wake of Darwinism and of German higher criticism of the Bible, swept over Canadian liberal thought in the late Victorian period. This idealism, powerfully manifested in British literature, was deeply influenced by Matthew Arnold’s search for “the best that is known and thought in the world.” (3)

Philosophical idealism in its most general formulation insists that the external world is a product of the mind and that through reason one can grasp the true nature of reality. While sources other than Hegel influenced the philosophical idealism of nineteenth-century Anglo-Canada, Hegel represents the culmination of German idealism from Kant through Fichte and Schelling, and specifically Hegelian idealism entered North American thought and education from a variety of sources.⁵ One of the first three professional literary critics in Canada Hubert

focuses on, James Cappon of Queen's University, was a student of the Scottish Hegelian, Edward Caird. Hubert shows that Cappon "consciously added Hegel . . . to Arnold," and in the process conceived of literature representing not only the best that is known and thought in the world, but also representing what Hegel called the "World Spirit" or "Absolute Spirit" (*Harmonious* 145). The Hegelian influence on English departments in Canada became less obvious after the 1920s and 30s, although Hegel remained at the source of idealist thinking within the profession.

Hegel and German Idealism also influenced Matthew Arnold, although where the Idealists privileged philosophy as the clearest representation of the mind and the unity of nature, Arnold privileged literature. Arnoldian claims for the importance of cultural ideas in literature replaced the waning cultural influence of traditional Christianity.⁶ According to Hubert, this literary, antirhetorical focus met the needs of the supporting communities:

The correspondence between this new literary-cultural orientation and the needs of its supporting late-Victorian society was so close that the new English curriculum captured the nation's higher education a decade before the century's end, retaining its influence in the new colleges being established in Canada West in the first decades of the new century. This idealistic, literary curriculum would remain uncontested in Protestant, Anglophone Canada until after the middle of the twentieth century, and then lose its hegemony only gradually. (*Harmonious* 123)

Again Hubert's position is very close to Harris's position: both of them have extrapolated from their analyses of English studies in eastern Canada the nature of English studies in western Canada.

Nan Johnson offers a slightly different story of the junior curriculum in Canada at the turn of the century. She suggests that North American curriculums often reached a balance in the teaching of composition, oration, and criticism; rhetoric, in other words, did not simply die

at the end of the nineteenth century as Harris and Hubert imply (*Nineteenth Century* 16). She is in agreement with Harris and Hubert, however, that the rhetorical tradition in Canada has its roots in British belletrism rather than American rhetoric and composition practices:

In contrast to the much documented rise of the “Freshman Composition” course in English departments in the United States, the twentieth-century Canadian academy has never embraced the curricular concept of the “Comp” class per se; and, with remarkable hegemony, has persisted into the present decade in offering introductory English courses founded on a synthesis of composition instruction and training in critical analysis—a synthesis which was the distinctive legacy of nineteenth-century Canadian adaptations of British-style belletristic rhetoric. (“Rhetoric” 869)

While Hubert, Harris, and Johnson are certainly right to characterize the dominant ideology of professors of English as Hegelian-Arnoldian idealism and the eastern Canadian curriculum as primarily literary, I will argue that the histories of each department at the four western provincial universities are more varied—the conflicts, Gerald Graff might say, more apparent—than their descriptions suggest. I am deeply indebted to their work, but want to bring a more thoroughly North American interpretation to the history of writing instruction in western Canada, and I want to emphasize some of the conflicts within what was admittedly a stable curriculum.⁷

Roger Graves’s *Writing Instruction in Canadian Universities* is the only study to have examined contemporary practices in Canada. In 1990, he surveyed not only the English departments, but various administrative levels of Canadian universities, about the teaching of writing in their institutions. What he found was that at that time, English departments seldom considered writing instruction to be part of their professional jurisdiction, and if writing instruction existed at a university, it was usually handled within individual disciplines. These two tendencies, he notes, are radically different from contemporary American universities (36).

Graves does provide a chapter on the history of writing instruction in Canada during this century as a means of explaining how the current situation has come about, and my research confirms his general finding that English departments began to refuse to teach writing in the 1950s and 60s (24). The present study, however, brings a regional focus and considerably more detail to the history of writing instruction in Canada than Graves provides, and it re-interprets the motives and practices of some of the historical figures he cites. Graves work is invaluable in representing the modern practices I am trying to account for in western Canada.

My second task is to address generalizations these scholars have made about writing instruction in Canada in the twentieth century. In the survey of the literature above, I have already suggested some of these generalizations about the ideology of English departments and the junior curriculum in western Canada I will be addressing. The most prominent question in the literature about first- and second-year English in Canada, however, is this: have the traditional literature and composition courses of Canadian first-year English education been primarily about literature, or have they achieved the balance the course title suggests? Henry Hubert has most recently addressed this issue. He summarizes the debate by starting with W. L. Morton's claim in *One University: A History of the University of Manitoba* (1957) that first- and second-year English was a "practical attempt to maintain a measure of literary competence in a pioneer and immigrant society in which good speech was the exception rather than the rule" (Morton 120, Hubert, "Babel" 384). Robin Harris (1975) made a similar claim that English in most Canadian universities had always guaranteed "some attention in its classes would be paid to the practical problems of written expression" (Harris, *History* 385; Hubert, "Babel" 384). Patricia Jasen (1987), in a history of the liberal arts curriculum in Canada, argues that English departments may have had it both ways: they may have claimed to have offered writing instruction, and they certainly assigned writing to be done in the class, but the study of literature took precedence in class discussion and in evaluation of the papers (Jasen 25; Hubert, "Babel" 384). Hubert agrees with Jasen, noting that "with composition considered

utilitarian, English departments were ideologically predisposed against teaching it, though some did the best they could within the restrictions of teaching it indirectly in the critical literary essay” (384).

I agree that members of Canadian and American English departments at the beginning of the twentieth century were often ideologically predisposed against teaching composition, but my archival evidence—course descriptions, departmental minutes, correspondence—suggests that those teachers in fact responded to the needs of the pioneer and immigrant society. Even as the profession of English studies matured in western Canada, English department members committed to democratic and socialist values thoroughly committed themselves and their departments to writing instruction. Only when the humanities and English departments achieved recognition through national funding were the English departments in western Canada able to act on their predisposition to refuse to teach writing instruction. Throughout this study, I will address this problem of defining the role of first- and second-year English as a issue of jurisdiction.

The third task of this work is to extend the scope and implication of key terms from existing histories of writing instruction by relating those terms to nation-building and professionalism. In chapter 3, I use the terms “enlistment” and “Harvardization” as key organizing terms to describe the early practices of writing instruction in western Canada, and I use “feminization” to supplement the nature of English departments enlistment to the other disciplines. David Russell uses “enlistment” to describe the practice of engineers and humanists *enlisting* each other’s discourses and practices to further their own work (“Rationales” 4). I discuss the enlistment of the junior curriculum in English at the Universities of Manitoba and Saskatchewan in slightly more unilateral terms—English enlisted by the university and the local community for nation-building—but like Russell, I focus on the importance of enlistment for shaping the work of the profession. Donald Stewart coined the phrase “Harvardization of English” to describe the privileging of literature over composition,

research over teaching, and to describe the acceptance of composition as a necessary evil rather than an integral part of the discipline of English (“Two Model Teachers” 124-25). I describe the Harvard-plan as proven tool of nation-building, and add to Stewart’s list of effects some direct borrowing of Harvard practices at Alberta and British Columbia: the use of an entrance exam in English; the establishment of a Committee on the Use of English; the balancing of literature and composition in first-year English. The “feminization of composition,” a phrase popularized by Susan Miller to describe both the positive effects of women bringing their counterhegemonic practices to the otherwise colonizing work of composition and the negative effects of composition being a field in which women are caught like bugs in a web because of the nurturing demand of work, applies to the work of writing instruction throughout western Canada (“Feminization” 39, 51). Graduate students were seldom available to do this work and the professional scholars did not consider writing instruction to be part of their jurisdiction, so women were frequently hired to teach first-year English or remedial courses. When women were not primarily responsible for writing instruction, the men often reconceived of this work in scientific terms: the English laboratory or the writing clinic.

In chapter 5, I use the terms “democratic” and “aristocratic” *attitudes* towards writing instruction to describe the nature of work being done in western Canada between 1937 and 1957. These terms are derived from John C. Brereton’s analysis of John Matthews Manly’s and Norman Foerster’s influential textbooks from the 1910s and 20s (each authored or co-authored numerous textbooks). Manly, Brereton says, brought to “writing instruction the attitude of Horatio Alger and Dale Carnegie”; Foerster “was a strong advocate of ‘substantial,’ demanding education” (43, 47). I emphasize the democratic and aristocratic *attitude* towards writing instruction rather than method of writing instruction in the sense that Kenneth Burke wrote of “attitudes towards history” or “attitude” as the sixth term in his grammar of motives. An attitude for Burke is “a state of mind that may or may not lead to an act”; he did not include attitude as part of his key terms because “it is quite clearly to be classed under the head of

agent” (*Grammar* 20). Chapter 5 emphasizes agents and the inter-relatedness of their attitudes towards writing instruction, Canadian nationalism, and professionalism.

The function of these terms from histories of writing instruction in the US as explanatory terms for the history of writing instruction in western Canada contributes significantly to the fourth task of this project: understanding the history of writing instruction in a North American and continentalist context, rather than only in the national contexts of Canadian and American histories. *Continentalist context* or *continentalism* are slightly awkward terms because I am not addressing Mexican higher education and the continent as a whole, but the terms have, for better or worse, been used extensively as a term to describe Canadian-American relations.⁸ While the continental perspective may seem more important to understanding the history of writing instruction in Canada than in the US—the influence of practices almost always flows north—the sharp dividing line between practices in the two countries is drawn at the time of the Cold War. This comparative history, in other words, lend considerable credence to the argument advanced by James Berlin, Arthur Applebee, Stephen North, and others that the professionalization of writing instruction in America was made possible because of Cold War funding.⁹ The two countries economies and cultures have become increasingly re-united in the last ten or fifteen years, and the relationship has been intensified by recent free-trade agreements. The 1991 Free-Trade Agreement between Canada and the US, and the 1993 NAFTA serve my argument in much the way Berlin, Applebee, and North use the Sputnik launch as a symbol of the influence of global politics and national policies on education and writing instruction in North America. While we do not yet have sufficient evidence to evaluate the effects of NAFTA on writing instruction in North America, I argue in the conclusion that because of the economic, political, and cultural relations on this continent, we need to continue to think about writing instruction in a North American context.

My elaboration of these four tasks is intended to show how my history of writing instruction in western Canadian universities will consistently return to the topics of nation-

building and professionalism. These terms are important starting points for a first history of a region; they provide an important perspective from which to view a long-standing controversy such as the debate over the function of English, to provide culture or utility?; they extend and enrich terms that are already used in the history of writing instruction; and they are important terms through which to consider contemporary issues in writing instruction. My emphasis on nation-building and professionalism as key terms for understanding the history of writing instruction in western Canadian universities is, of course, only one way of telling this history. I have departed from Hubert's primarily ideological analysis of English departments to try and understand the cultural and institutional forces that worked with and against the ideology of English departments. I have departed from Harris's analysis of writing instruction as one component of the work of a single department in order to be able to make generalizations about the nature of writing instruction in this region. I have drawn on a richer description of national cultures than Johnson did to support her argument about the similarity of rhetoric in North America. I have made use of archival materials and published documents to bring more specificity and detail to the history of writing instruction in the twentieth century than did Graves in his background study. These scholars and many others, nevertheless, have enabled my research and enrich this study of writing instruction, nation-building, and professionalism.

Archival Materials and Research Method

"Writing Instruction in Western Canadian Universities: A History of Nation-building and Professionalism" combines archival research and a synthesis of secondary material on education, English studies, and writing instruction in the US and Canada. Most of the secondary material is easily accessible, and I frequently followed the bibliographies of others' work. Heather Murray's *Working in English: History, Institution, and Resources* stands out as an exemplary listing of materials related to English studies in Canada. Because of the availability of secondary materials, this section focuses on what kinds of archival material I

found, how I employed it, and how it contributed to my understanding of the profession of English studies in western Canada.

University calendars or catalogues of courses (both titles are used) provide the quickest and easiest reference to course offerings and the texts employed, but they seldom provide much insight into the philosophy, intent, or actual operation of a course. Course descriptions throughout this century have become shorter and shorter to the point of listing course title and instructor, with little or no information about the course materials. This pattern is especially true of first- and second-year courses. To interpret the role of materials in a particular class, I had to corroborate the information provided with what I knew about the instructors, the department, the university, and the profession. In chapter 3, for example, I argue that A. S. P. Woodhouse and two other colleagues at the University of Manitoba published *Greater English Poets* for use in their first-year English course in order to focus the course on culture rather than utility—students until 1925 had the option of taking composition or technical writing courses. I found no materials relating to the intent of the text, and the preface gave no clues, but Woodhouse throughout the rest of his career exhibited considerably antipathy towards utilitarian education, he vigorously supported the professionalization of literary studies in Canada, and he saw Canadian nationalism in imperialist terms: Canada was to be the greatest colony of the British empire. From the title of the textbook, and an examination of its contents, I derived an interpretation of its role in the classroom, in the professionalization of English studies in western Canada, and in nation-building.

In many cases, however, I was able to find more direct corroborating evidence for my interpretation of class materials. To understand the role of Garland Greever's *Century Handbook* in English 1 at the University of Alberta, for example, I was able to draw on departmental minutes. At the November 13, 1926 faculty meeting, the *Century Handbook* is identified as having a good guide for marking, but of little practical use otherwise. The department agreed to consider Steadman and Foerster's *Sentences and Thinking* as an

alternative (UAA Minutes 70-91). This information from the department's minutes suggests how the *Century Handbook* was being used, what the department members wished it could do, and what sources they considered in order to locate a more practical classroom tool. The discussion is part of the considerable body of evidence that indicates their commitment to writing instruction, as well as their awareness of the materials being used in American universities. The university calendars or catalogues, in short, provide a good reference guide for tracing the history of a course offering, and are a good starting place for the investigation of classroom practices, but ultimately provide only skeletal information. The stability of most departmental offerings also explains in part the basis for Harris's and Hubert's claims for a stable curriculum in Canada. Most of the departmental and professional conflicts occurred behind the scenes, and are not visible through a reading of course offerings.

Individual instructors' class notes, student papers, or anecdotal accounts of classroom practices would undoubtedly be the greatest source of insight into classroom practices, but few of these kinds of materials are housed in university archives. The two most substantial collections of individuals' papers in the western Canadian university archives are the Roy Daniells Papers in the University of British Columbia's Special Collections Archive and the J. T. Jones Papers in the University of Alberta Archives. Daniells was department head at Manitoba from 1937-46, and department head at UBC from 1947-64. Jones spent his whole career at Alberta (1922-61), including eight years as department head (1953-61). Both of these collections consist almost entirely of correspondence.¹⁰ These letters do provide insight into what these individuals or their colleagues were doing in the classroom, and occasional documents, like a student's account of composition course at the University of Manitoba in the 1940s, provide a very clear picture of classroom practices (chapter 5). But more frequently the collected correspondences discuss professional politics at the local and national level. Working from the strength of my archival materials, I conceive of my work as a study in nation-building and professionalism, and not primarily a study in classroom practice. I seek to provide a clear

picture of writing instruction pedagogy in western Canada because in following Abbott I believe that the work a profession does is crucial to defining that profession, but clear accounts of all courses at all four universities is beyond the scope of supporting archival materials.

The Jones papers are obviously important for understanding the English department at Alberta, while the Daniells papers provide much more information about his nine years at Manitoba than his twenty-plus years at British Columbia. The Carlyle King Papers and Edward McCourt Papers at Saskatchewan are also good collections of papers, and do contain a few materials relating to classroom practices, but neither collection is as extensive as the Daniells or Jones collections. One other important source of individuals' correspondence relating to English studies in Canada, and more generally literary culture in Canada, is the Special Collections library at the University of Calgary. This library collects the papers of Canadian writers, most of whom attended university in Canada. I have drawn on two collections from Calgary: the W. O. Mitchell Papers, specifically his correspondence with professor F. M. Salter of Alberta, and the Malcolm Ross Papers. Ross taught at Alberta in 1943-44 and at Manitoba from 1945-50, and was the founding editor of the influential *New Canadian Library* series of Canadian fiction and poetry. The Mitchell and Ross papers contain documents important for understanding both local and national issues in the development of English studies.

Minutes from departmental meetings offer an institutional, rather than personal, perspective on English studies in western Canada. The meetings often discuss classroom practices, but not in extensive detail. They more often discuss the philosophy of first- and second-year courses, the requests from other departments to provide more writing instruction, or other topics of professional interest. The minutes are often candid in their discussion of issues, as in the University of Alberta's English department defining its work as more complex than the work in other humanities departments, for the minutes would seldom have had an audience outside of the department (September 14, 1961; UAA Minutes 72-107-1).

Departmental minutes can be read as more than a record of what was going on in a given department; they are texts vital to the production of a professional identity. The University of Alberta Archives has the most comprehensive holding of departmental minutes: from 1914 to 1970. The University of Saskatchewan Archives has minutes from 1951-1961 and 1968-1969, while no minutes are available from Manitoba or British Columbia. Intra-departmental reports, however, are a similar document, and are particularly valuable for understanding developments at UBC in the late 1960s.

Departmental reports to university presidents are another valuable source of information about the nature of English studies in western Canada. This genre usually required the department chair to describe and justify the work of his department. A common pattern of argument by the English department heads at Saskatchewan between 1909 and 1930, for example, was to emphasize the amount of writing instruction being provided in first-year courses, while in the same report arguing that his department should not be doing the high schools' job. This pattern of give-and-take illustrates what Abbott means by "the system of professions": the English department cannot simply define its work independent of the needs of the rest of the university, and therefore is forced to claim narrow jurisdictional boundaries (literature-only) while in practice exceeding those boundaries to include writing instruction. Departmental reports to the president are crucial documents for understanding English's relationship to the rest of the university. Reports to committees for Arts and Sciences, or other inter-departmental committees, serve a similar function of illustrating how the English department has functioned within the university's system of professions. Documents of this nature are available in all four university archives.

These four kinds of materials—course descriptions in calendars, individuals' correspondence, departmental minutes and reports, and reports to presidents or other university bodies—provide the bulk of the archival evidence for my argument. The problems of interpreting, representing, and authorizing histories are addressed more fully in the Appendix;

writing a history of writing instruction in western Canada seems a greater imperative at this time than writing about a history which has not yet been written. My interpretation of the archival materials described here is strongly influenced by existing histories of higher education, English studies, and writing instruction. By connecting these materials to existing histories I am able to locate the practices and developments in English studies in western Canada within a larger context, while at the same time I am able to bring local specificity to my history. The background material and synthesis of secondary sources I provide in chapters 2, 4, and 6, is an integral part of my interpretation of the primary materials I foreground in chapters 3, 5, and 7. The oscillation from continental claims to local practices is a crucial structure for explaining the nation-building function of English studies in North America and for explaining the development of professional identities in western Canadian English departments.

CHAPTER 2. HIGHER EDUCATION MODELS IN NORTH AMERICA (1880-1929)

This chapter provides an account of the state of postsecondary education in North America between 1880 and 1929. Both Canada and the US were countries in transition during this time, rapidly expanding and modernizing: Canada expanding to the west, the US expanding its economic and political influence globally. Mariana Valverde, in a history of moral reform in Canada (1885-1925) describes Canada's transition: "in the 1870s Canada was a very sparsely populated, barely post-colonial state where farming and staples production predominated; by the 1920s the Native populations had been firmly marginalized, the weight of the economy had shifted toward industry and finance, and urban living had become the rule rather than the exception. By the 1920s the Canadian state had developed, at least in embryonic form, most of the institutions it has today, and English Canada a certain cultural consensus, based to a large extent on American and British influence but incorporating a new nationalism, had emerged and was being consolidated" (15). T. J. Jackson Lears, in his history of the US between 1880-1920, defines "official modern culture in industrial America" as engaging in a transition from iron to steel, from "disorganized entrepreneurial capitalism to organized corporate capitalism" (9). He notes the rise of technical rationality, the new concern for clock time and material comfort, and the decline of a Victorian cultural superego as definitive of the Gilded Age (9-13). Growing secular attitudes began to erode religious certainty and undermine fundamental human beliefs and values. Much of American society, Lears argues, turned to a therapeutic cure for the dis-ease caused by modernization (38).

Mass public education was an integral part of nation-building, and postsecondary education made the transition from elitist classical colleges to modern training institutions vital to the success of these two modern nations. Laurence Veysey in *The Emergence of the American University* describes the transition in American colleges as a transition in educational values from a nineteenth-century focus on discipline and piety to the a twentieth-century

privileging of utility, research, and culture. Robin Harris's *A History of Higher Education in Canada: 1663-1960* focuses on curriculums rather than educational values, but he shows that professional education in Canada has grown much more significantly in the twentieth century than has education in the Arts and Sciences. The four western Canadian universities were all founded or modernized in the twentieth century, and therefore had the benefit of evaluating a number of educational models that had been established to address unique problems and goals of North American society.

Four Educational Models

The founders of the western Canadian universities saw four North American models of higher education to learn from:

1. The colleges of eastern Canada, especially Toronto, representing the British tradition of education and having the clearest connection to the old classical college the modern university was replacing. The University of Toronto would have seemed like the natural institution for western Canadian universities to emulate, but it was too firmly tied to tradition to meet the needs of the pioneering communities.
2. Harvard, which seemed to many Canadians like the pinnacle of American education in its ability to combine traditional cultural values, utility, and research. The University as a whole was too complex and too modern to be a good model in the fledgling provinces, but its composition program, which combined the modern pedagogy of writing instruction with traditional aristocratic values, was very influential in western Canada.
3. The state university serving the practical and cultural needs of its citizens, epitomized by the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Wisconsin was the most appropriate institutional model for the new universities of western Canada trying to serve their citizens but also keep an identifiable connection with the British empire and the culture it represented.

4. The land-grant college, established to provide, as was the motto with the Iowa Agricultural College, "science with practice." The land-grant colleges influenced the teaching of agriculture and engineering in western Canada, but on the whole the cow colleges were considered too utilitarian and vocational to meet all the needs in the Canadian provinces. Educators in western Canada were aware of British, German, and Scottish higher education models, but the influence of those national education systems had already been filtered through the development of North American colleges and universities.

The nature of writing instruction in these four model institutions varied because writing instruction, more than any other pedagogical field, has always been shaped by the university system. Sharon Crowley explains the extent to which teachers of English did not determine the work in their own courses:

late in the [nineteenth] century, teacherly authority began to be displaced by the authoritative voice of the current-traditional textbook. Teacherly authority [was also] replaced by the institutional authority represented in composition programs and in textbooks selected by a faculty committee (whose members often did not teach the course). The institution further usurped teachers' authority by imposing on them the standardized expectations about the formal features of discourse derived from current-traditional rhetoric. Some institutions imposed a standardized syllabus and uniform grading standards on their teachers as well. (153).

The role of external forces usurping English teachers' authority, we will see, also extended beyond the textbooks and syllabi to include the direct influence by university presidents and departments such as engineering and agriculture. Within my detailed description of each model institution, then, I will also describe the nature of English studies and writing instruction there. I will conclude this chapter by characterizing the missions of the four new universities of western Canada; such characterizations will be necessary to understand the nature of writing

instruction at those institutions in the first thirty-seven years of this century, the topic I will develop in detail in chapter 3.

The University of Toronto: Tied to Tradition

The University of Toronto was the most likely model for new universities in western Canada because at the turn of the century it was Canada's largest university and had matured sufficiently to establish an international reputation. The western Canadian universities did follow Toronto's lead on two points: (1) the University Act of 1906, which clarified its relations to the provincial government, and (2) the honors system stressing breadth and depth. On two crucial points, however, western Canadian universities differed from Toronto: (1) the junior curriculum in English, with its emphasis on the study of British literature and rejection of writing instruction, did not offer a practical model for western Canadian English departments in the first thirty-five years of this century, and (2) the university as a whole represented an idea of education considerably removed from the needs of a pioneering, agricultural communities. If the new universities of western Canada were going to emphasize a traditional college education—one closely tied to the British traditions of higher education—Toronto would have been an appropriate model. They were, instead, very selective in what they drew from the University of Toronto.

The Ontario government's University Act of 1906, Robin Harris notes in his history of English at Toronto, guaranteed financial assistance for the University from the province and integrated Engineering and Medicine as part of the University, rather than simply having them be affiliated colleges. Such an arrangement actually made the University of Toronto much like American state universities, but Toronto seldom conceived of itself in utilitarian terms. This legislation also made interference by the Minister of Education in the affairs of the University impossible, guaranteeing that most of the direct pressure on English departments to offer particular kinds of writing instruction would come from within the university itself (*English*

47-8). All of the western Canadian provinces adopted similar legislation for their universities, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia prior to their founding, and Manitoba in 1917.

The honors system at Toronto did provide an important pedagogical model for western institutions. A. S. P. Woodhouse, long-time English faculty member, describes the honors Classics program at University College, the largest college within the University of Toronto, as providing “general education by means of judicious specialization” (“Staff” 55). The success of this system at Toronto, and within Classics and English specifically, contributed to the antipathy towards writing instruction in Canada. The English department at Toronto established a reputation for offering a world-class education in literature and history, and perceived composition as a remedial subject for study. Toronto’s pre-eminent scholar of English in the first twenty-five years of this century, W. J. Alexander, was opposed to teaching composition at the university level, and his students, like Woodhouse, would continue the tradition of denying the place of writing instruction in English. The objection, however, was also jurisdictional and not simply ideological: Alexander had developed a composition textbook for high schools, as would some of his students.¹¹ The issue was not that writing instruction as a pedagogical technology for nation-building was unnecessary for Canada; its scholars of English simply wanted to ensure that writing instruction remain in the domain of high school education.¹²

The junior curriculum in English—the first- and second-year courses—privileged literature over writing instruction, and limited writing assignments to four essays per semester. This curriculum, as we saw in chapter 1, was largely the result of W. J. Alexander’s specialization in British literature and the Hegelian-Arnoldian ideology of English studies generally. This curriculum also reflected the fact that, according to educational historian Robert J. Carney, “a complex and extensive network of elementary and secondary schooling was in place in Ontario by the late nineteenth century” (43). High school students in Ontario came to university from large urban centers like Toronto, and they came well prepared. The Toronto

junior curriculum and honors program would come to have an influence on western Canadian universities in the nineteen twenties and thirties, but before then, too many differences existed at both the secondary and post-secondary levels. R. K. Gordon, who spent his whole career at the University of Alberta, was the first recipient of a Toronto PhD in English (1920), and only two others graduated that decade. The Toronto model for undergraduate education in English at the beginning of this century, therefore, was only one model among many for western Canadian universities. English department heads at Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia, as we will see, frequently drew on their graduate school experience to determine the curriculums at their new institutions, rather than follow the model of Canada's most prestigious university.

The University of Toronto as a whole represented to many western Canadians a commitment to traditional values of education that were not relevant to the needs of western Canadians. The University of Manitoba sponsored a Royal Commission between 1907 and 1910 to investigate the "university question": the question of what the role of the provincial university should be. Although the Commission fractured into three groups and offered what historian W. L. Morton describes as "the secularist, the evolutionist, and the traditionalist" reports, the secularist report resonated most clearly with the people of Manitoba (77).

A. McLeod of McLaren, McLeod, and Black, Barristers and Solicitors, wrote a letter to the Commission urging the complete separation of religion and education. McLeod's firm practiced in the town of Morden, located in a politically and religiously conservative region of Manitoba, yet McLeod advocated a cultural and utilitarian program of education be sought:

There is now no thoroughfare from the University to the shop or the farm, to commercial or civic life. The result is, that in these spheres of life, there is lacking that culture which can best be obtained by a University training. In other words, University ideals lead only in one direction. This is largely because the government of Universities is in the hands of the intellectuals. I

would like to see the University of Manitoba placed on a much broader basis than Toronto University. This would tend to place its financial and moral support on stronger ground, and also to broaden its ideals. (UA Sc 6, 5)

As a model for university education, Toronto represented traditional educational values, particularly British elitist values of education. Such a model certainly found some sympathizers in the west wishing to make western Canada into an extension of the British Empire, but educators and members of the public closely attuned to regional needs saw the short comings of the Toronto model.

Harvard: The Pinnacle of American Education

Between 1865 and 1910, Harvard embodied all three ideals of modern education identified by Veysey: a utilitarian education, directed primarily at business and commerce students; a graduate school steeped in scientific and humanistic research; and liberal culture defined by the likes of professor of fine arts Charles Eliot Norton, philosopher George Santayana, French literature specialist Irving Babbitt, and scholars of English, Le Baron Russell Briggs and Barrett Wendell. The two points about Harvard's history most relevant to my study are (1) the western Canadian universities' inability to emulate Harvard's elective system yet (2) their willingness to adopt writing instruction practices modeled on Harvard's composition program. Western Canadian universities did not have the resources nor the inclination to adopt the elective system instituted by Harvard, but they did adopt one of the pedagogical technologies the resulted from the elective system: current-traditional writing instruction. A. S. Hill's emphasis on utility and correctness had some influence in western Canada, but Barrett Wendell's ability to combine aristocratic values with this modern pedagogical technology made writing instruction palatable for Canadians and other liberal culture advocates in English departments throughout North America.

Harvard's shift to the elective system in 1869 from a prescribed curriculum was an important development in American postsecondary education that was not emulated in Canada. Robin Harris, in his *History of Higher Education in Canada*, says that Canadian institutions had neither the faculty—an elective system required more teachers—nor the inclination to offer electives: “there was in Canada, with its strong English, Scottish, and Roman Catholic traditions, a belief in the soundness of the traditional program. Many Canadians were prepared in 1890 to defend a fully prescribed curriculum on philosophical grounds” (120). Many American institutions, Harris notes, did not have the resources to follow an elective system, and continued their traditional curriculum for very practical reasons (120). What is most significant about the elective system for this study, however, is that it spawned writing instruction as a discrete pedagogy separate from a content-based course.

The relationship between the implementation of the elective system and the rise of composition courses is well documented. David Russell notes the series of events that shaped the modern pedagogical technology of writing instruction: President Eliot's attempts to address complaints about poor student writing; his hiring of journalist Adams Sherman Hill to handle composition at Harvard; Hill's concern for correctness rather than communicative competence; and the practical and specialized nature of composition courses (*Writing* 49-50). Russell also notes that Harvard never intended the first-year composition course to be the only course in writing instruction, but it was that model that was adopted by universities throughout North America (51). The notion that students must first be able to read and write English before succeeding at university, accentuated by the introduction of the entrance exam in 1872, initiated the characterization of composition as remedial (50). Even institutions like those in western Canada which did not adopt the elective system and were not concerned with making sure their students would receive writing instruction along with their specialized knowledge could adopt the claim that students needed *remedial* instruction in reading and writing if they were to succeed in university and life. This need for remedial instruction, and particularly this need for

instruction in language and literature, became a vital element of nation-building throughout North America. Susan Miller argues that composition and literature were taught together at Harvard as the two “elements that a properly evolving national culture would require.” She emphasizes the social and cultural importance of English’s role to “instill in the nonelect the necessary refinements of taste, in the form of correct grammar and spelling, two historically important signs of cultured propriety that Harvard’s way of teaching composition was going to provide” (51-52).

What Albert Kitzhaber describes as A. S. Hill’s “dogmatic tone” in *The Principles of Rhetoric* contributed to the notion that composition was not intellectual work, but drill work to be done in one particular way. Hill was a friend of President Eliot before being hired at Harvard, and “shared Eliot’s belief in the necessity for work in English composition.” Hill’s textbook was the standard at Harvard from the time it appeared (1878) until many years after his death (1910) (Kitzhaber, *Rhetoric* 62). His influence on educators in western Canada was limited, however, because few Canadians attended Harvard as undergraduates, Hill had little contact with graduate students, and he died only two years after the University of Alberta opened. Barrett Wendell was much more influential on western Canadian educators: he likely knew and worked with the graduate students at Harvard who were later to work in western Canada; he combined utility with aristocracy; and his formulation of the rhetorical principles of unity, coherence, and emphasis became an integral part of writing instruction throughout North America, including western Canada.

Wendell was particularly concerned with the notion of nation-building. David Shumway, in his history of the institutionalization of American literature and the creation of American culture, suggests Wendell saw “inexperience” as the salient feature of American life and character (75). Developing a national literature was one way of culturing Americans, giving them experience. This concern about inexperience may also explain some of Wendell’s commitment to composition. Miriam Brody describes how Wendell made a national industry

out of composition instruction: he considered it character-building and heroicizing work, and it was through this notion of character-building that English departments most clearly participated in the larger nation-building process (147). Wendell, however, was not a modernist nor a liberal. Brody says that he was interested in building a new nation firmly connected to older traditions:

By teaching more than grammar and more than skills, the composition course represented by Barrett Wendell, however newly minted its gatekeeper function may have been, retained its place in an older tradition, representing writing at the turn of the century as work for the manly agon of public life, and the purpose of its teaching as the character training such agonistic endeavor required. (161)

Retaining this connection to an older, aristocratic tradition of education was a central feature of composition in western Canada. Never was writing instruction presumed to be “scientific” as it sometimes was professed to be at the land-grant colleges in the Midwest (Brody 122). If writing instruction was to be provided in western Canada at all, Harvard was clearly a necessary, and ideologically compatible, model.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison and the State University

As much as western Canadians may have wished to aspire to Harvard- or even Toronto-like status in the educational community, the early educators quickly saw that the American state university was the most appropriate institutional model for western Canada. What is often referred to as the Wisconsin idea was not actually publicized until 1909, a year after the Universities of Saskatchewan and Alberta were founded, but the University of Wisconsin-Madison had already established a reputation for serving the people of the state and balancing the educational goals of utility and culture. This balance is what western Canadian universities were most interested in achieving. English at Wisconsin was influenced by

developments at Harvard, as were most developments at English departments in North America, illustrating the adaptability of Harvard's composition program. Wisconsin's English program was not particularly influential on western Canadian universities because of its derivative nature, but scholars of English were often aware of practices in Madison, and checked their own progress against that of the state university.

Wisconsin represented to the first presidents of western Canadian universities a balance of utility and culture, and not the stark utility of land-grant institutions like Iowa State. The Wisconsin idea—that the university is part of the State, and that its employees and resources serve the government and all the people of the state—was not unique to Wisconsin; it was prefigured at other Midwest institutions like Illinois (Veysey, *Emergence* 73). What these state universities were able to do was to combine a utilitarian mission with a sense of culture or social mission. Veysey says Wisconsin President Charles Kendall Adams (1892-1902) seemed to the people of Madison to be “worldly, sophisticated, ‘eastern’” (103). Adams' successor, Charles Van Hise, brought Wisconsin and the Wisconsin idea to national recognition with his interest in both practical education and social problems (*Emergence* 105).

English studies at Wisconsin was influenced heavily by Harvard in a number of ways. James Berlin notes that “Current-traditional rhetoric frequently appeared in large state universities, which adapted Harvard's plan to a much different setting” (*Rhetoric* 40). Edwin Woolley of Wisconsin produced a *Handbook of Composition* which, according to Berlin, was intended to “get rid of ‘illiteracy’” (41). The Harvard influence is more Hill's than Wendell's; Woolley covers topics such as diction, sentence structure, and punctuation, and offers no suggestions about style and elegance. Students coming to Wisconsin had to take a placement exam similar to Harvard's, and students in composition courses at Wisconsin were expected to meet specified mechanical requirements to pass their courses. The University's standard, Woolley notes, was exclusively concerned with rudimentary proficiency: “Students whose

writing is devoid of interest, originality, or any other literary merit, are qualified if their writing is satisfactory as to the rudiments" ("Admission" 240).

Three of their young faculty members, Norman Foerster, Frederick A. Manchester, and Karl Young produced, *Essays for College Men* (1913), a collection in which the Wendell influence is more evident. Not only is the emphasis in these collections on reading rather than writing, but the selections pit Woodrow Wilson, John Henry Newman, Alexander Meiklejohn, and Matthew Arnold against Thomas Henry Huxley and William James. For western Canadian educators, Wisconsin would become representative of the American habit of using essay collections or American literature rather than British literature to teach composition. Foerster alone would go on to have considerable influence on education in North America, and was well known in western Canada for his textbook *Writing and Thinking* and his aristocratic views on education.

Iowa State and the Land-Grant College

From the perspective of western Canadian educators, no single land-grant institution stood out from the rest as exemplary, although Iowa Agricultural College (later called Iowa State College and now Iowa State University) was one of the first to incorporate under the 1862 Morrill Act, and quickly established a reputation for excellence in engineering and agricultural sciences. The universities in western Canada were familiar with it from their visits to American institutions, and graduates of Iowa State held prominent positions at Saskatchewan and British Columbia. I argue in this section that despite claims to be founded upon liberal education principles, the land-grant colleges of the US were perceived in Canada as too thoroughly utilitarian and vocational to meet the goals of combining culture and utility. Although the University of Manitoba's English curriculum between 1918 and 1925 looked much like Iowa State's curriculum, the similarity was due to circumstances, not emulation.

Until the late 1950s, English at Iowa State was regarded almost exclusively as a service discipline; students could not receive a degree in English.

Iowa State College opened for students in 1869 and immediately faced the question of its purpose. A split between what historian Earle Ross calls the “the narrow-gauge practical agricultural school supporters and the broad-gauge technologists” ensued, with the latter group winning the struggle in 1884 (116). “On March 20, 1884,” Ross says, the government adopted a new code:

the state agricultural college [should adopt and teach] a broad, liberal and practical course of study in which the leading branches of learning shall relate to agriculture and the mechanic arts, and which shall also embrace such other branches of learning as will most practically and liberally educate the agricultural and industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions of life including military tactics. (118)

The land-grant colleges adopted the rhetoric of liberal education, but their heavy emphasis on agriculture and engineering, and their exclusion of a Bachelor of Arts degree, made them uniquely American to most Canadian’s eyes. Western Canadian institutions often offered a Bachelor of Arts degree even for students in the sciences.

English was part of the IAC curriculum from the inception of the college, and initially had been taught in the philological tradition. But in 1898 when Alvin B. Noble, Ph.D. replaced W. H. Wynn, Ph.D., D. D. as chair of the English department, English took on the scientific character Miriam Brody says was common to land-grant colleges (122). On June 27, 1898, Wynn wrote an angry letter about this change to his friend John B. Hungerford. In the process of denigrating the college’s president and his cohorts, Wynn also clearly defined what he saw as the proper scope of English. “English, as the term is used in curriculum [*sic*] means (1) Grammar, the higher ranges of it, to which ought to be added some elementary training in the Science of Languages, (2) Rhetoric, the vast matter of style and figures of speech, and (3)

Composition, theoretical and applied. As Grammar is intimately allied with Logic, a brief practical course in this ought to be included.” English Literature, in Wynn’s view, is a completely different field of study, but IAC’s administrators reorganized English, “throwing together . . . the whole literary side of the curriculum, the Dept. of English, English Literature, History, and Latin, into one Dept. under one multi-capitate ‘vigorous young man’—with two assistants under him, of which I have the honor of being one.” This vigorous young man, Wynn says, must also be an “empiric.” “I hate empiricism, and there is by far too much of it in our college now,” Wynn says (ISU 13/10 “Wynn” 3-4).

What Wynn saw as empiricism was the attempt by IAC and Noble to more closely align utility and culture. The first catalogue description of the new Department of Literature and Rhetoric under Noble says:

In the courses in English two ends are sought, utility and culture. Utility predominates in the first two years and culture in the last years, but there is hardly a recitation but contains something of both. So long as man communicates his thoughts and feelings to his fellows, so long will language have a practical value. . . . The more valuable his thought, the greater his need for a clear and effective use of language. (*IAC Catalogue 1898-99*, 196-97).

Rather than emphasize grammar, rhetoric, and composition as skills distinct from literature, IAC presented this sequence as closely connected to an understanding of culture: “in learning to appreciate what is best in the models set before him, he gains insensibly something of culture as well as of utility” (*IAC Catalogue 1898-99*, 198). During Noble’s tenure (1898-1930), all students received instruction in the principles of rhetoric and the modes of expression throughout all four terms of their first two years, then they were offered a range of literature, drama, and public speaking courses to choose as electives in their junior and senior years.

English departments in Canada may have shared Wynn’s fears that the subject was being taken over by *empirics*, although the empiricism Wynn and the Canadians feared was

probably the empiricism of the disciplines enlisting English. Noble was very accommodating to the powerful faculties of agriculture and engineering, so much so that his successor, J. Raymond Derby, spoke of the “esthetic awakening of Iowa” in a 1938 address (ISU ND5). The course in English under Noble had made no attempts to achieve professional autonomy or authority. The English department at ISC did not offer a degree program until the 1959, suggesting the peripheral role that English played in that institution. Peripheral, that is, from the perspective of other scholars of English wishing to establishing professional status and disciplinary space. Despite the claim to offer education in both utility and culture, Canadian educators in English looked down upon the practices in land-grant colleges as beneath, or outside, their disciplinary boundaries.

Western Canadian Universities

Wisconsin and the state university generally prevailed as the primary model for western Canadian universities; Harvard and Toronto had practices the new institutions considered worth emulating, but those universities as a whole were either too modern or too traditional to copy; and the land-grant colleges represented a utilitarian, pragmatic aspect of American life few Canadians wished to adopt, although the demands of a pioneering, frontier community often resulted in university practices not unlike those at land-grant colleges. I conclude this chapter by elaborating on why the state university was the most influential model, and by showing specifically how it and the other institutional models did in fact influence western Canadian universities. I also provide a brief introduction to English at each western Canadian university to emphasize how it fit with the new universities’ nation-building missions. In chapter 3, I explain more fully what pedagogical technologies were employed in the name of nation-building, and what role the professional authority of English department members played in shaping the curriculum. This brief introduction to the universities and English

departments, however, is necessary to show the connection between continental claims about education and English studies and local pedagogical practices in English.

The State University and the Provincial Settings

The state university model of education was the most influential model for western Canadian universities because it addressed the dual concerns of utility and culture, modernization and tradition. The western Canadian universities and their leaders were, as Canadian historian A. B. McKillop notes, working in a transitional period:

The English-Canadian university of the first quarter of the twentieth century, like the society itself, was one in a state of precarious balance between the weight of tradition and the currents of change. Hence, the academic could no longer be certain whether his role was to safeguard social stability or to facilitate social improvement. (229)

The state university, as it was perceived in western Canada, had brought education and culture to the frontiers of America without giving in completely to a pragmatic and utilitarian program of education. Canadian expansionists, Doug Owsram explains in *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West 1856-1900*, felt that “an empire was being built in the West and that such an empire needed a strong moral as well as material foundation” (125). The modern universities, I have been arguing, was a vital institution in this kind of nation building, and the teaching of literature and composition served the dual role of safeguarding social stability and facilitating social improvement.¹³

A stable educational model was vital to this rapidly expanding region. “In the years between 1896 and 1921,” Robert Brown and Ramsay Cook state in their authoritative history of this period, “the prairies became the most dynamic element in the country’s economic growth” (51). They cite 1921 as a particularly significant year because Canada’s urban-rural population was balanced, and the country would never again be a primarily rural, agrarian

nation. “That demographic shift had been a response to industrial growth and western settlement, the two dominant developments of the new century. The result was a much more complex nation where classes, sections, and ethnic divisions were potentially deep enough to make the country nearly ungovernable” (Brown and Cook 337). Universities were essential for training new professionals to carry on the work of nation-building in the newly urban (and striving to be urbane) nation. The institutional histories by Morton (Manitoba), Hayden (Saskatchewan), Johns (Alberta), and Logan (British Columbia) provide excellent sketches of the communities in which these universities were founded; I will only outline the conditions and inclinations which made the American state university seem like the most appropriate institutional model.

Winnipeg was the gateway to the west and with a population of 136,035 in 1911, it was Canada’s third largest city behind Montreal and Toronto.¹⁴ Harry Ferns, a student at the university during the 1930s, says in his memoirs that “In a small community, faced with formidable problems of building their connections with the larger society of North America and the world beyond the oceans, the pursuit of learning could not be given more than an ideal priority” (30). In other words, higher education at Manitoba had to privilege social improvement, or what the principal of the Normal school in Manitoba called “social efficiency” (UA Sc 6, 8). Saskatoon had only 8,000 people in 1909, and the first class at the university totaled 35 (Hayden 58-59). President Murray, however, described the town to his wife as *nouveau riche* and imagined the province would have a population of two million by 1931—its current population is around one million (Hayden 32, 36). Of all the western Canadian university presidents, Murray was the one most enamored with the Wisconsin model as it fit his view of serving a progressive yet cultured population. Edmonton had been a trading post of the Hudson Bay company for about a century before becoming capital of the new province in 1905. Its population in 1911 was 31,000, and the province as a whole had only 300,000, “of whom,” E. K. Broadus says, “a considerable portion were illiterate immigrants” (“Small

Beginnings” 21). Broadus also notes that the university clearly emulated American universities despite “the custom among Canadian university men to sneer at university teaching in the States” (“Small Beginnings” 26). Vancouver was Canada’s fourth largest city in 1911 (pop. 120,847), but the province was riddled with debt at the end of the nineteenth century and the university, when the province finally made a commitment to funding it, was not to be established as an “ivory tower.” Logan says “It was to be administered by business and professional men. It was to assist in the development of the Province” (37). The first president, F. F. Wesbrook, came to UBC from an American state university, the University of Minnesota.

The pioneer setting out of which the provincial universities in western Canada grew demanded practical education, and American state universities offered a better model of practical education than did the University of Toronto or other eastern Canadian schools. The American land-grant colleges were not as appropriate as models as were the state universities because the cow colleges, from the Canadian perspective, neglected tradition. Broadus notes that despite the American influence at Alberta, “We were a university within the British Empire. Pioneers and beginners though we were, we had inherited a tradition” (“Small Beginnings” 27). This sense of tradition for many people in Canada West gave away to the worldliness of a pioneering community, and the universities ended up resembling land-grant institutions in many ways, but the model for emulation was the state university.

The University of Manitoba: An eager new professional spirit

The University of Manitoba, because it moved from an administrative function to a teaching and research university, was not founded on as clear a vision of education as the other western universities, nor was its first president a leader with a vision. Its history, as presented by W. L. Morton, is a history of a collection of academic bodies trying to achieve some sort of unity. The University of Manitoba was founded in 1877 as an administrative unit for the

denominational colleges of the province, and did not take up teaching until 1904 when the Faculty of Science was formed. The newly formed Faculty of Science, the students of the university, the denominational colleges to a degree, and the public all pressured the University Council, the governing body of the university, to introduce instruction in the liberal arts. “A diversifying society demanded more and more professionally trained men,” Morton says (70). Morton identifies an “eager new professional spirit” in the university, and suggests that the humanities taught by the university’s Faculty of Art would be consistent with this spirit, rather than the scholastic spirit of the denominational schools (67).

The first head of the English department, A. W. Crawford, was a graduate of Cornell. Heads in history and political economy were appointed at the same time as Crawford, one a graduate of Oxford, the other a graduate of Edinburgh (Morton 76). The American, English, and Scottish educational traditions represented in the Arts faculty paralleled the eclecticism of the Science faculty, leading to what Morton calls a “rich diversity of traditions in the University Faculty . . . , a diversity which operated at once to produce a readiness to experiment while it prevented the easy but imitative reproduction of some particular tradition” (76). Because Manitoba did not adopt a University Act similar to Ontario’s until 1917, the first president at Manitoba, James Alexander MacLean (1913-1934), had little power and offered a limited vision of postsecondary education. The professional spirit and the willingness to experiment led to the most utilitarian curriculum of English departments in western Canada.

The University of Saskatchewan: Seeking a balance

The University of Saskatchewan drew on Wisconsin as its primary institutional model. Walter Murray, President of the University of Saskatchewan from 1908-1937, was thoroughly trained in the philosophical idealism of Kant, Hegel, and T. H. Green, and fit most readily into the educational and cultural milieu of nineteenth-century eastern Canada. Upon accepting the position at Saskatchewan, however, he recognized that The University of Wisconsin provided

a better model for a publicly funded school in western Canada than did Toronto or any other institution. Murray's biographers, David and Robert Murray (no relation), stress that Walter Murray sought to offer a balanced curriculum—a balance of utility and culture—but his greatest disappointment as president was that he was unsuccessful in fully supporting the Arts (159).¹⁵ Murray's daughter Jean noted the compromises that the humanists at Saskatchewan made in the early years of the university:

Most of them [early faculty members] had been trained in the humanities and they wanted to build a university in the best traditions of the older universities in the East. But at the same time they were reminded of the newness of the province and the need to convince the taxpayers that a university was worth supporting. They all agreed, and particularly the humanists, that the university had made the right decision in its plan to put agriculture in the forefront of the program. (48 in Hayden)

Because of such compromises on the part of the humanists, the western Canadian universities often ended up resembling land-grant colleges rather than the state universities they were trying to emulate.

The first head of the English department, Reginald Bateman (1908-1916), was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and was the student of “the Irish Matthew Arnold.” His successor, Robert A. Wilson (1916-40), was educated at Queen's by Canada's pre-eminent idealists: philosopher John Watson and literary critic James Cappon. Bateman and Wilson were both ideologically predisposed to teaching literature, but they perceived the need for instruction in writing to be more crucial to the needs of the average student at the University of Saskatchewan. Culture was consistently sacrificed to utility, and the demand for writing instruction, we will see in the next chapter, was met at Saskatchewan.

The University of Alberta: American and British traditions

According to Walter Johns, himself president of the University of Alberta in the 1970s, Alberta's first president, Henry Marshall Tory (1908-28), favored a central institution like the University of Wisconsin, rather than a university with affiliated colleges of agriculture and engineering (31). A retrospective prepared to celebrate the university's twenty-fifth year stressed the importance of a "sound balance" between culture and utility in modern education, and claimed, of course, that Alberta had achieved such balance (*The University of Alberta: 1908-33*, 8-9). The retrospective did admit, however, that the pioneering nature of life in western Canada made the "men and women . . . intensely concerned with the practical things of life" (6). Alberta may have been more successful than Saskatchewan in maintaining its balance; English department head Edmund Kemper Broadus says that "there were compromises in those [early] days. The only wonder is that there were so few" ("Small Beginnings" 21).

Broadus was the only American of the first generation English scholars in western Canada, but he was an opponent of the Wisconsin idea in Education. Broadus in many ways represented a closer link to the British tradition of education than did Tory or the second president of the University of Alberta, R. C. Wallace (1928-36). This strange arrangement, where the American represented the British perspective on education, is indicative of the difficulty of talking about a Canadian and American tradition as distinct entities: British culture and education was influential in shaping both American and Canadian postsecondary education.¹⁶ Broadus did bring first-hand knowledge of the composition program at Harvard, and he implemented features of it that put an American mark on the character of the junior curriculum in English.

The University of British Columbia: Meeting the province's demands

The University of British Columbia was established through The University Act of 1908, but it did not offer its first session until 1915. UBC was led during its first five years by Frank Fairchild Wesbrook, a graduate of the University of Manitoba (Arts and Medicine) who went on to study in Europe and become a teacher and Dean of Medicine at the University of Minnesota before accepting the UBC position (Logan 42-43). Wesbrook's views on education are most clearly articulated in an address made on the occasion of the inauguration of the first president of the University of Manitoba, November 19, 1913 (UBC President's Papers).¹⁷ Wesbrook's topic was "The Provincial University in Canadian Development," and he clearly envisioned university education to be part of a "nation-building mechanism" (1). The role of literature, the arts, and sciences he left till last "because of the obviousness of their place in any scheme of university development" (11). Harry T. Logan describes the curriculum worked out by the Faculty Committee as "a broad, liberal-arts education, free from the traditional attachment to the languages of Greece and Rome" (66). Wesbrook died while serving in his fifth year as President at UBC, but his successor, Leonard Sylvanus Klinck (1919-44) had a similar background—Canadian undergraduate training and American graduate training at Iowa State College—and professed to be guided largely by Wesbrook's vision (Logan 80-81). Neither Wesbrook nor Klinck referred explicitly to Wisconsin as a model, but the vision of state education clearly informed both their views, if we can grant that Klinck in some way spoke for both in a 1924 address:

Today all are agreed that it is the function of a University both to extend the boundaries of achieved knowledge and to promote the extension of higher education; all are convinced that the demand for short courses, for extension and lectures and for tutorial classes . . . is both widespread and genuine; all are of the opinion that the Universities ought to meet these demands. (81 in Logan).

Klinck ran into considerable opposition from various faculties, including English, when he appeared to promote work in Agriculture unfairly, indicating that the struggle to achieve some sort of balance between utility and culture was a struggle that UBC, like its three provincial university counterparts, endured (Logan 110-18).

Garnet G. Sedgewick, like Broadus of Alberta, was a Harvard PhD and implemented a Harvard-like structure for the junior curriculum at British Columbia. Less aristocratic than Broadus, Sedgewick appears not to have quarreled significantly with university administrators or other faculties. His balanced literature and composition program, with advanced courses in technical writing, met the needs of the university community. Throughout his career at UBC (1918-47) he expressed dismay about what to do with first-year students, but he never altered the structure of the junior curriculum. This stability can in part be attributed to Sedgewick's professional authority: he was one of the most respected Canadian scholars of his time.

These brief sketches of the four western Canadian universities, intended to emphasize the influence of American institutions on western Canadian education and therefore the continental nature of higher education at the turn of the century, provide the background for understanding the early practices of writing instruction in western Canadian universities. If in fact the nineteenth-century junior curriculum in English as established at Toronto—an emphasis on British literature and four papers a semester—had dominated the practice of English departments in western Canadian universities as Hubert and Harris have argued, that curriculum would have been at odds with the mission of the universities. I am arguing that it is necessary to look at continental and not just national claims about education, English studies, and writing instruction to understand the various local practices of this region during the first thirty-seven years of this century.

I describe the junior English curriculums of all four universities in more detail in the next chapter. I emphasize that English was considered by the public and university community to be vital to nation-building, and for the most part, members of English departments in

western Canada saw their professional role to be teachers first and researchers second. There was, in other words, limited conflict between the role that external forces wished to see English play, and the professional role that the insiders themselves valued. Writing instruction was seldom embraced, but it was seen as necessary. It was seldom carried out in original or creative terms, but Manitoba did frequently experiment with their junior curriculum and Saskatchewan had a particularly dedicated instructor, Jean Bayer. The two most professionalized departments, Alberta and British Columbia, followed the Harvard model and more or less willingly offered writing instruction as a necessary component of a modern education.

CHAPTER 3. ENLISTMENT AND HARVARDIZATION OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENTS IN WESTERN CANADA (1908-1937)

In this chapter, I examine in detail the junior curriculums in English of the four western Canadian universities. I argued in chapter 2 that the American state university was the most influential institutional model for the new Canadian universities, and I suggested that the nature of the institution would influence the kind of writing instruction offered there. We also saw in the previous chapter the influence of the pioneer environment on education in western Canada: the letter from lawyer A. McLeod to the Royal Commission in Manitoba insisted on education applicable to the community; Jean Murray, daughter of President Murray of the University of Saskatchewan, remembered the sacrifices the humanists made to be useful to the people of Saskatchewan; the pamphlet commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the University of Alberta emphasized the tension between the practical demands of the pioneering community and the traditional educational goals of the university; and Harry Logan's history of UBC notes that the founders of the university insisted on education that would be of practical benefit to the young province. The influence of the times and environment can be traced beyond its effects on university education generally; writing instruction has historically born the mark of public and university demands more than most pedagogical technologies. This chapter, therefore, examines in detail the influence of the practical and professional spirits of the new universities on the teaching of writing in the junior curriculum—the first two years—of English education in western Canadian universities.

I argue in the first section of this chapter that writing instruction at the Universities of Manitoba and Saskatchewan looked much like writing instruction at American state universities, and to some extent, even like writing instruction at the land-grant colleges. The junior curriculum in English was *enlisted* by other departments, the university as a whole, and even the public, to offer more instruction in writing than their colleagues at the Universities of Alberta and British Columbia. David R. Russell defines “enlistment” in the context of MIT:

“the emerging field of engineering . . . and the emerging field of humanities . . . mutually *appropriated* or *enlisted* aspects of one another’s discourse and institutional practice to carry on their respective objects” (Russell, “Rationales” 4).¹⁸ Russell writes of the mutual enlistment of the emerging fields, but I emphasize that during this time period, 1908-1937, the English departments at Manitoba and Saskatchewan did not possess as much professional authority as did the engineers or faculty of agriculture. This imbalance was due in part to the personnel of those departments, and in part to the priorities of education in those two provinces. This pattern of enlistment, however, cannot be generalized to the Universities of Alberta and British Columbia; the personnel at those institutions had greater professional authority within their universities, largely due to their graduate school training.

I argue in the second section of this chapter that because the department heads at Alberta and British Columbia were both Harvard PhDs, they carried considerable professional authority within their institutions. They drew on Harvard as a model for English studies generally and composition specifically to establish within their universities the jurisdiction of English. In other words, they enacted what Donald Stewart refers to as “the Harvardization of English.” “Harvardization” means much more than implementing a composition requirement; it refers to the pattern of privileging literature over composition, privileging research over teaching, and accepting composition as a necessary evil rather than an integral part of the discipline (“Two Model Teachers” 124-25). The Harvard connection in western Canada reinforces one of the arguments I stress in chapter 2: that higher education in North America at the beginning of this century must be conceived of in continental, rather than national, terms. The expatriate Canadian’s experience in American universities, says Carl Berger in his history of history writing in Canada, “underlined and confirmed the notion of the international community of letters and scholarship and the conception of the university as an institution that transcended national peculiarities” (142). The presence of American-expatriates, and

Canadians educated in American universities, brought American educational practices to Canada.

My grouping of Manitoba and Saskatchewan as examples of enlisted English departments and Alberta and British Columbia as examples of more autonomous English departments emphasizes one of my two key terms: professionalism. English at all four universities, however, was closely tied to nation-building. The somewhat ad hoc approach to writing instruction at Manitoba and Saskatchewan suggests that the English departments in these universities were responding to a perceived need for their student body, and the faculties there were not significantly drawing on the internal authority of their discipline to determine the jurisdiction of their work. Their professionalism, in other words, was infused with the nation-building project. The more clearly formulated plans for writing instruction at Alberta and British Columbia suggest that these English departments were implementing a proven pedagogical technology of nation-building. Harvard's English A course was already twenty-three years old when the University of Alberta opened for classes in 1908, and by the time sessions at UBC began in 1915, the Harvard pattern for first-year instruction in English was firmly established. I emphasize the articulation or joining of professionalism and nation-building throughout my analyses of the junior curriculum in English in western Canada between 1908 and 1937.

In a final short section of this chapter I discuss a new development in professionalism for the English departments of western Canada—the academic conference. The first-generation of English scholars in western Canada seldom met or exchanged views, and therefore could not derive professional authority from a professional body or organization. As the region matured, and the English teachers focused more attention on their research, their sense of professional identity began to change.

English Enlisted for Utility at Manitoba and Saskatchewan

To speak of enlistment at Manitoba and Saskatchewan is to speak of departments and curriculums which were strongly influenced by forces outside of the profession, and even outside of the university. In this section, I demonstrate enlistment at Manitoba through curricular and staff changes. Enlistment at Saskatchewan can be seen most clearly in the department's yearly reports to President Murray. Both English departments began to gain professional authority like that of the English departments in Alberta and British Columbia in the late twenties and early thirties, but between 1908 and 1937 the presence of composition and technical writing at Manitoba and the feminization of composition at Saskatchewan mirrored two of the tendencies of writing instruction in American English departments.¹⁹ The similarities appear to have emerged not by design, but through the similarity of the nation-building, and hence, educational needs of the Midwest and Great Plains regions of North America. The high culture implemented at these two universities was indeed the high culture of an ordered, standardized system of ideas and skills, with little room for pious claims of culture.

The University of Manitoba: Curriculum in flux

The most striking feature of the junior curriculum in English between 1909 and 1937 is the frequency with which it changed. I will discuss four distinct phases:

1. the idealist curriculum (1909-18)—the curriculum conformed to a Toronto-like pattern with literature and composition offerings for first and second year students, literature clearly emphasized;
2. the composition and technical writing curriculum (1918-25)—first and second year students not in Arts could take composition and technical writing courses with limited reading of literature;
3. the Woodhouse years (1925-1935)—A. S. P. Woodhouse was only at Manitoba between 1923-28, but I argue that he reformed the composition and technical writing curriculum and

he returned the junior curriculum to focus on literature, much like the first idealist curriculum; and

4. the Brown years (1935-37)—E. K. Brown came to Manitoba from the University of Toronto but returned the curriculum to a practical orientation, with perhaps the best literature-composition balance of any of these phases.

In terms of the four tasks of this study I outlined in the introduction, the instability of the curriculum at Manitoba challenges the generalization made by Harris and Hubert that the English curriculum in Canada was set by 1890. The various curricular phases also challenge the possibility of answering the question “Was writing instruction a significant component of the junior curriculum in English?” in any conclusive fashion. The term “enlistment” as it applies to English at Manitoba proves to be useful for describing not only mutual enlistment, but unilateral enlistment. And the practices (writing instruction) and components (textbooks) of the second and fourth phases clearly illustrate that writing instruction at a western Canadian university had much in common with writing instruction at American universities. The instability and enlistment of English illustrates the constant struggle within the system of professions to define professional jurisdiction, and the oscillation between curriculums emphasizing culture and curriculums emphasizing utility do not simply reflect changes in course content, but reflect different conceptions of the pedagogical technologies most appropriate for nation-building.

The Idealist Curriculum (1909-1918)

A. W. Crawford, a graduate of Toronto (MA) and Cornell (PhD), was appointed as the first head of the English department at the new, secular, University of Manitoba in 1909.²⁰ Crawford’s doctoral work at Cornell was in Philosophy, rather than English, but his dissertation on Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi suggests that Crawford was very much an idealist. He argued against the prevailing interpretation of Jacobi as realist, preferring to see him instead

as “an imperfect idealist, and his philosophy one of the springs of German Idealism” (86). Crawford’s education suggests he is part of the tradition of idealists Hubert identifies as dominating English and philosophy departments in eastern Canada. The Canadian idealists, influenced by Matthew Arnold as well as the German Idealists, privileged literature rather than philosophy as the source of a world spirit. Crawford and his contemporary at Saskatchewan, R. A. Wilson, confirm the Canadian privileging of literature over philosophy: they were both trained in philosophy and aesthetics, but taught English literature for most of their careers.

The English department’s first listing in the university calendar (1910-11) identifies the literature courses available, but no mention is made of writing instruction. Crawford’s idealism, and his work at Toronto—undoubtedly influenced by W. J. Alexander—suggest that he may have been predisposed to devalue writing instruction. But the external forces enlisting the English department, like the lawyer McCloud, other educational secularist, and the spirit of experimentation and professionalization Morton says characterized the university in the early years, may have influenced Crawford’s thinking in other directions. Morton credits Crawford with founding the extension courses at Manitoba, and changes in the course offerings subsequent to 1910-11 suggest that the need for writing instruction was addressed (94) .

By 1914-15, all students entering the university with junior matriculation (equivalent of Grade 11) took four courses in English: the first, in “Composition and Prose Literature” demanded four essays totaling 2000 words; the second was a course on the “History of Literature and Verse.” The two courses were repeated again the second year, with the writing assignments dropped to two essays totaling 1500 words. Carpenter and Brewster’s *Modern English Prose* was the text for the first course. The concentration on both *modern* and *prose* literature is indicative of a curriculum enlisted by other disciplines and public interests that saw modern prose writing as more relevant and accessible than the poetry that most teachers of English favored. The selection of *English* prose, of course, distinguishes the course from

American offerings, and was consistent with the emphasis on British in eastern Canadian universities. The curriculum was attempting to balance culture and utility.

The matriculation standards listed in the 1914-15 calendar required students to be able to pass six essays or exams in core subjects. One of the requirements was to produce a composition, and Fred Newton Scott and Josephy Denny's *Elementary English Composition* was listed in the calendar for 1914-15 as the text for reference. The exam presumed:

- 1) Formal rhetorical study of the sentence and paragraph along the lines of the textbook indicated.
 - 2) Frequent practice in composition of a simple character based on personal experience, everyday events, and objects and themes drawn from prescribed literature, reporting and editorials, letter writing, social and business.
- Attention to correct mechanical form will be demanded. (25)

This exam suggests that the English department would have expected students to have received "formal rhetoric" and composition training in high school, although Manitoba high schools were by no means as sophisticated as those in Ontario. English at the university could then concentrate on the reading and interpretation of literature, with composition being primarily a matter of writing about literature. The matriculation standards did not change significantly again before 1937, but new external forces brought about the changes in the jurisdiction of the English department between 1918 and 1925.

The Composition and Technical Writing Curriculum (1918-25)

As we saw in chapter 2, there was public pressure on the new, secular University of Manitoba to offer education relevant to the needs of a pioneering community. In addition to the letter from the lawyer McCloud, the Royal Commission on the University Question also received a forceful letter from the principal of Manitoba's Normal school, S. E. Lang. He noted that students who came to him often had deficiencies in composition, but the heart of his

letter is like McCloud's in its attempt to imagine the proper role for university education in Manitoba:

Enlarge the scope of the courses offered, bring these courses more into line with the pressing needs of the province, frankly recognize that social efficiency in the broadest sense and not mere scholarship or mere culture is the proper thing to aim at, and the methods of teaching to be desired will readily, almost inevitably, change to suit that end. (UA Sc 6, 8-9)

Morton says the secularists like Lang and McCloud were the "most outspoken, aggressive and publicly influential of the three schools of thought" and their report "was a clear-cut and uncompromising recommendation of the establishment of a provincial and secular university free of any kind of degree of denominational control" (66, 77). The impact of their vision on English was not immediate, but the influence of "social efficiency" was evident between 1918 and 1925.²¹

In 1917, the Provincial Government of Manitoba passed a University Act much like Toronto's University Act of 1906, a legislative change that resulted in a change to the bureaucratic structure of the university:

The colleges and the academic men had been removed from the places of control and practical men were to guide the university to new and undefined goals while the merely academic, the insistence on competence, the pursuit of excellence, and disinterested scholarship, the historic *raison d'être* of universities, were to be left to fare as best they might in the hands of scholars who were no longer members of a university but employees of a corporation, with limited power and diminishing responsibility in the general government of the university.

(Morton 115)

Included in these changes of 1917 was the affiliation of the Agricultural College with the university. The Universities of Saskatchewan and Alberta had included their Agricultural

Colleges within the university structure from their founding. They were both following the Wisconsin model for university organization, a model which encouraged co-operation between the traditional Arts courses and the practical demands of the professional schools vitally important to these agricultural regions.

The English department changed its course offerings in direct response to these external forces—the new administration and the new structure of the university. The new curriculum was designed to meet the specific educational needs of students in Arts, Sciences, Agriculture, Medicine, and Engineering. There were no Canadian precedents for such changes to the curriculum, but Susan Miller notes in her history of composition based on American university catalogues that “Especially in the earlier decades, a surprising variety of writing courses was taught” (68). The University of Wisconsin-Madison offerings in 1920-21 were more varied than Manitoba’s but included courses in composition and technical writing. Although there were no English faculty changes at this time to suggest an infusion of new ideas, there were American precedents for the University of Manitoba to follow. In other words, the department could draw on its discipline’s abstract body of knowledge to claim expertise in the teaching of composition and technical writing.

The number of changes to the course offerings during these seven years, however, suggests that the English faculty was not very certain of how to go about offering courses in composition and technical writing. Three different textbooks were tried in various combinations over these years, and the order of course offerings changed almost yearly. I will discuss the textbooks below, and use the offerings from 1924-25, the last year before the curriculum is radically revised again, as a representative year for course sequencing and selection. In 1924-25, Manitoba’s English department offered three levels of composition courses, taken primarily by Engineering students, and three levels of literature course. English Composition 1 & 2 was offered for pre-Engineering or pre-Medical students, and used Henry Canby et al.’s *English Composition in Theory and Practice* as its text. Arts and Sciences

students with poor matriculation scores would also have taken this course. Once accepted into the Engineering or Medical colleges, those students would then take a full year of English: an English composition course that used *Theory and Practice of Technical Writing* by Samuel Chandler Earle as its text, and an English literature course for non-Arts majors. The Arts majors who took English 1 & 2 would also take a further sequence of composition courses, English 9 & 10, before proceeding to the English literature course for Arts majors, English 3 & 4. Those who scored well on matriculation went directly into English 9 & 10, then took English Literature 11 and 12. Their second year English course was English 13 & 14 “English Prose.”

English Composition, authored by Canby and other members of the Department of English Composition in the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University, included selections from literature as models for description and narration, but utilized prose non-fiction for exposition and argumentation models. The text is divided into the four modes, and uses Wendell’s principles of unity, coherence, and emphasis as guides for writing paragraphs and sentences. The introduction says that “to write well is to solve a triple problem, and a successful solution will depend upon how far one masters the three branches of the problem, straight thinking, adequate expression, and good form” (xi). The authors see “style” as the “perfect bloom of good writing,” but they also see style as the domain of the literary writer, and not the readers of this book, the average writer (xii). “Think clearly, express your thoughts in the most effective manner, be sure that your book, your article, your report, or your theme is given the good form which it deserves. When you can do all this, and not before, you can begin to think of style” (xii). *English Composition*’s practical, scientific, problem-solving approach to writing seems to be the very kind of instruction that Nan Johnson in “Rhetoric and Belles Lettres in the Canadian Academy” suggests Canadian schools did not offer. The literary selections are also evenly balanced between American and British sources, rather than privileging British literature. William H. Taft, Woodrow Wilson, Hawthorne, and

Poe are included alongside John Henry Newman, T. H. Huxley, William Morris, and Rudyard Kipling. Balzac and Hugo also have a place in this American textbook.

Earle's textbook for the non-Arts students could not be further from John Genung's *The Working Principles*, the textbook Johnson says many Canadian universities, including Manitoba, relied upon as recently as 1925 ("Rhetoric" 868). Earle addresses his textbook directly to the engineer, and argues that no other attempt to teach technical writing has gotten "down to underlying principles or to deal with technical writing in a way which is general, yet definite and detailed enough to serve as a practical guide for the engineer" (vi). The text is divided into two sections, "principles" and "applications." His approach to writing instruction is clearly in the scientific tradition of rhetoric rather than in the belletristic tradition, suggesting the text was well matched with its students but poorly matched with the instructors.

Between 1918 and 1925, the English department at Manitoba was willing to claim composition and technical writing as part of its jurisdiction. None of the faculty were trained in these areas, but they drew upon sources within their profession to provide at least the appearance of legitimacy and expertise in these areas. The department's uncertainty about how to go about offering composition and technical writing courses, however, may have been exploited by Woodhouse shortly after he joined the faculty. He may have reminded his colleagues of what he considered their proper jurisdiction; the changes in the 1925-26 curriculum could not have been a more forceful assertion of the English department's claim to be a department of literary or textual studies, not a department of writing instruction. The literary selections also reflect Woodhouse's sense of Canadian national identity being derived primarily from its place in the empire.

The Woodhouse Years (1925-35)

The most remarkable aspect of the change in the 1925-26 curriculum is that the changes appear not to have been influenced by any external forces. Morton suggests that "The

insistence by the university on English in the First and Second years reflected, not an attempt to have literature take the place of classics or philosophy as the fundamental study, but only a practical attempt to maintain a measure of literary competence, in a pioneer and immigrant society in which good speech was the exception rather than the rule” (129-30). If Morton is right—this comment, as discussed in the introduction, has set off a controversy—the changes to the English curriculum in 1925-26 flew in the face of the university-wide demands for writing instruction. The changes clearly do represent a new attitude toward writing instruction in Manitoba’s English department, an attitude that Woodhouse became the central spokesperson for during his illustrious career at the University of Toronto.

If Woodhouse’s attitudes towards teaching technical or professional writing were already shaped by his years of study under W. J. Alexander at Toronto and Irving Babbitt at Harvard, the Manitoba curriculum he encountered in the fall of 1923 must have appalled him. We can only assume this, however, on the basis of his latter statements. Woodhouse, as head of the English department at Toronto in 1946, was willing to offer a single English course specifically for non-Arts students, but did so reluctantly:

The danger is that some professional schools may demand “practical” English (training in the writing of reports, business letters, etc.). This has been tried in some Faculties and has proved a dismal failure. It is not university instruction, and is not really practical. What one must do is train the student to think and write (reports, letters, etc.) correctly, clearly and cogently. There are no short cuts to these virtues. (Harris, *English Studies* 126)

Woodhouse goes on to espouse the view that composition could not be separated from literature, but the function of English was not to be the training of writers but the cultivation of human beings (Harris, *English Studies* 126). Only someone with Woodhouse’s confidence, or only departments as thoroughly imbued with a tradition of textual studies as Toronto, could successfully limit the effects of external forces on English and refuse to teach writing.

While there is only circumstantial evidence to show that Woodhouse was responsible for the change in the Manitoba curriculum, his attitude towards writing instruction, his strength of character, and his political savvy must have all strongly influenced the revision of the curriculum at Manitoba. The first-year English course offering for 1925-26 was a single course, "Prose Literature," with no mention of writing instruction included. *The Century Handbook* is listed as a required text, but there are no indications as to how it was used nor what assignments students were given. In 1927-28, the first-year course adopted *Greater English Poets* as the textbook, an anthology edited by Crawford, A. J. Perry (another Manitoba faculty member), and Woodhouse. Again there is no direct evidence to identify Woodhouse as the catalyst behind this project, but neither Crawford nor Perry published with any frequency, and both had been at Manitoba long enough to put such a textbook together before now. No other three-word title for a textbook could more aptly describe Woodhouse's elitism, imperialism, and traditionalism. He had returned the curriculum to the British-idealist orientation Hubert and Harris identify as hegemonic for Canadian English departments, and for ten years no one else sought to change it.

The Brown Years (1935-37)

Woodhouse left Manitoba after the 1927-28 academic year, but the curriculum remained the same at Manitoba until 1935-36 when Woodhouse's good friend, E. K. Brown took over as head of the department. Brown, like Woodhouse, was an undergraduate student of W. J. Alexander of Toronto, and Alexander is identified in Brown's biography as one of his great teachers (Groening 16). The similarities between Woodhouse and Brown may have ended there, and their friendship may have been the product of mutual appreciation of keen intellects. Brown re-instated the composition component of the first-year English course at Manitoba, a move intended to "placate the Sciences" he tells his successor, Roy Daniells (UBC, RDP n.d.).

But Brown's willingness to include writing instruction in the junior curriculum where Woodhouse would not can be traced to Brown's sense of nationalism and professionalism.

After completing his undergraduate work at Toronto, Brown took a *doctorat-ès-lettres* at the Sorbonne, writing a minor thesis on Arnold and a major one on Edith Wharton (Groening 23). Throughout his career, Brown could be characterized as an Arnoldian critic, but his subject matter was usually North American: Wharton, Willa Cather, and Canadian poetry. Groening argues that the depression made Brown reconsider his initial elitist aesthetic values—particularly the role of art in society—and his encounter with American nationalists made him consider the possibility of Canadian literature serving a similar nation-building function (181). “Brown, though deeply immersed in Arnoldian thought, nevertheless escaped the colonial trap of unconsciously regarding Canadian poetry as a minor (failed) version of English poetry” (Groening 87).²² Like Barrett Wendell of Harvard, Brown may have preferred to do his nation-building through literature than through composition, but sensed that introductory work in literature and composition must be relevant and engaging if Canadian literature was to have any audience.²³ Woodhouse's *Greater English Poets* suggests that he believed high culture could only be delivered from the top down, and not the other way around.²⁴

Brown's sense of national and local needs may have influenced his decision to offer composition at Manitoba, but he also expressed a clear sense of composition being within English's professional jurisdiction. In a 1945 publication, Brown articulates his views on writing instruction while also illustrating the dangers of utilitarianism in education. He draws on his experience at Manitoba to make his point.²⁵ At Manitoba, he says, the department gave most of its time to the first-year course in English because they believed that “it was our largest contribution to the intellectual well being of the university” (382). Brown goes on to describe the work done in the course, and the response of an engineer to the course:

The formula by which we worked had two parts: first, the chief objective was the improvement of writing; second, the right use of reading was the best means to improve writing. We believed that poetry and fiction rightly used would do more to improve writing than recent expository prose. As the freshman course stood, expository reading accompanied and subserved practice in writing. . . . The head of one of the departments of engineering viewed our program for the second semester not with one auspicious and one dropping eye but with two frankly dropping eyes. Were his boys to misuse their time by reading Browning, Milton, and Shakespeare? . . . Could we not give them neat clipped models of expository prose, the sort of prose they would be expected to use in their reports? (382)

Brown regards this engineer's attitude as inappropriately utilitarian, and argues that the engineer cannot see the utilitarian end to which the course was directed. Instead, the engineer accused the English department of "bootlegging culture" into the course (382). Brown was particularly appalled that "This man actually believe[d] that he [knew] better than the department of English what would improve writing and stimulate the formation of a creditable style" and that the engineer would challenge "the expert's view" (382).

Brown's defense of his first-year curriculum is a rare example in the history of writing instruction in western Canada of a defense of writing instruction based on professional jurisdiction. His statement is the kind of evidence that Patricia Jasen suggests is needed to back up Harris's and Morton's assertion that first-year English classes were primarily about writing instruction. As Brown's point suggests, however, "utility" is an awkward description for writing instruction when the English department worked to provide what they considered a utilitarian end by a means others viewed as cultural instruction.

Although Brown's stay at Manitoba was short, his re-design of the first-year course, described in the 1936-37 calendar as "A study of three types of literature—fiction, drama, and

poetry—and of the principles of composition,” influenced the junior curriculum at Manitoba for the next twenty years (62). Brown combined professional authority—a *doctorat-ès-lettres*—with a sense of local and national needs to shift the power relations of enlistment from unilateral to mutual enlistment. Ernest Sirluck, a future colleague of Brown’s at Chicago but an undergraduate at Manitoba between 1935 and 1940, says that Brown was:

free of the feeling of uncertainty, and even inferiority, that most Humanities faculty members displayed in that unpolished, impoverished, largely immigrant society in which pioneer values and attitudes lingered. . . . [I]t was clear that he thought the intellectual quality of his discipline the equal of any, despite the higher value placed on the sciences and professions by the local society. (41)

Sirluck’s account of Brown’s impact at Manitoba clarifies the extent to which earlier scholars had been susceptible to enlistment and accentuates the importance of a strong sense of professional identity in determining one’s professional jurisdiction. Brown’s adjustment of the Woodhouse curriculum suggests the extent to which a direct application of the Toronto-model simply did not work in western Canada. Brown’s literature and composition course, however, was also much more of an attempt to balance culture and utility than the composition and technical writing courses of 1918-25. In his two years at Manitoba, Brown re-configured the English department’s relationship with the rest of the university, changing the enlistment from a unilateral to bi-lateral relationship. This pattern was to hold for the next thirty years.

The University of Saskatchewan: Enlistment through feminization

The English curriculum at the University of Saskatchewan between 1909 and 1937 was considerably more stable than Manitoba’s curriculum during this time, and the English department was never enlisted by the other disciplines to the point of offering composition-only or technical writing classes. However, because the University of Saskatchewan was committed to the Wisconsin idea of a public university serving the state, external forces from

the public through to the university president encouraged the English department to offer instruction relevant to students of Agriculture and the Sciences. The apparent needs of the students themselves, more recently arrived in Canada than many of the Manitoba students and products of a public school system only as old as the province (incorporated into the Dominion of Canada in 1905), also forced the English department to offer more writing instruction than it desired. This need to serve the process of nation-building through assimilation of emigrants was stronger at Saskatchewan than at any other western Canadian provincial university. Sam Robinson, an historian of education, describes the extent of “saxonism” in Saskatchewan—“the need of the British to maintain order in colonial Canada and also to assert their sense of superiority”—the only province in Canada in which people of British or French descent do not make up the majority. This saxonism, Robinson shows, is particularly manifest in the research of two Saskatchewan public school educators (36-42).

The English department reports to President Murray suggest more vividly than the university calendars the nature of work being done in the department during this time. The three curricular phases at Saskatchewan I will discuss are:

1. the compromising of idealism (1908-1916)—the President and the English department compromised their educational philosophies, ground in Hegelian-Arnoldian idealism, in order to meet the university’s need for practical writing instruction;
2. the feminization of composition (1916-1930)—the English department relied upon the work of female instructors, particularly Jean Bayer, to carry out most of the writing instruction; and
3. the introduction of writing laboratories (1930-37)— the English department introduced writing laboratories in an attempt to treat writing as a scientific problem to be solved and as a means of re-gendering the work of their profession.

In discussing these three phases, I will also address the four tasks of this study outlined in the introduction. The idealism of the first two department heads at Saskatchewan supports the

characterization of English departments in Canada as home to Hegelian-Arnoldian idealists, but a close study of the work at Saskatchewan identifies the extent to which this idealism was compromised at Saskatchewan. The work of Jean Bayer during the second phase provides clear evidence of the attention paid to both composition and literature in first- and second-year English at Saskatchewan. Both “enlistment” and “feminization” are relevant terms for explaining the nature of English studies at Saskatchewan between 1908 and 1937, with the feminization of composition being a specific means through which English could be enlisted to demand for practical writing instruction made by other factions in the university. The feminization of composition at Saskatchewan and the introduction of writing laboratories, practices which paralleled patterns of writing instruction in the US. The compromising of idealism, the feminization of composition, and the introduction of writing laboratories all reflect changing articulations of professionalism and nation-building. The professional men in the English department begrudgingly took on writing instruction in the service of nation building, then left that work primarily to the women on staff, only to reclaim a nation-building role for themselves and writing instruction by describing that work in scientific terms.

Compromising Idealism (1908-1916)

In choosing Reginald Bateman, graduate of Trinity College-Dublin, as the first professor of English, and Arthur Moxon (Oxford) as professor of classics, President Murray looked to balance the staff evenly between American-trained PhDs (the mathematics and history professors were both Canadians who studied at Columbia) and British-trained scholars (Murray and Murray 75; Morton, *Saskatchewan* 69ff). Bateman taught at Saskatchewan only from 1909-1916, leaving to serve and die near the end of the War. Some of his lectures and writings were collected as part of a memorial volume, and “The Teaching of English” indicates that philosophically he was aligned with the ideal of culture, although he is careful to point out that in the lecture he is dealing only with the teaching of English literature (37). He also

clarifies that literature itself can be taught in several ways: as a piece of art, an historical document, or as a philological artifact (38-39). For Bateman, however, “a piece of literature is first and foremost a work of art, a record of life in forms of truth and beauty, a spiritual revelation” (39).

Hubert notes Bateman’s place within the tradition of Hegelian-Arnoldian idealism at the heart of English studies in Canada, England, and the US (“Babel” 383). But Bateman’s June 2, 1914 report to President Murray suggests that the former saw little hope for ever successfully studying literature as a work of art at the University of Saskatchewan:

The Freshman class was, as usual, below standard. The prospect of producing first-class honor students in the English Department is very small, as long as the students sent to us from the high schools continue to be of such poor quality, as has been the rule up to the present. (USA PR, RG1 Series 1, B.38/26)

Bateman goes on to identify reading essays as the greatest problem facing the department. A student reader was assigned to the department in the second semester (seemingly for the first time), but Bateman notes that even this reader can only read English I and II essays, and an instructor still needs to read one set of English I essays per term. Bateman proposes that English I students should write three essays in the first term and four in the second. English II students would write two and two, and English III and above should write one essay per semester. He calculates that on average a class has 45 students, each paper should receive twenty minutes of attention, meaning that the 15 sets of papers that an instructor will look at in a semester will mean 225 hours of grading, or an average of eight hours per week, “a very formidable result,” he says.

In an undated report, Bateman chose to single out English I for special comment. He was particularly frustrated by the range between the best and the worst writers in the class, and suggested that “in the future students who have not matriculated in English be required to reach a minimum standard of proficiency before entering Eng. I, and that those who fail to qualify,

be sent to Agricultural English II, the latter to work as English A of the Arts course.” Students entering the university to pursue a degree in agriculture were often only sixteen years old and had only completed junior matriculation (Grade 11). The English department offered sub-university courses in English for these students, courses that often focused on composition, before they could be admitted to the regular course. This gate-keeping concern for proficiency is very Harvard-like, and as we will see, the University of Alberta also adopted a proficiency exam. This problem of proficiency, however, seems to Bateman an issue that he and his department cannot address: “The amount of essay work done in this department is not nearly sufficient, but is probably as great as one man can deal with adequately. The present policy is to devote as much attention as possible to the composition of English I, in the hope (up to the present scarcely realized) that if a sound foundation is laid in that class, the students themselves may be trusted to build on it” (USA PR, RG1 Series 1, B.38/26).

In his published lecture “The Teaching of English,” Bateman identifies the teaching of English literature as the primary function or what Abbott calls the objective quality of English departments: the work that goes without questioning in a profession (Abbott 39-40). In his reports to Murray, however, Bateman is primarily concerned with the issue of how to handle writing instruction, a subjective quality of the profession. Bateman does not see writing instruction as an intrinsic part of his profession, but he identifies the weakness of students coming from high schools—what for him constitutes the proper place or jurisdiction of writing instruction—as an issue that cannot be overlooked by his department. In confronting the need to offer writing instruction, Bateman compromised his curriculum and sense of professional jurisdiction in order to serve the university and its students, much the way that President Murray compromised his educational philosophy to serve the needs of the province. As we saw in chapter 1, even the humanists at the University of Saskatchewan could see that the needs for building a strong and viable community in the province required that their educational philosophies be compromised in this pioneer environment.

The Feminization of Composition (1916-30)

One way to redistribute the work of English departments and to preserve the teaching of literature for the professionals was to assign first- and second-year courses to the sub-professionals. In the US, English departments could assign this work to their graduate students, or at universities without a graduate program, instructors could be hired. Without graduate students to teach writing, and with only the limited assistance of student markers, the burden of writing instruction at Saskatchewan fell almost exclusively upon instructors or the junior members of the department. These instructors were more likely than not women. Jean Bayer stands out among first-generation instructors of English in western Canada; she came to the university as a secretary and librarian in 1909, hired, it seems, because she was a friend of the Murray family.²⁶ She was shortly thereafter incorporated into the English department, and by 1919 had earned her MA from the University of Saskatchewan.

Bayer was so clearly responsible for the teaching of English I and II early in her career that Bateman's successor, R. A. Wilson, asked her to write the yearly report on English I for 1916-17. The literature-to-composition ratio she reports is typical of Canadian first- and second-year classes: two hours of literature to one hour of composition. The written composition, however, "included four fairly long essays, and weekly themes, mainly expository and argumentative. Only two of the four long essays were on literary topics; the other two were an autobiography and "A more elaborate expository essay." Bayer lists some of the topics covered: The Immigrant, Conservation of Energy, Church Union, History of the Mennonites, Radium, The Cavendish Experiment, The Rhodes Scholarship, and History of the Doukhobors. Bayer also explains that "[t]he weekly themes were at first expository, then argumentative, leading up to debate. Five or six lectures in debating were given, and the last six periods for composition were devoted to debates by the members of the class." She concludes by saying that these debates were an experiment, but "sufficiently successful to

justify one in giving more time and attention to that phase of oral composition” (USA PR, RG1 Series 1, B.38/26).

In this report alone, Bayer challenges almost all the standard conceptions of first-year English at Canadian universities. Other than adhering to the 2:1 time split, she gives equal attention in her assignments to literary and expository writing; she employs weekly themes—virtually unheard of in Canadian universities—and she includes oral composition, thought to have been virtually dropped by Canadian universities by the turn of the century. Bayer also included with her report on English I a single page description of the composition component of English II. Here she identifies:

- A. Five or six general lectures on diction.
- B. Study and practice of descriptive and narrative composition by
 1. Analysis of examples
 2. Weekly essays
 3. Criticism of weekly essays.
- C. Four expository essays [two of which are literary analyses, the other two assigned topics: “University Education” and “The Making of History.”]

She concludes this report by noting that “As far as possible in both the long essays and the short weekly themes a general subject rather than a definite title was assigned for the essays, and the students were encouraged to choose for themselves that phase of the subject which was most interesting to them” (USA PR, RG1 Series 1, B.38/26).

Her general lectures on diction suggest that she, like most writing instructors of the time, worked within a current-traditional theory of rhetoric.²⁷ Wilson’s report to the President for 1922-23, however, provides further evidence that along with the current-traditional approach, Bayer was providing intensive individual feedback. Wilson notes that Bayer had 90 students in two sections of English II for this school year—compared to Mr. Lothian’s 30—but:

Special time and care was given to the instruction of the student in the actual practice of writing. Nine essays were written during the term and a great deal of personal assistance was given to the individual students towards correcting the errors and improving the quality of their own work. Miss Bayer reports that “for two of the essays I had all of the students come in for personal conferences, and for all of the essays some of them came.” Mr. Lothian’s practice corresponds closely with this. (USA PR, RG1 Series 1, B.38/26)

One cannot help but doubt that Lothian’s practice corresponded closely with Bayer’s. Lothian would next succeed Wilson as department head, and expressed in his reports and publications a distaste for teaching writing.

What is ironic about this and other reports by Wilson is that he often focuses on writing instruction, but more-or-less admits to having no interest in that work. Wilson describes upper-level courses like his own English 4 in the 1922-23 report: “Here proportionately more of the time was given to the study of literature than in [English] 1 and 2 and the student left more to his own resources in his essay work.” About Mr. Lothian’s English 7, Wilson says: “more class time was given to the literary side and the student thrown on his own resources in writing.” There is no evidence to suggest Bateman, Wilson, or Lothian ever gave any serious scholarly attention to writing instruction, and all seem to have found it necessary but overwhelming. They address it thoroughly in their reports, but presumably because an external force, President Murray, was interested in knowing what kind of work the English department was doing for the university as a whole. Not until Wilson’s 1930-31 report is any mention made of departmental publications or other indicators of the department’s professionalism beyond teaching.

Having a committed and innovative teacher like Jean Bayer on staff allowed Wilson and Lothian to throw students to their own resources when writing, and allowed them to pursue their own research.²⁸ One of the reasons composition specifically and writing instruction more

generally has been ignored in Canadian educational histories is because writing teachers like Jean Bayer have been invisible. Susan Miller explains how the feminization of composition goes far beyond the statistical over-representation of women in this field:

as performers in a site for illegitimate and transgressive textual activities that are inextricably linked to, but only placed beside, a newly established and unsophisticated community, composition teachers would not have been separately recognized at all in the larger academic world. The students in the course that I have called a course in silence were taught by those for whom a separate and recognized “profession” of composition was “unspeakable.”

(Textual 127)

I have been arguing that a profession is defined by its work, and that English departments in western Canada could not get around the need to do the work of composition. Those of the professional rank—those with PhDs—could, however, rely on a group of subordinates to do the work which did not objectively or clearly belong to the profession.²⁹ Teaching writing was deemed by those outside the profession to be within the English departments’ jurisdiction, but those within the profession deemed the nurturing, time-consuming work to be sub-professional work. The feminization of composition encouraged scholars and critics to imagine their research and teaching as autonomous—free from enlistment to the other disciplines and a university mission connected to service and utility. By making writing instruction the jurisdiction of the sub-professionals, the literary scholar was also able to redefine the role of writing instruction as remedial and only an elementary aspect of nation-building.

The English Laboratory at Saskatchewan (1930-32)

In cases where writing instruction could not be given exclusively to female instructors, the work was redefined as scientific, and by connotation, manly. Susan Miller notes how teachers of composition have benefited from the redescription of writing instruction as

“scientific,” “tough-minded,” or “rigorous” (*Textual* 122). The English department at Saskatchewan did not aggressively pursue the professionalization of writing instruction through such language, but in the early 1930s they did institute an English Laboratory as a means of dealing with remedial students. This pedagogical technology was a means of keeping the masculinist connotations associated with the work of nation-building.

The nature of the first- and second-year courses at Saskatchewan began to change in the early 1930s—a little later than the changes at Manitoba—and the change seems to have been due to external forces—changes in the student body—rather than internal forces—the arrival of a figure like Woodhouse. Wilson, in his 1930 report, asks President Murray to note the “decrease in the number of students entering English 1 with Junior Matriculation (Grade 11), with an increase in the number entering English 2 with Senior Matriculation (Grade 12)” (USA PR, RG 1 Series 1, B.38/26). Wilson notes the pattern again in the 1932 report, suggesting that as the secondary school system in Saskatchewan improved, the burden of writing instruction for the university began to drop. The English department now begins to address the problem of weak writers through The English Laboratory—something akin to a writing center—rather than through traditional classroom practices.

In the 1930 report, Wilson notes that Mr. Percy Wright offered special classes for struggling students, and “In practically all cases Mr. Wright reports considerable improvement in the use of English by these students” (USA PR, RG1 Series 1, B.38/26). Wilson recommends that the project continue next year, and that proficiency tests be given at the beginning of the year so that those students “who were distinctly below University standards” could be directed to the special classes. Percy Wright reports on the success of his program in the 1931 departmental report, and includes the topics of four special lectures that he gave during the year (Nov. 25 - April 18): (I) The Organization of the Essay, (II) Sentence Structure, (III) Elementary Appreciation, and (IV) Some Common Errors in Composition. He notes that a total of 134 students attended these four lectures.

The English Laboratory approach to writing instruction is a sharp departure from Jean Bayer's extensive conferencing. The one-on-one instruction is not completely replaced, but the four special lectures suggest literally and figuratively an increased distance between students and teacher. The remedial work is still the jurisdiction of a junior member of the faculty—invisible to the profession at-large—but it is now assigned the status of near-scientific work: problems to be solved, improvements to be made and documented. This two-year experiment was a brief foray into the symbolic redefinition of one aspect of the department's work, a symbolic redefinition that would have allowed the English department to continue to see composition as being connected to nation-building. The failure of the program left composition largely in the hands of Jean Bayer and other marginalized members of the English department. Bayer continued to teach at Saskatchewan until 1944, and news of her leaving was met with some dread by the men on faculty who realized that they would either have to take up her work, or attempt to exclude it from the department's jurisdiction.³⁰

These histories of writing instruction at the Universities of Manitoba and Saskatchewan contribute significantly to the four tasks of this study I outlined in the introduction. The first two tasks of reassessing some generalizations about English studies and specifically first-year courses, are closely related. The work of Harris and Hubert suggests that English instruction in western Canada during this period continued the nineteenth-century trend towards specialization and a focus on British literature. However, the junior curriculums during this period, particularly the one at Manitoba, were very unstable and the Hegelian-Arnoldian idealism of the department members at both institutions was incongruous with the needs of their pioneering, immigrant communities. If the question of the nature of first- and second-year English is asked of the years 1908-1937, the answer is Manitoba actually offered composition and technical writing courses between 1918 and 1925, and that Jean Bayer at Saskatchewan most definitely taught writing as a vital part of her first- and second-year English

classes. This evidence supports Nan Johnson's argument that rhetoric, even in Canada, had not completely died by the end of the nineteenth-century.

The second two tasks of this study, extending terms from American studies of rhetoric and composition to the Canadian context and arguing for a continentalist perspective on writing instruction, are also closely related. The terms "enlistment" and "feminization" are valuable concepts from the history of writing instruction in the US that help to characterize the curriculums and practices of English departments at Manitoba and Saskatchewan at this time. The similarity of practices in western Canada and the US—teaching composition and technical writing and relying on untenured women to do that work, often far better than the men would or could—emphasizes the continental, rather than national, character of writing instruction during the first thirty-seven years of this century.

From these four points—that the Hegelian-Arnoldian idealism of English departments was often compromised in the junior curriculums; that those first-year, and sometimes second-year courses were often very practical; that this pattern of enlistment, often through the feminization of composition, was common in Canada and the US; and that the similarity of practices in the two countries suggests the need to see the history of writing instruction in continentalist terms—we can see a clearer picture of both the role of English studies for nation-building and the state of the profession between 1909 and 1937. Nation-building and professionalism during this time were very closely aligned; English departments clearly saw nation-building as one of their functions. Conflicts arose primarily when external forces had a vision of building western Canada economically and materially, without regard for spiritual or cultural growth. The faculties at Manitoba and Saskatchewan, however, were sufficiently committed to the nation-building project in all its forms that they were willing to be enlisted to the larger purpose, hoping, perhaps, that cultural growth would soon follow material growth. E. K. Brown represents the beginning of English departments' role in national-culture building, a more specific tasks within the nation-building project, but during the first thirty-

seven years of this century, professionals in the English departments at Manitoba and Saskatchewan generally contributed to the economic and material growth of the nation: high culture in Gellner's sense.

The Harvardization of English at Alberta and British Columbia

Donald Stewart has shown the influence of the Harvard English department on both literary studies and composition in American universities ("Harvard's Influence" and "Two Model Teachers"). The fact of Harvard's influence, Stewart says, has not been "definitively proven," but he outlines a program of research that would trace Harvard men to the colleges where they taught and investigate their syllabi and other materials to corroborate connections to Hill or Wendell ("Harvard's Influence" 455). Such a program can be carried out in small by looking at the careers of two Harvard men, E. K. Broadus of the University of Alberta and G. G. Sedgewick of the University of British Columbia. Until the University of Toronto began granting PhDs in English in the 1920s, Harvard may have been the most important training ground for Canadian scholars of English.³¹

The Harvard training of these two individuals, as well as their considerable personal abilities, contributed to their sense of professionalism—more clearly developed than in A. W. Crawford of Manitoba and R. A. Wilson of Saskatchewan. Their time at Harvard may also have given them a sense of the role of English education in nation-building, a role the Harvard department self-consciously adopted. By incorporating aspects of the Harvard composition program in their own institutions, Broadus and Sedgewick were making use of a proven pedagogical technology for nation-building. The stability of their Harvard-influenced curriculums makes the use of phases unnecessary for this section; instead, I will focus on points of connection between Harvard's approach to writing instruction and the junior curriculums of these two western Canadian universities.

The University of Alberta: Harvard of the west

Edmund Kemper Broadus was aptly suited for the Canadian academic environment. A Virginian by birth and a Harvard graduate of 1908, he was first and foremost a literary critic and not a philologist, despite having studied under the two most eminent philologists of his time, John Matthews Manly of Chicago and George Lyman Kittredge of Harvard.³² Broadus taught at Harvard in 1907-08 while finishing his dissertation, "Addison as Critic." Through this year's work in composition, and through work on his dissertation, he would undoubtedly have come in close contact with Le Baron Russell Briggs and/or Barrett Wendell.³³ Broadus also brought the Harvard priorities of James Francis Child to the University of Alberta. He insisted on literary criticism as a profession and he privileged literary study over composition, although he did not completely ignore composition. In this section I will focus on three institutional/programmatic changes to the junior curriculum at Alberta in which Broadus clearly followed Harvard's lead:

1. he instituted an entrance exam similar to Harvard's exam;
2. he established a Committee on the Use of English, modeled after Harvard's committee of the same name; and
3. he not only contributed to a separation of composition and literature, but near the end of his career he attempted to eliminate composition from the curriculum altogether.

The presence of Broadus in Alberta problematizes the notion of the hegemony of the Toronto curriculum in Canadian English departments; Broadus, in fact, showed a certain disdain for Toronto and its influence. Like other Harvard graduates, he privileged the study of literature, but also recognized the necessity of including composition in the junior curriculum. The notion of "Harvardization" is useful for analyzing English studies at Alberta not only because of Broadus' training and because of the applicability of Stewart's terms, but because Broadus extends the terms of Harvard's influence through his emulation of the entrance exam and the Committee on the Use of English. The continental nature of English studies is nowhere more

evident than at Alberta as Broadus remained particularly true to the practices of his native country. Broadus may have held no particular loyalty to Canada—Clarence Tracey, who joined the Alberta English department shortly after Broadus died, suggests that Broadus was not fond of Edmonton and his wife and son returned to New England after his death in 1936 (“Interview” 136)—but his pedagogical and administrative decisions were extensions of the Harvard plan for nation-building.³⁴

Entrance Examination

The first clear sign of Broadus’ Harvard roots is his institution of a proficiency exam, described in the 1911-12 university calendar:

Immediately after registration, all matriculants, whether they submit accredited certificates or not, are required to write a theme, the subject to be chosen from a list provided by the Professor. Should this theme fall below a standard of average excellence, the student will be required to take a special course in composition. No credit towards the degree will be given for this work, but students assigned to it must comply with its conditions and show satisfactory improvement in composition before they can advance to their degree. (Quoted in Harris, *A History* 247; see also McMaster 6)

This exam differs from the Harvard Entrance exam in that it was administered after students were already accepted, but the University of Alberta in its early years did not have the luxury of turning students away. The implications of the exam are typical: proficiency in composition is a skill that should have been attained in high school, but in most students entering university did not meet Broadus’s, nor the institution’s, expectations for writing competently. The desire for students to have proficiency in writing is seldom motivated by the ideal of utility alone. The desire to have students write well, as we will see in an essay Broadus wrote in the twenties, and as we can see in Le Baron Russell Briggs’s defense of the composition exam, is

intimately connected to culturing students. Briggs defends the use of literary texts in the Harvard exam by saying “in this ‘practical’ age it is well to teach a boy that classics exist” (58). The non-credit composition course proposed by Broadus here, and again in 1930 (the proficiency exam having lapsed), was called English A, the famous Harvard designation for first-year composition.

Teaching literature was the focus of English 1 and 2 at Alberta and a requirement for all students, but at department meetings, members primarily discussed and reported on the problems of teaching writing. The minutes of the English department from 1914 (the first year Broadus had a colleague, R. K. Gordon) to 1930 discuss English 1 almost exclusively, and include discussions of composition pedagogy. The November 13, 1926 meeting reports on an experiment tried in English 1. Students were given a “quality prose composition,” asked to write notes on it, submit those notes to the instructor, who would return the notes to the students a week later and ask them to write a paragraph of their own based on their notes (and presumably the instructor’s evaluation of those notes). The advantages of this method were thought to be:

1. It affords practice in précis writing.
2. It enables the student to compare his own writing directly with that of a recognized master.
3. It gives the instructor excellent material for lecturing on the art of writing.

(UAA Minutes 70-91-68)

A report on this method was made at the next meeting, December 11, 1926. Instructors found the method difficult to work with because students either stuck much too closely to the original (a paragraph from Macaulay) or wander so freely from the original that no comparison between Macaulay and the student could be made. “The instructors seemed agreed, however, that as a result of the careful analysis which the method imposes on the student when he summarizes and when he re-writes the paragraph, the discussion of the assignment in class was unusually

profitable, and the students showed considerable appreciation of the method and style of the original" (UAA Minutes 70-91-68)

This method of instruction does not bear any clear relation to the pedagogy of Hill or Wendell, but it does suggest the dual role of teaching composition and literature together. It bears some relation to textbooks like Frances Campbell Berkeley's *A College Course in Writing from Models* (1910), a book influenced by Fred Newton Scott and his students, but there is no evidence to suggest this method of modeling continued for any length of time at Alberta. *The Century Handbook* was used for English 1 and 2, but in the November 13, 1926 minutes it is described as having a good guide for marking, but it was perceived to be of little practical value (UAA Minutes 70-91-68). Steadman and Foerster's *Sentences and Thinking*, a work I will discuss in chapter 5 as representative of the aristocratic attitude towards writing, was later adopted. The entrance exam and the general concern about students' writing suggest some important connections to Harvard, but also the similarity of concerns about first- and second-year English throughout North America. These concerns for correctness and standardization were the concerns of young nations wishing to establish high culture in both the Gellner sense of an orderly, standardized system of ideas and the woolly and pious sense instructors of English often invoked.

The Committee on the Use of English

In 1927, the Harvard influence is again apparent. In the October 29th Minutes, Broadus reports that a Committee on the Use of English by Students had been formed by the General Faculty Council (UAA Minutes 70-91-68). The idea for such a committee, however, is likely to have come directly from Broadus and not someone else on the committee, because earlier in the year, he had delivered a paper to the National Conference of Canadian Universities on "Weakness in English Among Undergraduates and Graduates in Canadian Universities." In that paper he spends considerable time describing a pedagogical scheme

developed by the 1915 Harvard Committee on the Use of English by Students. Roger Graves has cited Broadus as an isolated innovator in writing instruction during the 1920s, but Broadus's approach to writing instruction seems to have more in common with Hill and Wendell than with Fred Newton Scott or Gertrude Buck (Graves 32). Broadus's article is blatantly elitist and proposes not so much to alter pedagogy—Broadus says that “Faulty as our teaching methods are, they are too deeply rooted to be lightly changed” (89)—but to institute exams “in the later stages of the student's undergraduate life, [so that we may] assure ourselves that when he graduates, he will at least not disgrace himself and us by palpable weakness in English” (89). The theme of being ashamed by students' weakness in English runs throughout this article, and students are described as suffering from such afflictions as “fogginess of mind” and such vices as “slovenliness in matters of expression” (80).³⁵

Graves is attracted to what he sees as Broadus's call for tutorials, but Broadus's own description of these teacher-student conferences rings of intellectual imperialism: “frequent individual conferences in which the instructor will not only criticize the form of the theme, but also lead the student on to a free discussion of its content[;] such a course ceases to be an irksome drill and becomes a veritable [*sic*] enfranchisement of the mind” (88).³⁶ One suspects that Broadus's own tutorials might have been monologues rather than dialogues; one student relates the stern lecture he received from Broadus upon visiting his office (McMaster 6). Broadus, however, did not do the formal tutoring at Alberta. In a follow-up article, “A Plan for Dealing with Weakness in English,” he describes the work of the Committee's single tutor. The Committee had designated one member of the English department to provide “private tuition,” a practice that Graves understandably sees as progressive. But again in this article, Broadus conceives of students' needs in terms of their *disabilities*. He also frequently invokes an unarticulated standard of “simple lucid English” which he hopes all students can produce (97). More than any other figure in the history of English studies in western Canada, Broadus

seems to have embraced what Ian Hunter calls the “pedagogical technology . . . of moral supervision” (36).

The Committee lasted for four years, and a record of all students reported as deficient over the four years catalogues their ailments and their fate (UAA Committee 70-91-82). Many of these students quit university altogether, but in a letter to President R. C. Wallace on December 11, 1928, Broadus identifies almost fifty students as having made use of the tutorial system in each of its first two years. “[T]he figures quoted above speak for themselves as to the demand,” Broadus says, “and the benefit so far derived by the students is known to every one who has watched its progress” (UAA PP 3/2/4/3/1-6). Progress in the eyes of a Committee on the Use of English would seem likely to consist of the elimination of mechanical errors, not for the purpose of improving students’ ability to communicate, but for the reason often stated in his article and repeated in his letter to Wallace: “preventing them from disgracing us after graduation” (UAA PP 3/2/4/3/1-6).

In this same letter to the president, Broadus asks for funds to continue the tutorial service that for the first two years had been offered through the English department. No funds were forthcoming, and the handling of weak students is funneled back into a more typical classroom setting. McMaster recounts the episode in his short history of the English department:

Mr. Broadus reported that a course to be called English A had been organized for special instruction of backward students, particularly foreigners, and that Miss Mary Martin had been appointed as instructor in that course. Mr. Broadus also asked instructors in English 1 to prepare lists of their students possessing foreign names.” (What was a foreign name in Alberta in 1930? Certainly not a Scottish one.) The course meets the usual success. Miss Martin reports that students are “attending irregularly or not at all.” In October the Dean opines that attendance can be enforced. In December the President wishes “to have the

matter left in his hands for a few days,” and by way of encouragement suggests “that owing to financial difficulties it might be necessary to offer English A on alternative years only.” (7)

Broadus’s attempts to deal with weakness in student writing over his twenty-eight years at Alberta contained no innovations, and seems to have been tinged with elitism and ethnocentrism, or what Sam Robinson calls in the Saskatchewan context “saxonism.” His desire to address this issue seems never to have been motivated by a sense of utility or service to the sciences or professional schools, although he did approve a request for a lecture on business English.³⁷ The motivation is enculturation and cultivation, the desire to eradicate shameful mistakes, and to appear Eastern and sophisticated rather than midwestern and boorish. This dirty work, as was common in the US and as we saw was the case at Saskatchewan, fell to untenured female instructors like Miss Martin.

Broadus concludes his article on the weakness of students by noting that a mix of midwestern and eastern schools have adopted something like the Harvard remedial plan. The results Broadus reported are that the program failed in the Midwest and succeeded in the East. His reasoning was as follows:

It seems to me that the success or failure of this plan depends upon the existence of certain qualities and conditions in the given institution especially upon organization, personnel and something which I am compelled to characterize rather vaguely as atmosphere. . . . I think that I am not wrong in believing that a scheme which would probably fail at Wisconsin or Illinois, but which is succeeding at Harvard, will succeed with us. In the East, and measurably in the West [California, specifically Stanford], we are still, as far as the *spirit* of education goes, in the English tradition. Still, despite all our scientific and industrial research councils, I hope that we are concerned less with getting tangible economic result in education than with inculcating a state of mind. (96)

Harvard's influence on Broadus and writing instruction at the University of Alberta comes through not only in his implementation of an entrance exam, but in the formation of committees to deal with problems that he sees the University of Alberta sharing with Harvard. His critique of the Midwest's state universities also suggests that he saw the practical work of his department as still being connected to a traditional English, elitist model of education. In other words, he could in good conscience consider his practical work to be within the proper jurisdiction of his profession. If he thought about Canadian national identity at all, he would have thought about it in the imperialist tradition: Canada as an extension of the British Empire.

Eliminating Writing Instruction

At the same time that the department was struggling to provide effective remedial work, taught by an untenured woman like Miss Martin in charge of English A, on December 6, 1930 the department as a whole rejected a proposal to make English 3, a course for Agriculture students, a composition course.

Mr. Gordon reported a request from Dean Howes to have English 3 again made available as a compulsory course for students in Agriculture. The department felt, however, that it could not at present offer the course on account of the burden of essay marking it would entail. Mr. Jones suggested that the kind of course he would like to see given instead of English 3 as at present defined would be a course of reading, to be conducted informally like a reading club, and registration in it to be optional. The department approved of this suggestion, and asked Mr. Jones to report to Dean Howes the substance of the discussion. (UAA Minutes 70-91-68)

J. T. Jones, the third person to join the department, reported on December 20 that Howes had agreed to make the course a reading rather than writing course, but he preferred to make it compulsory.

This exchange between the English department and the College of Agriculture suggests the degree to which the English department at Alberta in 1930 could define and defend its professional jurisdiction. While it is unclear exactly what Dean Howes hoped to have this course accomplish, the concern for writing instruction expressed in the past, and after this decision, suggests that the College would in fact have preferred a composition class. The English department was willing to accept responsibility for remedial work via English A or the Committee on the Use of English by Students when its least valued members took on that task, but avoided the work of composition when it required a full-fledged member of the profession to teach a course.

A second clear example of the shifting nature of the work of Alberta's English department parallels a change at Saskatchewan in the 1930s. In 1937, English 1 at Alberta was dropped from the Faculty of Arts and offered as a course in the College of Agriculture. The department discussed the impending changes at a November 24, 1936 meeting. Three decisions were made: (1) that the lecture classes be divided into sections on Fridays "for the purpose of close questioning on the material of the current reading and lectures"; (2) that essays "be based strictly on the assigned readings" and that "[a]fter marking they will be returned to the students with brief comment wherever it may appear necessary to point out the error of fact or grammar"; and (3) "The above plans will apply also to the course given in Mount Royal College" [in Calgary] (UAA Minutes 72-107-1).

Although never discussed, the reason for shifting English 1 from a university-wide Arts requirement to a College of Agriculture requirement is presumably the same as the reason at Saskatchewan: more students were coming to university with Senior rather than Junior matriculation and the public schools in Alberta were improving in quality. This change of the student body enabled the English department to pursue the work it always deemed to be its appropriate responsibility, limiting the teaching of writing to the marking of grammatical errors. The department also performed an interesting jurisdictional move by assigning the

composition and literature class to another College, and leaving it almost exclusively to a junior member of the department, Clarence Tracy. The complete fruition of the Harvardization of English at Alberta was discussed only weeks before Broadus died, and implemented the year after his death.

What we see from the junior curriculum at the University of Alberta between 1908 and 1937 was not an extension of the Toronto curriculum, but an attempt to adapt Harvard ideas about first- and second-year English to higher education in Alberta. The entrance exam and the Committee on the Use English are signs of Broadus accepting a gate-keeping role for his profession in this young nation; his desire to end the teaching of writing suggests his desire to recognize the coming of high culture, in his terms, to Alberta. In Gellner's terms, however, the end of composition recognizes only the success of high schools to prepare workers for an advanced industrial society in which high culture is an orderly system of ideas.

The University of British Columbia: A tempered Harvard influence

The evidence of Harvard's influence at the University of British Columbia is not as voluminous as the evidence for the Alberta connection, but UBC's first English department head, Garnet Sedgewick was a Harvard PhD (1910) and he established a balance between literature and composition in the junior curriculum at UBC that lasted throughout his tenure (1918-47).³⁸ Sedgewick's personality and beliefs are more difficult to pin down than Broadus's—they certainly do not line up clearly with Hill, Wendell, or even Kittredge of Harvard. He was a first rate scholar: Watson Kirkconnell, in his memoirs *A Slice of Canada*, says that "explosively irrepressible" Sedgewick and his first mentor, the "punctilious but mellow" Archibald MacMechan took center stage at a national conference of Canadian scholars in English in 1928 (234).³⁹ A. S. P. Woodhouse considered his mentor, W. J. Alexander, and Sedgewick to be the foremost Canadian critics of the first half of the twentieth century.⁴⁰ Sedgewick's work was never as philological as his Harvard mentor Kittredge's, and some of

his publications on liberal education and first-year teaching suggest that in fact Sedgewick was something of an Hegelian-Arnoldian idealist like MacMechan.⁴¹ Sedgewick refers to himself as a Victorian, but he was also called a communist for his role in the Vancouver Civil Liberties Union.⁴²

The following account of the Harvard influence on Sedgewick can merely suggest, then, that we should not expect to find the Harvard composition program transferred in tact to UBC. Where Broadus had his roots in the soil of the eastern seaboard, and consciously turned to Harvard for direction in policy and practice, Sedgewick was not as firmly attached to the practices of Cambridge. On two points, however, the Harvard imprint is evident: (1) in a letter to President Westbrook, Sedgewick refers to Harvard as a model for structuring the junior curriculum, and (2) Sedgewick organizes the first-year course as two linked components—literature and composition—although he examines on the areas separately, an arrangement that resembles the early Harvard conception of the two functions of English. On the issue of nation-building, however, Sedgewick is ambivalent. He distances himself from any overt participation in a crude nation-building process, but his curriculum, as an extension of Harvard's composition program and as an introduction to high culture in Gellner's sense, played an important role for British Columbians to establish their place in the advanced industrial society of early twentieth-century North America.

Sedgewick arrived at UBC in 1918 after seven years at Washington University in St. Louis. The Harvard model for his English department was in tact and underwent very few changes during his tenure. Upon arriving, he informed President Westbrook that composition must be taught in tutorials of no more than thirty and not through lecture, that students must meet with their instructors frequently, and that no instructor should have more than seventy students a semester.⁴³ While this arrangement is not exactly that of Harvard's daily theme program, it implies intensive writing instruction through close student-teacher relations. Sedgewick claims this pattern can be found in hundreds of institutions in North America, and

Harvard, as Stewart has argued, was the standard most departments followed. Sedgewick's plans do not acknowledge the Toronto approach to the junior curriculum as an influence in any significant way.

The course descriptions of first and second year English at UBC look different from Alberta's descriptions; UBC's literature and composition are identified as separate courses in the Calendar. Students would, however, take both courses as part of their English requirement. The course description for 1920-21, for example, lists literature and its readings separate from composition. Composition is described as addressing "Elementary forms and principles of composition, expository themes; study of models" (*UBC Calendar 1920-21*, 95). Both literature and composition met two hours per week. In their second year at UBC, students again took two hours of literature, but only one hour of composition. Composition now consisted of "Narrative and Descriptive Themes; the writing of reports" (96). Literature was unquestionably used as a model for composition, but as Nan Johnson and others have argued, this belletristic approach to composition was common at the turn of the century, and persisted as a practice well into the first quarter of the twentieth century (Johnson, *Nineteenth-Century Rhetoric* 16).

Sedgewick's exam for 1926 makes evident the kinds of tasks expected of students in his class. The exam he prepared for English 1B (the composition component) asks students to correct faulty sentences, criticize and revise outlines, analyze a prose selection about Wordsworth (including its unity, arrangement, and coherence), and develop their own plan for an essay entitled "A Comparison between Modern Poetry and the Poetry of the Romantic Revival." This exam was given along with the exam to English 1A, the literature component. The tasks asked of the students are all clearly part of the current-traditional approach to rhetoric, and are seen as distinct from literary interpretation. Le Baron Briggs, in his defense of the Harvard entrance exam, saw the correction of faulty sentences as good indication of

students' ability because they could not prepare set answers at home. Sedgewick's reference to unity, arrangement, and coherence illustrates his familiarity with Wendell's work.

The work of first- and second-year English at UBC valued literature and composition as, in Susan Miller's words, "elements that a properly evolving national culture would require" (51). Sedgewick, however aware he was of being a "long distance from the ocean of prevailing thought" and however aware he was of the provincial nature of his students, advocated an education of the whole person and not simply a training of workers ("Of Disillusionment" 707). He commended his first-year students for "show[ing] no signs . . . of leaning towards some common and utterly benighted forms of nationalism" (708). Nationalism, Sedgewick says, is "bad humanity" (708). While the claim to be above petty nationalism is common among humanists, few Canadian scholars were as generous as Sedgewick in seeing the value of American experiments in education.

We love to think of ourselves [Canadian scholars] as rigorous and thorough and conservative and secure, and to sneer at educational experiment, particularly if it is American, as faddism and confession of weakness. I know that some of my friends and colleagues do so, even though we have been trained, for the most part, under a generous American hospitality, and furnished with such colour and breadth as we possess by that very experimentation which we affect to fear. ("Unity" 367)

Sedgewick's antinationalism and appreciation of American education suggests that in fact he would freely have admitted the influence of Harvard on his junior curriculum. He did not see his work as furthering the economic or political cause of his nation or region, but he saw and appreciated in his students a "contemporary spirit which animates them," a spirit he encouraged rather than squashed ("Of Disillusionment" 709).

The influence of Harvard on Sedgewick is less direct, or more filtered by other experiences, than is the influence of Harvard on Broadus. But composition was an openly

acknowledged part of the junior curriculum at UBC, and not simply promised as part of the teaching of literature. Literature and composition appear to have worked together as part of a process of refining and the culturing the young citizens of British Columbia, but Sedgewick envisioned this education as part of their education into humanity. The Canadian discourse surrounding composition was not as openly infused with the industrial and commercial language surrounding composition in the US, but even composition in the US, Miriam Brody argues, “retain[ed] its discursive interplay between truth-seeking, virtuous enterprise and the heroic masculine” (125). The differences between nations between 1909 and 1937 was largely a difference of emphasis, and writing instruction was a pedagogical technology applied in both countries—with slightly different emphases—in the service of nation-building.

In sum, the Harvard influence at Alberta and British Columbia circumvented the potential Toronto influence between 1908 and 1938. The work of the junior curriculum at each university balanced literature and composition. The composition instruction was current-traditional in nature, and drew heavily on literary models, but the English department conceived of the work being done in first- and second-year courses as logically divisible into two practices. To say from a contemporary perspective that the courses did not offer writing instruction is to impose an anachronistic standard. The “Harvardization of English departments” is an applicable term for understanding the work at Alberta and British Columbia, and the extent of the Harvard emulation at Alberta suggests that the term “Harvardization” might also encompass other features than the three Donald Stewart privileges. The Harvardization of English at Alberta and British Columbia also makes a very strong case for the continental similarities in writing instruction practice. The leading professionals in these two departments, Broadus and Sedgewick, were somewhat removed from the obvious work of nation-building—the composition and technical writing courses of Manitoba, for example—but the Harvard curriculum, as Susan Miller and Miriam Brody argue, was already a well-honed

tool for nation-building. As a pedagogical technology for character- and nation-building, the Harvard curriculum worked equally well in Canada as in the US.

The New Professionalism

I have discussed the history of writing instruction in western Canada between 1908 and 1937 almost as if the departments operated unaware of one another. In some respects, this was so. The two-thousand miles between Winnipeg and Vancouver would have been an immense expanse to traverse early in the century, and not until 1926 did the English departments of western Canada organize a conference for themselves.⁴⁴ The *professionals*—the men—met in both 1926 and 1927 to share their problems and research. Watson Kirkconnell, then a member of the English department at United College (affiliated with the University of Manitoba), attended both meetings and reports on each in his memoir, *A Slice of Canada*:

The conferences were a great success. As teachers, we discussed such professional matters as remedial English (referred to us by the National Conference of Canadian Universities for study), high school curricula, the proper character of examination papers, and modern philosophies of education. Equally important were scholarly papers in which individuals put some of their special research wares on the table and received the criticism and encouragement of men in their own field. (234)

Kirkconnell's report is a clear illustration of how wide the jurisdiction of English departments was in the late 1920s, even if remedial instruction was an issue referred to the professionals from an external force. In 1928, the westerners were invited to University College, Toronto, for what Kirkconnell says "marked the widest geographical extension of the "English Conferences" (234).

The profession of English studies in North America was at a crossroads in the late 1920s. Gerald Graff illustrates a shift in the profession through John Livingston Lowes's

MLA Presidential Address of 1927. Lowes and his Harvard colleague Irving Babbitt had engaged in “lively public combat” about criticism and scholarship, but Graff says, “anyone who heard Lowes’s MLA address might have thought it was Babbitt himself speaking” (*Professing* 143). Lowes was critical of the excessive specialization of literary studies at the time, and called upon his colleagues to find a “constructive end” for “our accumulations” (143 in *Professing*). Two years later, Graff says, William Nitze was defending scholarship against the critics, citing the work of Lowes and John Matthews Manly for support, yet also seeing that scholarship had not managed to unite the field of literary studies (143–44).

Philology had never firmly established itself in Canada, but the Canadian scholars’ sense of being both superior to American scholars because they avoided such scholasticism but inferior to American scholars because they were not as rigorous in their work prevented the Canadians from ever feeling secure about their own state of professionalism. Individuals like Woodhouse and Brown were world-class scholars representing historical research and humanist criticism respectively, but not until American philology passed from the scene could Canadian scholars in general begin to feel certain about their place in the academic community. Garnet Sedgewick’s paper delivered at the first conference of professors of English in Canada in 1928 entitled “The Unity of the Humanities” notes the very shift in the profession Graff identifies. He also connects the unity of the humanities to Canada’s familiar educational guide, Matthew Arnold.

Sedgewick first identifies an exchange in the May 1928 *Atlantic Monthly* between Classics Professor Paul Shorey and Sir Alfred Lord Whitehead about the merits of “breadth and specialisation” (358). The answer, Sedgewick thinks, is suggested by Manly of Chicago:

Professor Manly, if I understand him, has been suggesting—and the suggestion comes with peculiar force from him—that the term of intensive and narrowly-confined studies in Chaucer is in sight: that fruitful investigation of Chaucer must hereafter be a process that calls the imagination into larger play. (358)

Manly's suggestion, along with the statement's by Lowes and Nitze, authorized Canadian scholars to pursue the primarily historical and humanistic study they had been engaged in. And more importantly, perhaps, the capitulation of philology left historical and humanistic studies the claim to representing professional literary study.

The Depression and the Second World War made similar meetings impossible until after the War, but professional activities such as these conferences are signs of a shift in the Canadian academy and English departments specifically. Scholars would no longer earn their reputation as teachers only, but pursued research and publication as a part of the professional work of the discipline. This new professionalism in Canada also happened to emerge at the same time that discussion of general education came to the forefront of education debates in the US. The period of intense nation-building in both countries, 1880-1929, was followed by a period of re-assessment, and general education appeared to offer an alternative to what had become highly specialized and utilitarian curriculums. Chapter 4 is an examination of the general education movement in the US and Canada, with a focus on the Chicago Plan and the Harvard Redbook, two American initiatives influential in western Canada.

CHAPTER 4. THE GENERAL EDUCATION MOVEMENT IN NORTH AMERICA (1929-1946)

Professional jurisdictions, Abbott notes, are worked out through local practices and national claims. I am arguing, however, that claims about education, English studies, and writing instruction made in the US during the first half of this century were having an impact throughout the continent. Western Canadian educators were particularly open to claims about education being made in the American Midwest and at Harvard. The University of Wisconsin was the most popular institutional model for western Canadian universities at the beginning of the century because it balanced utility and culture. Midwestern experiments in general education, which tried to correct the tendency towards specialization and over-emphasis on science or utility in higher education, proved to be as popular in western Canada as had the Wisconsin Idea. Harvard, however, continued to represent the pinnacle of American education, and Harvard's ideas about education always received a hearing in western Canada.

This chapter connects the general education plans and experiments at the Universities of Chicago, Minnesota, and Harvard University with general education initiatives in western Canadian universities. These American institutions, much like the ones identified in chapter 2, represented certain models or values to Canadian educators: Chicago, under the Presidency of Robert Maynard Hutchins, represented aristocratic values in education; the University of Minnesota represented progressive education; and Harvard, on the basis of its 1945 report, *General Education in a Free Society* (more commonly known as the Redbook) represented democratic values in education.⁴⁵ These values were contested even within these institutions—Chicago had a strong democratic tradition and Minnesota and Harvard had strong aristocratic traditions—but I am primarily concerned with the cultural and political values these schools came to represent. Writing instruction was also a part of these general education plans; in my discussion of each institution, I will identify how writing instruction was affected by the general education plans.

After characterizing the three American institutions, I will identify the extent of liberal education initiatives and reforms at the four western Canadian universities: The University of Manitoba attempted to follow both Chicago and Harvard, but was unsuccessful in making significant changes to its curriculum; Saskatchewan followed the Chicago Plan and made the most radical curricular changes of any of the western Canadian universities; Alberta's second President, R. C. Wallace, wrote a monograph encouraging professional education that had some similarities with the Minnesota General College, and the university as a whole expressed interest in the Harvard Redbook; and Garnet Sedgewick of British Columbia was always thoroughly aware of American educational experiments, but he chose to focus liberal education efforts on his upper-division students rather than junior students. One of his last acts as department head, however, was to suggest ways in which UBC could implement suggestions from the Harvard Redbook.

The general education movement in North America brought about a significant change in the profession of English studies. Gerald Graff says: "No development had more influence in securing the fortunes of criticism in universities and secondary school than the movement for general education revived and restated by Robert Maynard Hutchins of Chicago in the 1930s and institutionalized after World War II" (*Professing* 162). General education often meant a defense of the humanities and a privileging of the reading and criticism of English. The teaching of literature, in other words, began to emerge as a pedagogical technology of nation-building in its own right, and had the dual effect of pushing writing instruction outside the jurisdiction of English departments, but also creating a new kind of professional: the writing instructor independent of English departments. The writing faculties at the Universities of Chicago and Minnesota, for example, were pioneers in establishing a professional identity separate from the English department. Both effects are evident in the history of writing instruction in the US; in Canada, no new group of professional writing instructors emerged.

Roger Graves lists a number of changes in the education in the United States, including “the progressive education movement [and] the development of general education and communication courses” which he says *did not* affect writing instruction in Canada (32). My argument in this chapter is that these movements *did* in fact affect writing instruction in western Canada, only they affected writing instruction negatively rather than positively. In chapter 3, I argued that writing instruction was very much a part of the junior curriculum in English in western Canada between 1908 and 1937, but the onset of general education and the professionalization of literary criticism, as described by Graff, started the process of more narrowly defining the jurisdiction of English departments. The Harvard Redbook in particular served as an influential source to justify marginalizing writing instruction in western Canada. In terms of the tasks of this study, then, this chapter will re-assess Graves’ claim that progressive education, general education, and communication courses did not affect writing instruction in Canada. It will also modify Patricia Jasen’s related claim that the general education movement in the US had limited effect in Canada (298). This chapter will also continue to advance the argument that education in North America needs to be understood in continental, rather than national terms: the same educational trends that dominated the US between 1929 and 1946 dominated educational experimentation in western Canadian universities.

General Education in American Universities

The modern general education movement has its roots at Columbia University, which in 1917, according to Daniel Bell’s history of general education, offered a course in “War Issues” and “Peace Issues” called “Contemporary Civilization” (14). Columbia University may have initiated the general education movement in the US, but the most prominent general education experiments of the late 1920s and early 1930s were in the Midwest at the University of Chicago, the University of Wisconsin, and the General College at the University of

Minnesota. Chicago and Minnesota in particular were looked to as models for American and Canadian schools on the Great Plains.⁴⁶ The state universities in Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska were influenced by, or shared in some part the same liberal culture, aristocratic values as Chicago.⁴⁷ The land-grant colleges in Iowa and Kansas had more in common with the progressive, utilitarian program at Minnesota than with the Chicago Plan.⁴⁸ The influence of Chicago and Minnesota on western Canadian institutions will be developed below. The Harvard Redbook was not issued until 1945, but had the same kind of blanket effect as did Harvard's composition program at the turn of the century: it influenced almost every corner of higher education in North America.

The University of Chicago: Aristocratic plan, democratic practices

Robert Maynard Hutchins burst onto the North American educational scene in 1929 when, at the age of 30, he assumed the presidency of the University of Chicago. In this section, I will emphasize three points about the University of Chicago: (1) the educational philosophy of Hutchins and the Chicago Plan, including the challenge to that philosophy issued from within; (2) the Chicago curriculum Hutchins imagined, and the one that other universities copied; and (3) the nature of writing instruction proposed by Hutchins and carried out in his university. The Chicago Plan for general education was the reform movement most visible to western Canadians, and Canadian scholars as diverse as E. K. Brown, Marshall McLuhan, and Ernest Sirluck came in close contact with Hutchins and Chicago at various times in their careers.⁴⁹ The Chicago Plan, however, did not actually represent the curriculum at Chicago, a fact which explains why his own faculty and John Dewey were among the most vocal critics of Hutchins and Adler.

To understand the significance of Hutchins to Canadian educators, one must first understand the nature of the University of Chicago before Hutchins. The University of Chicago, led by President William R. Harper, was founded in 1892 as primarily a graduate

school focused on research. By 1910, says Veysey, a “research-oriented observer . . . would have listed Harvard, Chicago, Columbia, and Johns Hopkins” as the “leading American universities” (171). Because of this focus on research, Chicago was not initially a significant role-model for western Canadian universities. When Hutchins became President in 1929, the schools of the Canadian West began to take notice. In 1941, Hutchins’s primary ally at Chicago, philosopher Mortimer Adler, described the difference between the Harper years and the Hutchins years:

just as Harper’s Chicago reflected and formulated the “religion of science” which dominated American culture from the nineties to the thirties, so Hutchins’s Chicago, in the past ten years, has focused attention upon—more than that, has become the leading forum for—the crucial issue of our day; *whether science is enough, theoretically or practically.* (32-33)

The University of Chicago’s mouthpiece, President Hutchins, began to speak about education in a way familiar to Canadians. This concern for the dominance of science in western Canadian universities is largely what motivated general education experiments there, and Chicago was a geographically and ideologically appropriate role model.⁵⁰

Hutchins’s philosophy was most clearly articulated in *The Higher Learning in America* (1936). Hutchins described the external conditions influencing higher education in the 1930s—the love of money, a confused notion of democracy, and an erroneous notion of progress. He considered higher education in American to be facing the dilemma of trying to offer both a traditional and professional education. *Higher Learning* and other words by Hutchins proposed a new structure for American education: general education spanning the junior year in high school to the sophomore year in college open to all Americans and higher education for students with the interest and ability to pursue specialized training in an academic field. Hutchins’s proposals for general education held the greatest interest for Canadian educators because of its emphasis on great books and a de-emphasis on specialization.

Western Canadian English departments aspired to such a curriculum, but as we saw in chapter 3, they were often forced to be more practical in their implementation of the junior curriculum. The great books, of course, were only one part of his proposal: “We have then for general education a course of study consisting of the greatest books of the western world and the arts of reading, writing, thinking and speaking, together with mathematics, the best exemplar of the processes of human reason” (Hutchins 85). His proposal was often confused with the structure already in place at the College in the University of Chicago. Hutchins notes that their present arrangement of divisions—humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, and biological sciences—served “to mitigate and not remove the disunity, discord, and disorder that have overtaken our educational system” (60). Canadian educators cited Hutchins as an innovator in general education, but the structure of the University of Chicago’s college was as influential, if not more influential, than was Hutchins’s educational philosophy.

One of his faculty members, Harry D. Gideonse of economics, responded to Hutchins to clarify that in fact Hutchins was not speaking for the whole university and that the current divisions structure was working very well. Gideonse considered Hutchins’s notion of democracy to be particularly confused, as Hutchins argued for pluralism in the curriculum but clearly privileged a Platonic-Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition of education alien to American philosophies of education (6-9). A democratic curriculum would not simply be one that admitted all students—Hutchins’s plan for general education. It would also be one that was determined by a community of scholars to be relevant to students, a curriculum that would be continually open to revision and the democratic process of selection. Gideonse says: “the test for deciding the inclusion or exclusion of a given subject matter in the curriculum must be its significance for living the life of our society. Nothing, however, should be included in such a curriculum merely because it has the prestige that comes with antiquity or because it is called a classic” (14). Gideonse work, we will see, was also known in western Canada, but generally rejected as part of the American pragmatic tradition of education.⁵¹

The curriculum of the University of Chicago College had a clearly identifiable structure. The College was reorganized into four basic divisions: the humanities, the biological sciences, the physical sciences, and the social sciences. Milton Mayer's memoir of Hutchins describes some of the other features of the curriculum: "[T]he elective system was invaded by year-long general courses in the four divisional fields. The course-credit system was junked" (99). In order to receive their baccalaureate, students took a series of comprehensive exams, administered by an independent board of examiners (Mayer, 99). Frederick Rudolph's history of curriculums describes the examination process in more detail:

Completion of the work of the college was measured by the passing of seven comprehensive examinations, of which five—English composition, humanities, social science, physical science, and biological science—were required. The other two comprehensive examinations were second examinations, calling for a greater depth and wider knowledge, in any two of the four general groups.

(278)

Many of the Chicago reforms were not Hutchins's ideas, but what Rudolph calls "imaginative and liberating reforms" quickly came to be associated with him and the University of Chicago. The ideals that Adler and Hutchins both wanted—the Socratic method used to learn from the greatest books of the Western world—were difficult, if not impossible to achieve at Chicago. Yet these ideas held considerable interest, if not sway, at other institutions struggling to regain a liberal arts curriculum after a quarter of a century or more of specializing in scientific or utilitarian education.

As we see from Rudolph's description of the examination process, composition was an integral part of the Chicago curriculum. It was not considered a "division," but it was the one skill the university deemed necessary for all students to have. Hutchins argued that grammar, logic, and rhetoric have a place in general education, but composition as taught in American universities is currently a "feeble and debased imitation of the classical rules of writing" (83).

Hutchins was a serve critic of the character-building notion in education, but ironically his preference for the *trivium* and mental discipline was a preference for exactly the kind of high culture Ernest Gellner says is crucial for building an advanced industrial nation. Hutchins favored an ordered system of ideas and “correctness in thinking” (67). *The Educational Objectives of the College in the University of Chicago* , cited in Gideonse, identifies English Composition as being closely related to the four divisions. Although he does not discuss the role of composition at any further length, he presumably would have considered it an appropriate part of the curriculum as long as others also considered it relevant to “twentieth-century life in all its phases” (12).

The clearest description of writing instruction at The University of Chicago is provided by Henry W. Sams in a collection describing *The Idea and Practice of General Education*. Sams’s educational philosophy seems aligned with Gideonse’s philosophy rather than Hutchins’s. Sams discusses the importance of writing for the College, and does not disparage the current work in composition or general education. Writing instruction at Chicago was divided into three parts: (1) English Deficiency (itself divided into writing and reading deficiency courses); (2) English, the regular course into which most students enter; and (3) Humanities 3, a course which emphasized style and presumed preparation in the regular English course (206-09). What is most striking about Sams’s description of writing in the College, however, is the sense of professional identity which his staff, hired exclusively for teaching writing in the College, was beginning to develop:

Its status as an independent staff in the faculty organization has contributed much to the sense of responsibility with which each teacher approaches his work and to the effective introduction of writing into other phases of College work. There is reason to hope that, by persistence in its present activities, by constant refinement of detailed classroom procedures, and by assimilation of ideas being developed in vigorous courses at other institutions, the College may

in time bring rhetoric to the level of importance and utility in general education which it lost during the years in which undergraduate education was dominated by encyclopedic curriculums. (210)

On the basis of Sams's report, and corroborating evidence from Minnesota, we will see that the general education movement in the US was a fore-runner of the communications movement of the 1940s. Sams, his staff, and the staff at Minnesota began to conceive of writing instruction as a legitimate area of professional concern because the jurisdiction of education itself was being redrawn around issues of significance for contemporary life, not simply around great books.

In sum, the educational philosophy of Hutchins struck a cord with western Canadian audiences. An American at a prestigious research institute was talking about great books, the unity of the curriculum, and critiquing specialization: all topics near and dear to most humanists in Canada. The clear structure of the Chicago curriculum—its four divisions—offered a model for western Canadian universities to emulate, although few could reproduce it in whole. Neither Hutchins nor Gideonse denigrated the idea of writing instruction, and for Canadian reformers most interested in emulating the Chicago Plan, incorporating writing instruction into general education reforms seemed an appropriate strategy. Only in the late 1940s did general education reform plans of western Canada begin to leave writing instruction out of their jurisdiction.

The University of Minnesota: Democratic and progressive reforms

The same tension between aristocratic and democratic philosophies of education that existed at Chicago also existed at Minnesota. James Gray, in his history of the University of Minnesota, says the tension was relieved through the founding of two separate Colleges within the university: University College (1930), designed for gifted and motivated students, and General College (1932), designed for students seeking an overview of selected topics, rather

than specialized knowledge (309). The General College proved to be the real innovation at Minnesota, and was a much more influential experiment than was University College. This section will elaborate on (1) the philosophy of the General College, (2) the curriculum in the General College and (3) the place of writing instruction in the General College. The Minnesota experiment did not receive the wide-spread attention that the Chicago's Plan received, but it influenced the thinking of the president of the University of Alberta, and its use of English Laboratories for the treatment of writing as a clinical problem paralleled practices in western Canada, as we have already seen in chapter 3.⁵²

Because of its contrast with the University College and its emphasis on "overview," the General College was often thought to have a remedial focus.⁵³ James Gray acknowledges that this was a common perception, but insists that the College offered "a curriculum which the best creative minds of the university had contributed their finest insights into the fundamentals of their fields" (315). The philosophy of the College, according to Ivol Spafford in her introduction to a description of the College, was to "help people to live richly and fully in all relationships of life, and to meet the many and varied problems of living in ways satisfying to themselves and society" (1). The two-year College resembled Hutchins' plan for a two year general education, and Spafford also notes that general education can complement advanced, specialized, training. But the underlying philosophy of the College was the democratic principle Gideonse, not Hutchins, advocated. The curriculum had been created democratically by a committee of experts, as Gray notes, and did not espouse a metaphysics or a theology unifying the College's work.

The curriculum was also much more concerned with addressing human needs and issues than Hutchins imagined his general education curriculum to be. Gray describes a human biology course that told the story of life "from the ovum to the grave"; physics and chemistry were concerned with things like "the chemical compound common to paper . . . rayon, pine lumber, straw, cellophane, cotton cloth, dynamite, and photographic film"; and courses in

developmental psychology, public opinion, modern world studies, and fine arts all had similar frames of reference (316). In these respects, the College resembled progressive education experiments in the tradition of John Dewey and Alexander Meiklejohn.⁵⁴ Students of the General College could receive an Associate's Degree in two years, and/or continue on to earn a Bachelor in the regular university program. Edward Eddy Jr. suggests that the Minnesota program had a strong appeal for land-grant colleges which found little relevance in Hutchins's reforms, but the curriculum would have been perceived as too practical by most of the traditionalists in Canada (Eddy 156).

Writing instruction played an important role in the College, but composition class was not compulsory. The approach to writing instruction in the College, in fact, was innovative and insightful, and the practitioners appear to have had the same sense of professionalizing themselves as did the writing instructors at the University of Chicago. The nature of the Writing Laboratory at the General College is most fully described by F. S. Appel in the collection written by Spafford and others. Appel authored the text for the course, *Write What You Mean*, and he moved the focus of the course away from correctness toward expression:

The work of the course is premised upon the observation that the single worst fault of all student writing is the use of vague generalizations. Indefinite expression actually blocks communication, whereas even misspellings or dangling construction merely cause temporary confusion. (293)

While still within a current-traditional framework that treated a single issue, removed from the context of communication, as the problem to be addressed, this course at least was concerned with communication and not simply correctness.

The course Appel describes was divided into three quarters. Description and observation were emphasized in first quarter, expository writing, usually on a topic assigned in another course, was emphasized in the second quarter, and students were encouraged to plan work according to their own interests in the third quarter (293-94). The work submitted in this

quarter ranged from satiric poems to essays on socialized medicine to first chapters of novels, but book reports and term papers were the most common kind of submission. In a single week, students would attend a two hour writing period and a one hour lecture period. They would conference every two weeks (294-95). While the instruction was relatively personalized, and instructors experimented with using the new media of their times as prompts for writing—radio dramas and motion pictures appear to have been the most popular—the language of scientific rationality also permeated the English Laboratory (298). Besides the title itself, Appel says the “clinical service” of the laboratory was not limited to the college; help in writing papers for advanced courses was also available (295).

The symbolic re-articulation of writing instruction as scientific rather than remedial, and as connected to everyday life rather than scholastic mental (and moral) discipline, began to legitimate writing instruction as worthy of professional jurisdiction in the US. The professionals in American universities like Chicago and Minnesota, however, were independent of the English department, and could more easily conceive of their work as having a professional jurisdiction distinct from the literary scholars. The writing instructors in western Canada were always part of the English department, and were either permanent sub-professional instructors, or young professionals waiting to get sufficient rank to be relieved of writing instruction duties. It is through the general education movement, with its legitimating of the notion of professional critics, but also opening up the space for professional writing instructors, that we begin to see a significant parting of professional practices in Canada and the US. Writing instruction would continue to be prevalent in western Canadian universities in the late 1950s and 60s, but no sense of professional identity for writing instructors was formed, and no special jurisdiction for writing instruction was claimed. Minnesota’s General College provided a model of liberal education for progressives in western Canada like Alberta’s president, R. C. Wallace, and western Canadian universities shared in the practice of using

writing laboratories to solve writing problems, but on the whole, the Minnesota College was not as influential as the Chicago Plan.

The Harvard Redbook: Democratic claims, aristocratic practices

Chicago and Minnesota represent pre-War general education experiments. They were intended to mitigate against over-specialized and overly scholastic education. Harvard's report, more commonly known as the Redbook, was issued in 1945 and addressed concerns about education in, as the title suggests, a free or democratic society. Daniel Bell, as noted above, drew a contrast between the aristocratic nature of general education at Chicago and the democratic nature of education endorsed by the Harvard Redbook. As with my summary of the other two plans, I will examine (1) the philosophy of the Harvard Redbook, with a special concern for this issue of its democratic nature; (2) the proposed curriculum of the Report (a curriculum that was not fully adopted at Harvard); and (3) the place of writing in the plan for general education. The spirit or philosophy of the Harvard Redbook had more influence than did the actual reforms suggested by the committee.

The Harvard Redbook claimed to embody the two spirits of democracy in America: the Jeffersonian [aristocratic] spirit and the Jacksonian [meritocratic] spirit (27). Later in the report, this role is clarified: "The task of modern democracy is to preserve the ancient ideal of liberal education and to extend it as far as possible to all members of the community" (53). Bell describes the report as democratic in contrast to Chicago's aristocratic approach to education because it attempted to provide "for all citizens 'some common and binding understanding of the society which they will possess in common'" (15). The Harvard Redbook does not, however, embody democracy in general education as Harry Gideonse of Chicago had defined it. The Report lists four previous attempts to find unity in education through common method, great books, contemporary life, and science, but rather than conclude as Gideonse did that any sort of unity cannot hold education together across time and

space, and must therefore be worked out through democratic processes, the Harvard Redbook proposed that an awareness of the need for both heritage and change could unify modern education (36-47). The Report ultimately endorsed a kind of mental training much like Hutchins's plan for higher learning: "education is not merely the imparting of knowledge but the cultivation of certain aptitudes and attitudes in the mind of the young" (64). Such an approach to cultivation and high culture is consistent with Gellner's sense of high culture as an ordered system of ideas.⁵⁵

The curriculum the Report proposed was not innovative. It recommended that College education be divided into three groupings: the humanities, the social sciences, and math and the sciences (204). Students would take one general education course from each grouping, and would have to take six hours of credit outside of the grouping in which most courses were chosen from. Within the humanities grouping, both a "Great Texts of Literature" course and other literature courses were proposed as potential ways of fulfilling the requirement. David Russell notes that few of the reforms suggested by the Report were actually implemented at Harvard, but the elimination of composition courses separate from general education courses was carried out, and writing instruction was to be included as part of the first-year courses in general education (253-54).

The report did offer some potentially innovative ideas about instruction in *communication*, but expressed the traditional jurisdictional belief that when forced to offer writing instruction, "the colleges must do a kind of work in composition which the schools should have done and which the schools should be able to do better than the colleges" (199). To be able to communicate thought was one of four "abilities" the report considered general education should instill: to think effectively, make relevant judgments, and discriminate among values were the other three abilities (65). Literature was considered the best means of offering instruction in language—"The root argument for using, whenever possible, great works in literature courses is briefly this: ours is at present a centrifugal culture in extreme need of

unifying forces” (108)—but the Report did not conceive of literature as the exclusive, nor even the primary means of communication: “the language needs to be neither high learning nor high literature in order to be communication. What we have in mind is the language of a businessman writing a plain and crisp letter, of a scientist making a report, of a citizen asking straight questions, of human beings arguing together on some matter of common interest” (69). The Report’s recommendations for writing instruction included: constant practice, short exercises, relevant assignments, attention to coherence, closeness of observation, integrity of purpose, freshness of attack, observance of minimal essentials in mechanics, and grammar when relevant (112). It also noted that handbooks of composition were to be viewed as etiquette guides, “rarely needed if literary upbringing is wholesome” (112). What the Report and reform did not do was promote the professionalization of writing instruction as the programs at the Universities of Chicago and Minnesota did. The general education reforms at Harvard eliminated the Harvard A course, and did not replace those instructors with any professionalized body of writing instructors.

Why was the Harvard Redbook so influential? Its philosophy was familiar and its curricular innovations limited. Its timing—published in 1945—accounts for its reception as a text espousing democratic views of education. The cultural and professional authority of the Harvard tradition accounts for the attention it received. For educators in western Canada, Harvard still represented the pinnacle of American education, and conservative general education reforms like the ones suggested in the Redbook would be palatable and acceptable to the traditionalists in Canada.

General Education in Western Canadian Universities

This section will provide a history of general education in western Canadian universities between 1929 and 1946. The history of this educational movement is crucial to a history of writing instruction in western Canada because English departments were often

deeply invested in general education reform on their campuses; general education was about redefining professional jurisdiction, among other things. I argued above that general education in the US played an important role in professionalizing writing instruction by establishing academic units for writing separate from the English department. This pattern is not repeated in western Canadian universities—an important point of differentiation in the pattern of writing instruction in the two countries.

The general education movement in western Canada is also a barometer for assessing nation-building. Attempts to initiate general education reforms were more popular in western Canada than in eastern Canada because, as we saw in chapters 2 and 3, the ideals of liberal education in western Canada had often been sacrificed to the need for practical and professional training. Universities in eastern Canada, established in the nineteenth, rather than twentieth century, gradually allowed professional education into their domains of liberal education. The general education movement in the US may have looked to eastern Canadian educators like an attempt to emulate the balance of liberal education and professional education already achieved at a university like Toronto. The popularity of general education in the American Midwest and the Canadian West, in Willa Cather's words, may have marked the end of the pioneering phases of westward expansion, and a "wave of generous idealism" may have been sweeping over the Great Plains during the 1930s and 40s (238). Cather's idealism is the Hegelian-Arnoldian idealism of Canadian English department, and she is hopeful that "The Classics," which faced their darkest hour during the pioneering stage of westward expansion, will revenge themselves. She says:

One may venture that the children or the grandchildren of a generation that goes to university to select only the most utilitarian subjects in the course of study—among them, salesmanship and dressmaking—will revolt against all the heaped machine-made materialism about them. They will go back to the old sources of culture and wisdom—not as a duty but as a burning desire. (238)

Patricia Jasen's "The English Canadian Liberal Arts Curriculum: An Intellectual History, 1850-1950" provides the most detailed discussion of general education experiments in Canada, or what were more commonly called "liberal education" experiments, but her analysis of this educational trend does not fully account for, nor stress the significance of the interest in general education in *western* Canada. She discusses the general education plans at the Universities of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, but not the plans at Alberta and British Columbia (288). She suggests that Alexander Meiklejohn of the University of Wisconsin Experimental School was an influence in Canada, but does not explicitly note the influence of the Universities of Chicago or Minnesota (286). She suggests that the Harvard Redbook was an effective guide for reform in Canada because it combined "traditional and progressive outlooks," but she suggests an influence on similar *texts* in Canada—J. B. Brebner's *Scholarship for Canada* and Woodhouse and Kirkconnell's *Humanities in Canada*—rather than on specific institutions (298). I will describe general education reform plans (not always carried out) in western Canadian universities, and show the impact of general education on writing instruction at these four universities. I will offer more detail about writing instruction at each of these universities in the next chapter, but draw from this discussion of general education the categories of aristocratic and democratic education as applied to writing instruction.

The University of Manitoba: Plans but no action

University presidents in western Canada were often the initiators in general education reform, just as their American counterparts at Chicago and Minnesota took the lead at their institutions. English departments, which often had the most to gain through such reforms, were usually strong supporters of their presidents. In this discussion of general education at the University of Manitoba, and in my discussion of general education at each western Canadian institution, I will identify (1) the educational philosophies and models of liberal

education that were influential between 1929 and 1946; (2) the role of the English department in general education reform; and (3) the place of writing instruction in general education reform. The University of Manitoba put more time and effort into general education reform than did any other western Canadian university, but by 1950 it had nothing to show for all its committee work and reports.

In 1929, the University of Manitoba was the oldest and largest yet least sophisticated of the western provincial universities. W. L. Morton writes that “There is no evading the conclusion that among the many disabilities of the University of Manitoba was the personal failure of its first president in character, purpose and will” (159). The single-most significant event in its early history, however, was the defalcation of almost \$1,000,000 of its endowment, discovered in 1932.⁵⁶ President MacLean retired shortly after this scandal, and in 1934, Manitoba’s new president, Sidney Earle Smith, brought to the university what Morton says it needed most: “confidence, leadership and presence” (159). Summarizing Smith’s inaugural address, Morton says:

He began by stressing the need to preserve the primacy of the liberal spirit in education, in all branches of study and especially in the liberal arts, its native home. Without the preservation and encouragement of an able and devoted faculty, he declared, no university could flourish. But its inner life secured, the university must recognize and fulfill its many responsibilities to the society which it served and which maintained it. (159-60)

During his tenure at Manitoba (1934-44), Smith became a national spokesperson for general education.

Smith’s clearest public statements on general education took the form of an article for *Queens Quarterly* and a published address. In “The Liberal Arts: An Experiment,” Smith lamented the failings of the Arts courses in Canadian universities, and noted with regret the emphasis on the sciences (3). He went on to describe a series of courses in Western

Civilization that he and a committee at the University of Manitoba were proposing, one to be taken each year for four years. The first course was to “deal with man in his physical environment”; the second course was to “deal with man and the social elements”; the third course was to deal with “man and literature, with man and his expression”; and the fourth courses was to “treat of the fine arts” (11-12). The four-part structure of this reform plan suggests its debt to Chicago, although the Arts were to get two instead of one course at Manitoba. Smith’s allegiance with Hutchins is even clearer in his second address, *Unity of Knowledge*, both because of its title, and its conclusion that “religion . . . can provide the cement wherewith to repair the walls of a badly shaken civilization” (12). Smith’s vision of general education reform, like Hutchins’s Plan, was firmly grounded in a metaphysics and theology, and not in a democratic process.

The plan Smith described in 1944 was never put into effect at Manitoba, and Smith left that same year.⁵⁷ His successor, A. W. Trueman (1944-46), was faced with the problem of increasing post-war enrollment and the case for general education was not raised again until 1949 when President A. H. S. Gillson established a sub-committee of the Arts and Science Committee. This time, the model for general education was the Harvard Redbook, not the University of Chicago. The Report of the Sub-Committee on The Curriculum for the General Degree in the University of Manitoba (1949) identifies the two dominant schools within educational philosophy as the pragmatists and the idealists, but the Manitoba report adopts what it sees as the position of *General Education in a Free Society*, a compromise between these conflicting philosophies (UA 6 Minutes Vol. 5, 21). “The true task of education is, therefore, so to reconcile the sense of pattern and direction deriving from heritage with the sense of experiment and innovation deriving from science that they may exist fruitfully together, as they have never ceased to do throughout our western history” (50 in *General Education*, UA 6 Minutes Vol. 5, 22).

The authors of the Manitoba report were particularly interested in striking a compromise because they were, like most humanists in Canada during that time, Hegelian-Arnoldian idealists, and felt their educational philosophy to be threatened by the public will.

Our province, as yet, has not fully emerged from the frontier stage of social evolution and the pragmatist outlook finds here a favorable climate.

Consequently, a trend toward its characteristic emphases, such as the priority in importance of the present to the past, or of the material and institutional aspects of life as over against the cultural, might easily get out of hand to such an extent as to distort both the structure of the University and the nature of its impact upon the community. (UA 6 Minutes Vol. 5, 26)

Although this Report did not result in the re-arrangement of the curriculum for the General Degree at Manitoba, it is a testament to the extent that idealism persisted, even flourished, at mid-century in western Canada specifically. Canadian educators' antipathy towards pragmatism and progressive education becomes particularly virulent at this time, and sharpens the distinction between American and Canadian educational systems.

The English department at Manitoba played a crucial role in Smith's plans for general education, but its members were less actively involved in Gillson's plan. One of Smith's key appointments as president, E. K. Brown, may have been the first person to discuss Hutchins' Chicago Plan in Manitoba. Laura Groening, Brown's biographer, notes the similarity between a public lecture Brown delivered, and a paper Hutchins had published: "[Brown's] paper, titled 'The Higher Education: New Proposals,' was based on Robert Maynard Hutchins' 'The Higher Learning in America' and it was a forthright advocacy of what was becoming known as 'the Chicago Plan.'" (51). Brown did not participate in the Western Civilization project at the University of Manitoba (he left in 1937), but he and his successor, Roy Daniells, were influential in promoting Sidney Smith's vision of liberal education. Responding to a letter from Daniells, Brown writes on March 6, 1942:

I quite agree with your ideas about what is called in the US "General Education." That is the kind of thing that two thirds or more of our undergraduates should get; and a helter skelter pass course, with its oddments of knowledge does not give. . . . The practical thing, I think, is to devise some new courses, group courses, or division course, or what you will. Make sure that they are given by the best teachers and that they do cover important areas. I think there would be a real chance of exciting S. Smith about this. (UBC RDP 4-3)

While it is difficult to assess the importance of Brown's views on the subject, the Manitoba plan, as we have seen, did in fact devise new courses by division, it did attempt to recruit the best teachers in the divisions (physical sciences, social sciences, literature, and fine arts), and the courses were designed to cover a wide and important range of areas.

Daniells was one of four members of Smith's Western Civilization committee, and as both the letter from Brown and Daniells's subsequent work at Manitoba suggests, he was a catalyst behind the reform plans. The privileging of literature as one of the four courses is distinct from the Chicago Plan, although it is consistent with an emphasis on great books courses extending back to Columbia's courses. Daniells and the English department clearly took a lead in general education reform plans during the Smith years, but the English department showed little interest in the topic when it was revisited in 1949. Daniells was also very interested in attaching writing instruction to the Western Civilization courses, while the issue of how to teach writing appears not to have been a concern to the later committee.

Daniells saw the opportunity to improve students' writing at Manitoba by connecting instruction to the general education experiment, much as Chicago and Minnesota made writing instruction an integral part of general education. In a memo to Smith in which he outlines various possibilities for offering writing instruction, he identifies both the English department and the tutors attached to the "Civilization" course as possible candidates for handling the responsibility of composition.⁵⁸ If such a plan had gone through, Manitoba would not have established a group of writing experts as had Chicago and Minnesota, but it would have acknowledged writing instruction as an integral part of all disciplines, and not simply remedial instruction for high school students.

The absence of any discussion of writing instruction in the 1949 report is a sign of things to come at Manitoba and western Canadian universities. English was still proposed as a requirement of the first and second years—the junior years—but no mention is made of the necessity for writing instruction. Ross, the English department representative on the Committee, was a doctoral student of Woodhouse's at Toronto, and showed no particular predisposition to encourage writing instruction. As an important figure in the new generation of professional scholars in English, Ross would not have benefited in any way from encouraging writing instruction: the proper jurisdiction of the modern scholar in Canada was to be literature.

Neither the Chicago-influenced plan of President Smith nor the Harvard-influenced plan of President Gillson had a significant effect on the students of the University of Manitoba, but the attempts to define the role and function of higher education in Manitoba indicate the degree to which at least this Canadian university was influenced by American schools and experiments. At the level of writing instruction, however, we can see that education in the two countries began to move in different directions. In the early 1940s, Manitoba was still concerned with providing its students with a modicum of writing instruction. By the late 1940s, that concern had largely faded. In the next chapter, I will discuss in more detail the

practice of writing instruction, but the same pattern will hold: with the departure of Daniells in 1946, concern for writing instruction began to fade.

The University of Saskatchewan: Reforms implemented, humanities falter

The implementation of general education reforms at the University of Saskatchewan provides an interesting contrast to the Manitoba plans: there was comparatively little discussion and publicity surrounding the Saskatchewan plan, but the plan was in place before Manitoba began considering general education reform, and it was part of the university curriculum for over twenty years. These differences are due in large part to the personalities of the presidents at Manitoba and Saskatchewan, a point I will develop in my discussion of Saskatchewan's presidents and their educational philosophies. English did not play a significant role in the general education plan, although it continued to be a required course for all students. Writing instruction was not conceived of as integral to the general education philosophy at Saskatchewan and remained completely within the jurisdiction of the English department.

The reform of the Arts course at Saskatchewan, Patricia Jasen says, was the work of men with two different educational philosophies: "Dean Thompson of the Faculty of Arts and Science was a pragmatic man, a scientist interested in promoting Saskatchewan as a research centre, while the university's president, the Reverend J. S. Thomson [1937-1949] was trained in philosophy and was a traditionalist" (290). Neither were as gregarious or ambitious as Sidney Smith of Manitoba, who moved from Winnipeg to the presidency of the University of Toronto and then into federal politics. For this reason, Saskatchewan's general education plan did not receive as much attention as did Manitoba's. The Saskatchewan plan was also not as ambitious as Manitoba's plan, and proposed only one new course. The rest of the courses were simply organized into streams. Jasen describes the plan:

Three separate streams were created from which students would choose when they entered the university: Language and Literature, Social Science, and

Natural Science. . . . [T]he student specialized in one group of subjects and within that group took four courses in one discipline. . . . The most innovative part of this scheme was that students were required to take “General Introductory Classes” in fields outside their own group of subjects. (Jasen, 291; see also Hayden 178-79)

This arrangement was used from 1941-1968, but it largely worked against J. S. Thomson’s plans to introduce liberal culture to Saskatchewan: “the science category attracted over half the students, another third enrolled in the social sciences, but, in 1951, only two and a half percent of the faculty’s students were choosing to concentrate on languages and literature” (Jasen 292). Although neither Thomson nor Thompson clearly articulated democratic views of general education, the students’ freedom to choose their stream of education is closer to Gideonse’s version of democratic general education than either Hutchins’ plans or the scheme presented in the Harvard Redbook.

The English department appears to have had no special input into the general education plans at Saskatchewan. The department head to follow R. A. Wiison, John Lothian, was clearly in line with President Thomson’s philosophy of education and felt a similar sense of loss. In a letter to Roy Daniells upon news of President Smith leaving Manitoba, Lothian said: “I hope you get someone who understands the humanities: they need fostering in Canada. We are being gradually pushed off the map—even off the students’ time-tables—by the laboratories of the scientists, with their high-school mentality and methods!” (July 15, 1944; UBC RDP 4-13). Lothian’s anxiety about the humanities suggests the extent to which the program at Saskatchewan had already begun to favor the sciences in 1944.

The general education reforms at Saskatchewan, influenced by the structure of the College at the University of Chicago, did not accomplish their goal of balancing student’s plan of study, nor did they affect writing instruction in any significant way. Discussions of writing instruction at the University of Saskatchewan between 1929 and 1946 were not connected to

discussions of general education. First-year English was outside the streams and continued to be a required course for all students at Saskatchewan. A summer program that emphasized writing instruction was attempted at Saskatchewan in 1944, but it had no programmatic effect. Writing instruction became a prominent issue in 1949 when Carlyle King took over the headship of the English department from Lothian. King was an important member of Saskatchewan's socialist political party and saw a clear connection between democracy and writing instruction. His insistence upon good writing instruction for Saskatchewan's students, however, was in no way connected to the general education reforms of the university. I will elaborate on King's attitude towards writing instruction in chapter 5.

The University of Alberta: Considering the Minnesota and Harvard plans

The University of Alberta, like the University of Manitoba, considered two models of general education between 1929 and 1946. Alberta's second president, R. C. Wallace was influenced by Minnesota's General College, and the university issued a report, *The Stewart Report on General Education*, influenced by the Harvard Redbook. The English department was mildly sympathetic to Wallace's Minnesota-style plan, and considerably more sympathetic to general education reforms influenced by the Harvard Redbook. Writing instruction was not an integral part of the general education proposals at either time, but the English department did take notice of the need for writing instruction, particularly during and after the War.

President R. C. Wallace (1928-1936), like Saskatchewan's second president, turned the attention of the university toward liberal education. Wallace was the first president of the western Canadian universities to take an interest in general education, and his *A Liberal Education in a Modern World* came out in 1932, the year the General College at Minnesota opened, and four years before Hutchins's *The Higher Learning in America*. A geologist, Wallace's vision of liberal education may have been influenced by *The Liberal College in Changing Society* (1930), written by the Dean of Arts and Sciences at Minnesota, John B.

Johnston. In the two lectures that comprise his work, Wallace addresses the question of whether or not liberal education is possible in this utilitarian age. He comes down primarily on the side of Thomas Henry Huxley, who saw a need in education that Cardinal Newman and Matthew Arnold did not see:

The need for man to understand the world in which he lives, in order to mold that world the more fully to his needs, came as a challenge which could not be dismissed. It is this viewpoint which has transformed our outlook in education and has introduced a utilitarian factor which it is our responsibility now to evaluate and appraise, in order that we may go forward into the future with a clear understanding of the issues. (4)

Wallace's evaluation is that science has brought the world new knowledge, which in turn has inspired a new curriculum. In light of these developments, he poses the question of what should be included and what should be left out of a liberal, university education. His answer is: "Only if there are profound underlying principles, for this time being, it may be sensed rather than clearly enunciated, should any subject be admitted to the rank of university standing" (43-44). Wallace uses this definition to justify the inclusion of Engineering, Agriculture, Home Economics, Nursing, and Librarianship within the university by pointing out the underlying principles of science in the first four disciplines, and the arts foundation of a degree in Librarianship (54-61).

Wallace's lectures make much the same point that John Johnston of Minnesota was making two years earlier: that liberal education, drawing from its liberal-free and *artes liberales* traditions—or scientific and humanistic traditions—was not incompatible with professional education.⁵⁹ Wallace was not arguing that universities should become training schools, but that liberal education accommodate the professions of the modern world. The land-grant colleges of the US provided a model for Wallace. He traces the development of land-grant colleges from their beginnings as "strictly technical colleges" to their present status within the university

community as institutions that do research in “the sciences which underlie agriculture,” among other things (53). The implication of Wallace’s argument is that the University of Alberta, by building the professional programs he has focused on, is moving in the right direction. Returning to a more traditional liberal arts program is not only unnecessary, but a mistake in the context of understanding contemporary needs.

Wallace continued to advocate a general education later in his career as Principal at Queen’s, but like Sidney Smith of Manitoba, his suggestions were seldom implemented. The University of Alberta held its course through his and President Kerr’s administrations (1936-41). Like many Canadian universities, however, Alberta responded favorably to the Harvard Redbook, *General Education in a Free Society: Report of the Harvard Committee*. President Robert Newton (1941-49) was not as integral in pursuing general education as was the faculty of Arts and Sciences itself. Walter Johns says the faculty of Arts and Science “had come to regard its old curriculum as no longer suited to the needs of the times” and adopted a General Reading Course, English 4. This course is described in the university calendar as a course “For students in the schools of Household Economics, Commerce, and Pharmacy, and for students in the first year of the B.Sc., M.D. course, the B.Sc, D.D.S courses, and the B. Sc. in Nursing course” (*University of Alberta Calendar, 1945-46, 276*).

This course reform actually preceded the Harvard Redbook, but it was indicative of the concerns about specialization in university education, increased enrollment in the sciences, and decreased enrollment in the arts at Alberta during the 1940s. In 1948, the university issued the Stewart Report on General Education, a report that hoped to find a way to redress these problems: “the university graduate will emerge as a technician rather than an educated citizen unless he becomes conscious of his place in, and the implications of his field of specialization to, society” (UAA 70-91-81). The committee recommended a summer reading program to enhance general education on campus, but even that simple recommendation was never implemented.

The English department did not initiate general education plans at the University of Alberta, but President Wallace sought feedback from E. K. Broadus, and the Stewart Report's recommendation for a summer reading program was clearly influenced by the English department. A letter, dated March 29, 1932, fulfilled Wallace's request to Broadus for "adverse criticism." Broadus took issue with the qualifying clause in Wallace's criterion that only subjects of profound underlying principles, *sensed or enunciated*, should be included in university study.

If the "profound underlying principles" are for the time being only "sensed" (by which I suppose you mean vaguely guessed at or assumed to be some day discoverable), the given subject is not even on probation as a university subject. When the subject, by independent development has reached a point where it is seen to possess profound underlying principles susceptible of clear enunciation, the University (conceived as a teaching body, not as a collection of isolated investigators employed by a Research Council) can admit it into the curriculum.

(UAA PP 3/2/4/3/1-6)

Broadus says he cheerfully admits the validity of Wallace's criterion without the qualifying clause, but he also adds that "the criterion, strictly and remorselessly applied, would eliminate most of us, and transform the university into what I gladly admit it ought to be—a graduate school, presided over by philosophers of their subject."

Both in this letter, and a letter on January 19, 1934, Broadus openly questions the place of "Household Ec" in the university. In the later letter, he is complaining of a time change requested by the Department of Household Economics that would affect English 2 (a required English course). Broadus, in mounting his argument for the priority of English in the university, cites *A Liberal Education in the Modern World* to its author, although Broadus again leaves out Wallace's qualifying clause. Broadus's dislike for home economics and other professional courses had little or no impact on the curriculum other than ensuring that English 2

would be a course primarily in literary appreciation. But Broadus's attitude, stated most clearly in the first letter, reflects the elitism of aristocratic liberal education: "I must confess that what you have to say in your later pages of the possible cultural and genuinely educational value of vocational subjects goes further than I can go—or, shall I say?, is more open-minded than I can yet bring myself to be" (UAA PP 3/2/4/3/1-6). Such elitism ensured the limited success, if not failure, of traditional liberal education reform in western Canada.

The English department had a visible influence on the production of the Stewart Report, as its recommendation of a summer reading program would suggest. The Stewart Report essentially endorsed a great books approach to general education:

We would agree that that there is a deficiency somewhere if university students prefer to spend their leisure hours during the summer reading Lil' Abner or the popular versions of the Kinsey report. The deficiency is much too fundamental to be solved by requiring the student to read a book. This method provides no guarantee that the student will choose to read good literature after he is free from the compulsion of formal education. Such a desirable objective can be assured only if somewhere along the path of education the student has been awakened to, and has learned to appreciate, the values to be derived from good literature. (UAA 70-91-81).

Like the Manitoba report of 1949, the Stewart Report can be seen as a defense of the Hegelian-Arnoldian tradition of English studies and liberal education. Good literature, or great books, even if read independently by students during the summer, would sufficiently bring them in contact with a world-spirit and the best that has been thought and said.

These general education reports may not have had significant immediate impacts on their own institutions, but they were part of the larger public campaign of humanists to assert their importance for the cultural growth of Canada. The Harvard Redbook was followed in Canada by the *Humanities in Canada* (1947), the local reports at Alberta (1948) and Manitoba

(1949), and by the Royal Commission on the National Development of Arts, Letters and Science (1949-51), more commonly known as the Massey Commission. The *Humanities in Canada* and the Massey Commission, I will show in chapter 6, were crucial in changing the nature of the nation-building function of education in Canada and the nature of the professional in English studies.

Writing instruction was not discussed as significant component of either Wallace's publication or the Stewart Report. Writing instruction at Alberta under Broadus, as we saw in chapter 3, began to be pushed from the regular courses and into remedial sessions. Wallace had not advocated an increase in writing instruction, and Broadus had not volunteered to provide more. The university and English department were true to the Harvard Redbook and introduced a general *reading* course and proposed a summer reading program, but no specific mention of writing instruction was made in conjunction with those plans. The English department at that time, however, was not completely unconcerned with writing instruction, and one of its members, Clarence Tracy, authored a textbook on writing for the university in 1946. A later department head, Frederick Millet Salter (1950-53), would insist upon a new standard of concern for writing instruction, only to have his staff object strongly. Systematic writing instruction in English began to fade in Broadus's last years at Alberta, and never returned with any stability or consistency.

The University of British Columbia: Open to American experiments

Between 1929 and 1946, of all of the western Canadian universities the University of British Columbia showed the least interest in general education. For most of this time, the university had only one president, Leonard S. Klinck, and Klinck showed no particular interest in general education reform. The English department, under the direction of G. G. Sedgewick, was considered to be the second best in Canada after Toronto's, making the need for reform to it less pressing. He was, however, aware of American ideas on general education between 1929 and 1946. In a published paper, "The Unity of Knowledge," he articulated ways in

which his department responded to the early developments in the general education movement. In an internal report written in 1946, he suggested how UBC might incorporate some of the principles from the Harvard Redbook. Writing instruction was included in, but not foregrounded as an issue for Sedgewick when addressing general education reform. In short, business continued much as it had since the opening of UBC in 1915.

The University of British Columbia did not take up any university-wide initiative to pursue general education during the tenure of President Klinck (1919-1944). Klinck was accused of favoring his home department, agriculture, excessively, a practice which did not stimulate campus-wide trust in co-operative projects (Logan 110-18). His successor, N. A. M. "Larry" MacKenzie, expressed more interest in general education than did Klink, although he did so primarily at the national level. MacKenzie was one of the five members of the Massey Commission, and recommended, Paul Litt says in his history of the commission, because he was "chummy with numerous Liberal party insiders" and could ensure them that "whatever the commission's terms of reference, federal funding for universities would receive serious consideration" (32). Litt adds that MacKenzie "was no stranger to high culture, but he tended to be more of a populist both in his cultural preferences and his political instincts" (32). MacKenzie, in other words, was less a supporter of general education movements specifically and more a supporter of higher education in its many forms.

English departments throughout the US and Canada were often the starting place of general education reforms, and to the extent that there was support for general education at UBC, English department head Garnet Sedgewick expressed such views. Sedgewick was Arnoldian to the extent that he believed the aim of education was to make students "men of culture," but, despite being fluent in Greek, he saw that the demand for classical languages as part of an education in "'mental discipline' is an exploded myth to be held only by classical fundamentalists" ("Unity" 362, 360). He identifies in Paul Shorey, a University of Chicago classicist, an "arrogant, or rather snobbish, exclusiveness" ("Unity" 360-61). Sedgewick

seems to have combined a healthy respect for culture and tradition in a way that we now associate with conservative politics, but his attack on Shorey, and the attack he received from the Archbishop of Vancouver, suggests that in fact Sedgewick was a leftist, and saw education in democratic, rather than aristocratic terms. In an undated letter, the Archbishop W. M. Duke accuses Sedgewick of being a communist because of his position as president of the local Civil Liberties Union:

Will not Christian parents fear such radical influence on youthful students who come under his teaching? Will not British Columbian property holders be reluctant to furnish the salary of one who is the enemy of private property? Does it dispel the suspicion that Leftists are at work in the universities when we find a prominent University of British Columbia official presiding over an organization with such a Communistic reputation as the CCLU? (UBC GGSP 1-2)

Sedgewick, like the other Canadian scholars who exhibited leftist politics in their non-academic work, was more congenial to writing instruction than the aristocratic scholars who shaped the curriculum at Toronto.

In addressing the question of how Canadian schools might make men of culture, Sedgewick shows his familiarity with both British and American educational models. He argues that the tutorial system of Oxford is one way to unify the humanities and make men of culture, but both Oxford and Harvard have considerably more money to spend on tutors than does Saskatchewan (363). He shows considerable interest in Alexander Meiklejohn's experimental college at Wisconsin, but notes that "it has infinite possibilities of failure" (363-64). His final suggestion is to employ liberal education practices like the one UBC was using: private reading seminars for senior students. The students, in effect, unify the humanities for themselves. The instructors would possibly teach one less class, but were spared no work in guiding numerous students (365).

Sedgewick's plans, which he admits are "general and remote suggestions," look for ways to introduce senior students to the humanities, but offer no suggestions for the freshmen. Showing a mixture of aristocratic and democratic spirits, Sedgewick says:

We find it not easy to teach them anything at all, not to speak of such high-brow matters as the relations of English literature and Classics and History. Annually the English Department tries to reveal to them some of the mysteries of a Greek play in translation. And this does no particular harm. Further, our Faculty as a whole is looking into what the Americans love to call courses of Orientation. I think that there is a good deal of hope in these, both for the body of sciences on the one hand and for the humanities on the other. But just now we tend to brood over our first year with an all-covering but barren sympathy like a hen over a china egg. What to do with them in any way, not to speak of historico-literary relations in particular, I must confess baffles me. (366)

Sedgewick's tone when he writes "what the Americans love to call courses of Orientation" reveals another tension beyond democratic and aristocratic, although the second tension—the admiration/distaste for American innovation—is closely related. He concludes the essay, as we saw in chapter 3, with a defense of American general education experiments (367). This defense, coming in 1928, may have paved the way for the general education experiments at Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. He also, somewhat in jest, identified Queen's and Toronto as dinosaurs, disclosing a Canadian regional tension that predisposed western Canadians to look to the US, rather than eastern Canada, for ideas on education (367).

Sedgewick's other overt engagement with American liberal education or general education experiments came in 1946, his second last year of teaching. *General Education in a Free Society* had just been published and Sedgewick wrote a report on "The Curriculum of the Faculty of Arts and Science" as it might be influenced by the Harvard Redbook. The first section in Sedgewick's document is a summary of the Redbook, and includes his observation

that “The Report has already attracted much attention and seems to be destined to occupy a very high place among the documents profoundly affecting educational thought” (UBC GGSP 1). Sedgewick lists the eleven points the Report recommends Harvard adopt, then develops a section where the Report’s recommendations might be applied to UBC. The recommendations, like the general education plans at the other western Universities, had little visible effect. The English requirement remained constant, although Sedgewick’s suggestion here is that course work required to meet the English composition requirement not be given academic credit. He proposes that students take three general courses beyond first-year general courses. Although the idea of general education reform at UBC did not spring directly from the head of the Harvard Redbook, UBC is the only university in western Canada to establish a visible general education program, Arts 1. Arts 1, however, was not established until 1967, so I will hold off discussion of it until chapter 7.

Sedgewick’s views on general education in 1928 and 1946 did little to alter writing instruction at the University of British Columbia. Sedgewick implemented the Harvard model of teaching literature and composition together when he came to UBC in 1918, and his department did not waver from that pattern. At no time did UBC experiment with inter- or cross-disciplinary courses, and there was never a need to establish a group of writing specialists. In a letter to his former student and successor Roy Daniells, Sedgewick warned Daniells that the department needed help to deal with the huge number of students in the junior years, but UBC did not yet have graduate students to take on the teaching of these courses and students, and the university did not have the resources to expand the English department nor set up an English Laboratory like the one used at Minnesota.⁶⁰ The financial resources available to American universities like Chicago and Minnesota clearly played an important role in establishing the profession of writing instructor in the US; the ideologies of English departments in the two countries were not significantly different enough to account for the

professionalization of writing instruction in the US, and the absence of professional writing instruction in western Canada.

This history of the general education movement in North America illustrates the extent to which this movement was continental in its scope. General education plans at Chicago, Minnesota, and Harvard were influential in western Canada, and other plans, like the Meiklejohn experiment in Wisconsin, were also well known. In addition to these institutional models, individual scholars from the US were also invited to share their work in western Canada. Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta sponsored lectures in 1930 and 1931; they invited historian Herbert Heaton from the University of Minnesota, historian R. M. McIver of Columbia University, and economist Jacob Vinar from the University of Chicago to their campuses (UAA PP 3/3/10/5-3). These visits are further evidence of the interest that western Canadian universities took in the educational practices of American universities. The influence of American general education on western Canadian universities was more significant than Patricia Jasen suggests in her study of the liberal arts curriculum in Canada.

This history also suggests that general education had a significant impact on writing instruction in western Canada. The general education movement in the US resulted in writing instructors working independently of English departments, but there was no parallel development in Canada. More importantly, the strength of the claims about the importance of general education instilled English departments with a greater sense of professional identity. The professionalization of literary criticism enabled English departments to limit the amount of time and effort they put into writing instruction. The demands of university presidents for English departments to produce more scholarship gave department heads a chance to plead their case: that they were overworked by the teaching of first- and second-year students, and particularly overworked by the grading of essays.⁶¹

General education did affect writing instruction in western Canada, and the affect was generally negative. The next chapter is a closer examination of local practices in western

Canadian English departments between 1937 and 1957. It will not focus on the effects of general education specifically so much as the effects of the growing sense of professionalism in western Canada. Such a consideration will (1) demonstrate a stronger Toronto influence on western Canadian English departments than we have seen so far, (2) address more specifically the question of what exactly was going on in the junior classes of English departments in western Canada, (3) extend John C. Brereton's concepts of aristocratic and democratic attitudes towards composition; and (4) further the continentalist interpretation of writing instruction in North America. The nature of the profession changed during this period as literary criticism established itself in institutions throughout North America, but the ideology and practices of these departments was still consistent with a larger nation-building project.

CHAPTER 5. DEMOCRATIC AND ARISTOCRATIC ATTITUDES TOWARDS WRITING INSTRUCTION IN WESTERN CANADA (1937-1957)

In this chapter, I argue that the attitudes towards higher education which informed general education experiments in North America between 1929 and 1946 were attitudes which also informed writing instruction in western Canadian universities between 1937 and 1957. John Brereton has already noted the democratic and aristocratic attitudes towards writing instruction expressed in the textbooks of John Matthews Manly and Norman Foerster, and James Berlin offers similar categories for understanding the history of writing instruction in the US: the democratic process approaches of Fred Newton Scott and Gertude Buck, and the liberal culture elitist values characteristic of Yale and Princeton (*Rhetoric and Reality* 51; 46). Brereton sees an Horatio Alger-like optimism in Manly's many textbooks: because all humans are created equal, all students could succeed by following the rules of writing ("Composition" 45). Manly's conception of the relationship between democracy and writing instruction is not as sophisticated as the conception of that relationship in the work of contemporary scholars like Berlin, but Manly, Scott, Buck, and Berlin can be seen as part of a democratic tradition in English studies which has valued writing instruction for its role in producing educated and active citizens of a democracy.⁶² This tradition has also been critical of the conception of composition courses as a gate-keeping mechanism. A democratic attitude towards education, like the one adopted at the Minnesota General College, promotes inclusion rather than exclusion.

In contrast to the democratic principle of the natural equality of all humans, conservatives in America like John Adams, Irving Babbit, or Brereton's exemplar, Norman Foerster, have believed that some individuals are natural leaders—natural aristocrats—and their talents and intellect ought to be fostered.⁶³ The belief in the organic relationship between thought and writing at the heart of the aristocratic pedagogy implies that very little can be done to improve students' writing other than improve their thinking and style; if one does not have

great thoughts, one cannot produce great writing. Brereton notes how Foerster ignores traditional rhetoric, particularly invention: “His rhetoric is sentence rhetoric, which means grammar and intense concentration on style as it reflects thinking” (50). The aristocratic attitude towards writing instruction is very close to what Berlin calls the “liberal culture” approach to writing instruction—instruction through teaching literature. The aristocratic attitude could also lead to an abolitionist position on writing instruction: because students must improve the quality of their thinking to improve the quality of their writing, universities, the argument goes, are wasting their time teaching writing.

I will characterize the individual scholars in western Canada as embodying or the other of these attitudes, but obviously some combination of the two was also possible. These attitudes, in the Burkean sense of an attitude being “a state of mind that may or may not lead to an act” are most evident in the reports, correspondences, and course designs of English department heads in western Canada (20). The sense of professional authority for English scholars that began to emerge with the general education movement in the 1930s made it more likely that individuals’ attitudes towards writing instruction, rather than the attitudes of the university or community, would be manifest in the arrangement and practice of writing instruction in western Canada. The predominance of democratic attitudes in western Canadian English departments challenges the traditional binary of America as a liberal-democratic nation and Canada as a tory-aristocratic nation gives way to a continentalist interpretation of North American society in which the same values are prevalent in both countries, with national differences being primarily matters of emphasis.⁶⁴

Attitudes towards writing instruction were also closely tied to attitudes about professionalization and nation-building. Scholars embodying a democratic attitude generally recognized that writing instruction was within the jurisdiction of English departments, although the English departments in western Canada never pursued writing instruction as a professional specialization. Those favoring a democratic attitude towards writing instruction also perceived

nation-building in New World terms: educating a populace for the times and conditions. The western Canadian scholars who privileged a democratic attitude in writing instruction often took considerable interest in Canadian literature. Western Canadian scholars embodying the aristocratic attitude towards writing instruction often wished to move writing instruction out of their professional jurisdiction, or to marginalize it to simply writing about literature. Those holding an aristocratic attitude towards writing instruction in western Canada continued to support Canadian national identity through its connection to the British empire, and therefore continued to privilege British literature. Nation-building in Canada takes on a particularly aristocratic tone during and following the work of the Massey Commission. The changes in professional claims at the continental level, including the changes the Massey Commission influenced, are discussed in chapter 6. The period 1937-57 was the last period in western Canadian English departments in which the democratic attitude towards writing instruction regularly prevailed.

The University of Manitoba: Mildly Democratic Attitudes

Between 1937 and 1957, Roy Daniells (1937-46) and Lloyd Wheeler (1946-64) were the English department heads at Manitoba. Both of them actively worked to improve writing instruction in the university, and both of them embodied a mildly democratic attitude towards writing instruction. They did not have Manly's Horatio Alger spirit, but they recognized the importance of writing instruction to their student body and exhibited no aristocratic attitudes. Two points illustrate their attitudes: (1) Daniells was strongly influenced in his thinking about writing instruction by Garnet Sedgewick and E. K. Brown, and a report he prepared for the Senate Committee on Arts and Sciences, surveying first-year English at other institutions in Canada, the US., and England, aligns Manitoba's practices more closely with those of the British Columbia and Wisconsin than with Toronto or Yale and (2) Wheeler showed no ideological predisposition against teaching writing as a universal requirement, nor through

special courses to various departments. Strains of the aristocratic attitude towards writing instruction can be seen in other staff members and in the use of Foerster and Steadman's *Writing and Thinking* throughout much of Wheeler's period, but such a balance would have been easy to accommodate in a place that exhibited mildly democratic attitudes towards writing instruction.

Roy Daniells: Democratic attitude, current-traditional practice (1937-46)

By the 1930s, a young scholar like Roy Daniells could receive a good, comprehensive education in Canada. Daniells was an undergraduate at the University of British Columbia and studied under Garnet Sedgewick. He received his Master's and doctorate at Toronto, where he crossed paths with the man he would succeed at Manitoba, E. K. Brown. Sedgewick and Brown, as we saw in chapter 3, were both very willing to include writing instruction as a legitimate part of English department's professional jurisdiction, and embodied the democratic attitude of doing what was best for their universities. Neither adopted the aristocratic attitude that their students would not be able to write because they were not naturally predisposed to great or deep thinking. Knowing that Daniells was influenced in his thinking and practices by Sedgewick and Brown is an important first step in understanding Daniells's attitude towards writing instruction.

As deep as Daniells's Canadian roots were, the University of Manitoba was still looking at other institutions throughout North America for models or standards of education. Early in his tenure at Manitoba, Daniells was asked by the Senate Committee on Arts and Sciences to compare first-year English at Manitoba to other practices in North America. Daniells's choice in institutions provides another important clue as to his own attitudes about writing instruction. He delivered the report on October 31, 1939, comparing Manitoba's Grade XII Course and first-year English at the University of Manitoba to Toronto and British Columbia, "in the opinion of many people the two best English departments in Canada"; to

London, which “represents a fair norm of English practice”; and to Wisconsin and Yale which “represent two schools of American practice” (UA 6 Minutes Vol. 2, 237-38). In choosing these institutions, he was able to align the practices at Manitoba most closely with the other western Canadian institution—UBC—and the American Midwestern institution—Wisconsin. To be aligned with UBC and Wisconsin suggests that Manitoba at least attempted to embody a democratic attitude towards English studies and writing instruction.

The Manitoba high school course was divided into four units—composition, the drama, the novel, and poetry—and students wrote three-hour examinations on each unit as part of their matriculation process. The description of composition is as follows: “The following points shall be considered in teaching the Composition: elegance, force, clearness, plan (unity, sequence, proportion); paragraph structure, unity, sequence; sentence structure, choice of words. Five texts are listed as use for reference. The first-year University of Manitoba course lists only the “principles of composition” as an area of study, and offers no details as to what will be covered. Daniells notes that the strength of the course is in its variety: “Undoubtedly stimulating to a wide variety of students: every year we get examination papers which give eloquent testimony to the interest which it has aroused” (UA 6 Minutes Vol 2, 238-39).

The University of Toronto first-year pass (rather than honours) course focused on Shakespeare, modern novels, and modern plays, but listed under composition “the writing of at least four original compositions during the session.” This requirement is the same one the English department instituted when the University of Toronto’s Colleges meet as one English department for the first time in 1919 (Harris, *English Studies* 56-57). UBC made less demands of its students to read extensively, and required more writing. Composition, listed as a course separate from literature (the pattern that Sedgewick introduced and maintained throughout his career) is described as covering “Elementary forms and principles of composition.” *The Macmillan Handbook of English* is listed as the text, and “The work in composition consists (i) of themes and class exercises and (ii) of written examinations.

Students will be required to make a passing mark in each of these two parts of the work” (UA 6 Minutes Vol. 2, 239). The University of London offered no writing instruction, and Daniells notes that “we cannot hope to match the wide prescription of reading made by the English university; the superior literacy of their incoming undergraduates goes back to the social structure of England” (UA 6 Minutes Vol. 2, 238).

Daniells’s choice to compare Wisconsin and Yale is an indication of the kind of universities Canadians considered models. Kitzhaber’s *Rhetoric in American Colleges, 1850-1900* compares Yale and Michigan, but Canadian teachers of English (like many American teachers of English), seem to have been unaware of the kind of programmatic uniqueness of Michigan’s program.⁶⁵ Wisconsin represents for Daniells a good state school, although Daniells’s apology for the thinness of reading at Manitoba might also have been meant to draw attention to the near-absence of literature at Wisconsin. Only Hardy’s *Return of the Native* and an unnamed collection of essays from Bacon to the twentieth century are listed as texts. “The student is required to make a weekly statement of the reading he has done. There are discussions on the lines of a “thought course.” Composition consists of “about one essay per week” and “A special course, ‘Sub-Freshman English,’ is prescribed for students below standard. Yale’s reading list is much more like Toronto’s reading list, with a heavy emphasis on Shakespeare. A brief paragraph about the course is also included: “Yale offers no course in composition, as such. But students defective in the mechanics of writing are compelled to join an “awkward squad” and [are] given extra essays to write. If they do not improve sufficiently, they lose the year, as far as English is concerned” (UA 6 Vol. 2, 240).

These comparisons suggest that students in first-year English at Manitoba did not receive as much writing instruction as first-year students at British Columbia or Wisconsin, but they may have received more instruction in composition than did students at Toronto, London, and Yale. Daniells’s attitude towards writing instruction, influenced by his contact with Sedgewick and Brown and his awareness of state of education in Manitoba, was mildly

democratic. This attitude did not lead to a particularly progressive pedagogy—one in the tradition of what James Berlin calls Fred Newton Scott’s transactional or democratic process pedagogy (*Reality* 51-55). Instead, Daniells employed a current traditional pedagogy with a democratic spirit. An exchange of correspondence with the provincial Department of Education, and an student’s description of his or her experience of a course, provide clear evidence of Daniells’s practices.

In 1938, Daniells expressed his frustration with incoming students to A. M. Pratt of the Manitoba Department of Education: “If only the students who come to us from the schools could have been taught to read and to write . . .” (ellipsis Daniells’s, Nov. 19, 1938 UBC RDP 3-7). Daniells goes on to say to Pratt that within the English department, the feeling was strong that even if no demand for a knowledge of formal grammar was made, still the ability to write grammatical sentences was a reasonable requirement. He also regarded knowledge of punctuation and of the function of the various parts of speech in the sentence to be important. Daniells’s concerns with correctness and grammar suggest the degree to which he regarded problems in student writing from a current-traditional perspective, but he never suggested that writing instruction was outside his department’s jurisdiction. He was looking to clarify the work that high schools should be responsible for, but he did not fall back on the aristocratic argument that Manitoba’s students are not naturally gifted enough to be good writers.

The second example of the current-traditional practices at Manitoba comes from an unidentified student’s account of “The Course in English Composition.” The paper may have been a theme from a course Daniells taught, or one that a staff member passed on to him. The title of the document supports E. K. Brown’s claim that the courses at Manitoba were primarily about composition, and the document itself focuses exclusively on the writing instruction offered:

When I began this course in English Composition I wrote a theme on the benefits I expected to derive from it. My concluding sentence read, in part, “It

is my hope that the instruction I receive will enable me to improve my method of communicating thought.” In a limited sense only has this hope been fulfilled. To the extent that it had taught me to correct some of my mistakes in grammar and to appreciate fine shades of meaning between words, the course has increased my ability to communicate thought; in the matter of the actual art of composition it has produced exactly the opposite effect. (UBC RDP 4-1)

The student goes on to try and assess why this was so. The two major problems he or she finds with the course are its terminology—including unity, coherence, and emphasis—and the demand put upon students to “PLAN.” “[T]his course would be well to attach less importance to terms, more importance to actual writing.” The student also recommends drafting and revising rather than planning. He or she is willing to correct faulty sentences as long as the demand to name the fault is dropped.

This document provides considerable insight into what was going on in first-year English courses at Manitoba. While Hubert and Jasen argue that Canadian composition courses did not teach writing, what seems to be the case is that they often taught it poorly and mechanistically, or antirhetorically as Hubert describes it (*Harmonious* 178). The document also suggests that even a democratic attitude towards writing instruction was easily de-railed by current-traditional practices. The more progressive aspects of Daniells’s pedagogy—advocating smaller classes for composition and suggesting that writing tutorials be connected to the Western Civilization course—were not realized while he headed the English department at Manitoba.

Lloyd Wheeler: A quiet democrat (1946-64)

Lloyd Wheeler was not as thoroughly connected to the scholarly community as Roy Daniells, and his attitude towards writing instruction is a little more difficult to sketch out. Wheeler came to Manitoba in 1932-33 after completing his doctorate at Wisconsin. He spent

all but the last few years of his career there. He had been passed over as department head in 1935 when Brown was hired, and passed over again in 1937 when Daniells was hired, but ended up being the longest-serving head in the department's history. He was an excellent teacher but not as professionally ambitious as Brown or Daniells. According to his colleague at United College in Winnipeg, Walter Swayze, Wheeler preferred to spend time at his cabin on an island in the Lake of the Woods (two-hundred miles east of Winnipeg) more than he liked to do anything else in the world (Swayze, Interview). An account of (1) Wheeler's classroom practices, (2) negotiations with President Trueman about writing instruction for the professional disciplines, and (3) courses offered during Wheeler's tenure will suggest the ways in which Wheeler was a quiet man concerned about the welfare of his students.

Wheeler would likely have taught composition as a graduate student at Wisconsin which, as we saw in chapter 2, had adapted many of the Harvard practices, but his own classroom practices seem not to have been overly prescriptive. Ernest Sirluck, who's comments on E. K. Brown's role at Manitoba illuminate the work that was being done in the mid-thirties, also provides a clear description of Wheeler's pedagogy and demeanor:

He was shy and insecure, and his classroom manner was very low-key (he tended to speak down, toward his desk, rather than outward, to the students), but he was committed to literature and interested in encouraging students to engage with it. When students expressed opinions he seemed not to regard them as challenges, as some other professors did, but rather as matters for discussion, and I soon began to look forward to his classes. (37)

Like most scholars of his time, he was committed to literature before writing instruction, but his approach to classroom discussion is in line with a democratic attitude towards teaching in general: the classroom was a space for open discussion, and student participation was valued rather than stifled.

Wheeler showed no particular privileging of Arts students, and was open to the possibility of offering writing instruction tailored to the needs of other disciplines. President Sidney Smith's successor, A. W. Trueman, himself a scholar of English who was to become the first director of the Canada Council in 1957, exchanged memos with Wheeler in 1948. They discussed implementing special course in English for engineers, agricultural students, and home economics students. Trueman says in letter to Wheeler that he thinks the problem of writing instruction is a universal one that every university grapples with.⁶⁶ Wheeler was willing to offer a special course for engineering students, but in a March 18, 1948 memo he tells Trueman that "Merely to tinker with the present course would be inadvisable." In the same letter to Trueman, Wheeler suggests that the engineers would benefit from "the course in precis writing for Commerce students ([English] 202 [formerly 21])," but he was unsure whether the Engineering department was really committed to creating time in their students' schedules to take an English course. Wheeler also suspected that the engineers did not know that the English department received \$5 a student from the Commerce department for teaching English 202. His final suspicion about the whole project was that the engineers wanted the writing classes to be small, but Wheeler writes, "Frankly, I should begrudge staff time for small sections in Engineering when our sections in Arts and Science are excessively large" (UA 20 PTP 90-19). A number of special courses in writing were offered for 1948-49, suggesting the degree to which the English department at Manitoba was still being enlisted by other faculties. Wheeler's negotiations, however, also suggest the extent to which the enlistment was now mutually agreed upon. His willingness to offer writing instruction also suggests some of his democratic attitude—students exposed to writing instruction would be able to benefit from such practice.

The course work itself undercut the democratic spirit of Wheeler and his department slightly because the principle text employed was Foerster and Steadman's *Writing and Thinking*. English 202 is described in the 1948-49 catalogue as "One hour a week, both terms.

This course is based on an intensive practical study of the mechanics of English composition. A précis or a short essay will be required weekly of every student. Text: Foerster and Steadman: *Writing and Thinking* (67). English 203 is designated for Agriculture students only, and is listed as four hours per week, combining the study of literature (3 hours) with an hour of composition. English 204, Prose, was for Engineering and Architecture students only, and was to meet two hours per week. The essay, prose satire, and the short story were to be covered, along with composition via Foerster and Steadman (67). Two other junior-level English courses were offered at Manitoba in 1948-49: English 101 (Special English) and English 110 (Introduction to Literature). The former met one hour per week in both terms and was designed as a “review of the elements of English composition” (67). No text is listed, but “Students will be required to procure the drill-book specified by the instructor” (67). The latter met four hours a week for both terms, included a study of poetry, drama, the novel, and short stories, and one hour a week was devoted to composition: “Students will be required to submit regular critical reports and other forms of writing” (67). Foerster and Steadman’s *Writing and Thinking* was the composition text for this class.

Foerster and Steadman’s textbook is consistently interpreted as part of the aristocratic tradition in writing instruction, but the use of the textbook alone is not sufficient enough evidence to force a reassessment of the democratic attitude towards writing instruction exhibited by Wheeler and the staff at Manitoba generally. *Writing and Thinking*, for one thing, was quite simply the dominant text of its time. Robert Connors, in “The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse” says *Writing and Thinking* was “in print for over twenty years, and it exerted a profound influence on later authors” (451). Composition textbooks in western Canada were almost always American written and published, and many of the western Canadian universities were drawn to this popular text. Connors also notes that *Writing and Thinking* was the first of many textbooks to incorporate the thinking of the general education and the general semantics movements of the 1930s, 40s, and 50s (451-52). The English

department at Manitoba, as we saw in chapter 4, was very interested in the general education movement, and this textbook might have represented a lingering interest. Most likely, however, the democratic attitude towards writing instruction in Wheeler, and at Manitoba generally, would have been sufficiently mild that nothing in Foerster and Steadman would have appeared objectionable, nor even particularly aristocratic.

Staff and Administration: A mixture of democratic and aristocratic attitudes

Daniells and Wheeler were the two most influential figures at Manitoba between 1937 and 1957, and they brought to the department a mildly democratic attitude towards writing instruction. Female instructors, like Jean Bayer at Saskatchewan in the teens and twenties and Doris Saunders at Manitoba (1930-66), also adopted the democratic attitude. Ernest Sirluck describes Saunders as “sober, hard-working, and responsible, even doing some scholarship when her heavy teaching duties permitted” (49). The work-ethic and concerns for students did not mitigate against some disparaging of students. In a letter to Daniells on October 31, 1946, Saunders notes both the extent of her work load and the naiveté of her students:

I rejoice in teaching a second year class composed largely of Arts students numbering only 32, and as I have them for both prose and verse I already know them individually—a new state of affairs. However, I make up for this luxury by having 86 Home Ecs and Interior Decorators twice a week. They are harmless and insipid. Not a rise! Pencils poised to take down the dew from Heaven, and what a surprise they get! (UBC RDP 5-6)

The democratic attitude towards writing instruction did not necessarily come with an unconditional respect for students’ intelligence.

British trained faculty like J. Max Patrick, however, exhibited clear aristocratic and elitist attitudes towards writing instruction and students. He caused a controversy in a class of home economics students by suggesting that the women prove they “are more than mere child-

bearing animals” (UA20 PSP 20-9). He explained his actions by saying to President Smith that “There was, I think, a general resentment because I made Matthew Arnold’s remarks on Victorian philistinism a little too applicable to Winnipeg. I do feel that it is necessary for them to realise this and to learn to reexamine conventions and prejudices in an age of changing standards like our own” (UA20 PSP 20-9). Patrick’s attitude may be appropriately characterized as elitist rather than aristocratic, but it is representative of the disdain for students instructors of English occasionally exhibit. He was cautioned by Daniells to be much more careful with his words and attitudes in class (August 12, 1941; UBC RDP 3-20).

The predominantly democratic attitude towards writing instruction at Manitoba did not, of course, mean a rejection of the importance of literature. Like E. K. Brown, Daniells and Wheeler were willing to do work the rest of the university considered useful, but they were not willing to compromise or apologize for making culture part of the curriculum. On this point, Daniells received support from President Smith, a strong support of an aristocratic approach to general education. Daniells wrote to President Smith on January 21, 1941, thanking him for supporting the literary and cultural content in English during a conference with the Dean of Engineering:

I should like, informally, to express my appreciation of the stand you took this morning, during the conference with Dean Mitchener and myself—that the cultural and literary emphasis in the presentation of English must at all costs be preserved, whatever else has to be attempted in more “practical” ways.

For obvious reasons, the English Department cannot, itself, with any propriety, lay much stress on this point. It was with a considerable sense of relief that I found you were willing, this morning as on other occasions, to speak for us, in terms of the University’s wider aims and services. (UBC RDP 3-19)

The professional status to determine the conditions of one's enlistment, and the recognition by the president of the importance of literary and cultural content in English, suggests that Daniells and Smith envisioned building a more mature and cultured nation than it had been possible to envision in 1918 or even 1935.

The period 1937-1957 was not one of rapid growth or change at Manitoba, but the English department held the ground within the university that E. K. Brown had claimed. The junior curriculum during this period still did not conform to the University of Toronto pattern, despite having a Toronto graduate like Daniells as department head.⁶⁷ The nature of the work in junior courses is evident in Daniells's 1939 report to the Arts and Science Senate Committee, in the student report on "The Course in English Composition," in Wheeler's willingness to offer specialized writing courses, and in the courses that were in fact offered. The student's account of the course in composition is particularly clear evidence that writing was not taught simply through literature as Jasen and Hubert have suggested, but was also taught through themes and drill work. The approach to writing instruction at the University of Manitoba was not innovative, but it was a significant departure from the Toronto plan. Brereton's concept of a democratic attitude towards writing instruction is useful here in understanding that such an attitude could be part of a current-traditional pedagogy. Histories of writing instruction in the US will need to be certain not to conflate current-traditional practices—the dominant pedagogy throughout this century—with aristocratic attitudes.⁶⁸ The presence of Foerster and Steadman's *Writing and Thinking* at Manitoba indicates that universities in western Canada relied on American textbooks to teach writing. This book would have been particularly appealing to those Canadians who adopted an aristocratic attitude towards writing instruction, but its connection with the ideas and attitudes of the general education movement may also have made it appropriate for the educational milieu of the time and place.

The University of Saskatchewan: A Study in Contrasts

The English department at the University of Saskatchewan, as we saw in chapter 4, had very little role in general education reforms of this institution. The aristocratic and democratic attitudes towards education and writing instruction, however, are clearly expressed through the work of the department heads of this era: John Lothian (1940–49) and Carlyle King (1949–64). In this section I show that Lothian’s aristocratic views are expressed primarily through his contempt for having to address the remedial problems of Saskatchewan’s students. The department offered one section of first-year English in the summer of 1944 that focused intensively on writing, but all other courses during Lothian’s tenure privileged literature and the assumption that students’ writing could be improved only through improving the quality of their thoughts. King’s democratic views, clearly evident in his role as the brain trust of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (Canada’s socialist party in the 1940s), carry over into his commitment to ensuring a literate population. King as head of the department was particularly forceful in demanding that the composition component of first-year English—two hours a week—be devoted to composition and not literature. King drew some of his professional identity from an idealist like Emerson, and he received his PhD at Toronto, but he was more committed to writing instruction than any other English department head in western Canada.

John Lothian: Aristocratic attitude (1940-49)

Lothian was educated in England and held many of the same attitudes towards Canadian students that J. Max Patrick in Manitoba held. In an undated report to the President, probably issued during his first year as department head, Lothian identifies 1600 of the department’s 2000 enrollments coming from English 2, English 2X (correspondence), English S2 (Summer School), and English 3 (Engineering). Lothian says these classes perform three functions:

- (a) Remove the residual illiteracy still common after ten to twelve years of public and high school education. This is no light task.
- (b) Provide basic training in the language arts, and appreciation of their importance in life. The burden on English has greatly increased with the decline in the study of compulsory ancient and modern language.
- (c) Provide a working knowledge of the major forms that literature takes, such as any educated person might be expected to have and to use. (USA PR RG 13 S.1)

Lothian's pathologizing of the students suggests that he saw few natural leaders coming out of Saskatchewan's public education system, but he diagnosed their disease, prescribed a cure, and predicted the success of treatment. Abbott suggests there are three fundamental professional acts: "to diagnose, to infer, to treat," but what is significant in this report is Lothian's sense that the focus of his professional work is a burden, i.e., not the proper work of his profession. King makes a similar diagnosis of Saskatchewan students when he succeeds Lothian, but as we will see, his treatment is very different in substance and in expression.

Upon assuming the position as head of the department in 1940, Lothian also prepared a report specifically about English 2, the university's only universal requirement.⁶⁹ His main concern in the report is that instructors cannot sufficiently balance the teaching of literature and composition, the former being what Lothian identifies as the English department's goal for the course, the latter the university-wide assumed goal of the course. Lothian uses what John Trimbur calls the "regression narrative" of literacy crisis, a narrative which suggests "students' abilities to read and write are quantifiably failing as a result of decaying social and educational institutions" (281). Lothian distorts the past to make the present situation seem particularly urgent: "At one time matriculation standing in English was an assurance that a student possessed certain elementary skills in the use of English—the ability to spell, to punctuate, to write a correct sentence—; and the task of the English 2 instructor, in composition, was merely

to endeavour to add some polish and maturity to what was already correct English” (USA RG 1 Series III B-70). We saw in chapter 3 that Saskatchewan’s students in the early 1930s were improving significantly from the first twenty-five years of university operation. Unless Lothian is referring to a decline in literacy between 1932 and 1940, he is misrepresenting the effectiveness of matriculation in the first part of this century, and is claiming a long-standing high-level of competency for Saskatchewan’s students when in fact that high-level had only recently been acknowledged.

The department, as noted in chapter 3, offered remedial writing instruction through a non-credit course. In this report on English 2, Lothian says that “Instructors were often confronted with the attitude that the class was a sort of penance for their sins which the unfortunate students assigned to it had to endure and which was sufficiently expiated when the student sat passively through it for the required two hours.” Although meant to focus on the practical or utilitarian skill of composition, without a clearly defined application for correct English, students could not see any practical value in this remedial class: “apparently the connection between a remedial class exercise in the use of the apostrophe and an essay on Thomas Hardy’s philosophy of life at the final examination was too remote and nebulous to make much of an impression on a number of the students” (USA RG 1 Series III B-70).

The department was also confronted with the rather embarrassing fact that students whose work in remedial class was often considered unsatisfactory could still pass the final examination in English 2 because the exam tested knowledge of literature and not “elementary skills in the mechanics of English writing.” Lothian proposes some highly unlikely scenarios in which students with weakness could escape the examiner: students could avoid having to punctuate quoted conversation, a typical weakness; students could avoid interrogative sentence and therefore avoid exposing their ignorance of the question mark; and “bad spellers sometimes learn to use a remarkably restricted vocabulary and, by careful choice of synonyms, can write an essay on a literary topic at a final examination in English 2 without their weakness being

detected.” To Lothian’s thinking, most students would seem to have a weakness they are conscious of and are trying to hide, and he sees the English department’s job as rooting out and correcting that weakness. The problem the English department faced, however, was that they did not have time to test the “higher skills involved in writing an essay” as well as the “elementary skills of language” (USA RG 1 Series III B-70).

Lothian proposed that English should employ a “division of the work between theory and technique” like the division employed by the sciences between “laboratory or practical work” and “theory,” but this arrangement was not adopted until King took over the department (USA RG 1 Series III B-70). In the summer of 1944, however, the English department did experiment with English 2, dividing the class into three groups of forty that met five times every two weeks. The report on this course details the mechanical drill work of these labs, starting with the choice of text—*English Fundamentals* by Emery and Kierzek, a “drill book in syntax”—through the oral correction and extensive testing done during the two hour meeting periods. “There were fifteen laboratories during the Summer School, and the subjects allotted to them were as follows:

Vocabulary - 2 periods

Figures of Speech - 1 period

Précis Writing - 2 periods

Prose Style - 2 periods

Essay Writing - 3 periods

Prosody and Metre - 1 period

Interpretation of Poetry and Paraphrasing - 2 periods

(USA RG 1 Series III B-70)

The other two periods were used for exams, and the laboratory work “accounted for thirty percent of their marks on both the mid-term and the final examinations.”

The instructors—Miss Olive Robinson, Miss Patricia Plank, and Mr. Thomas Hicks—unanimously approved of the drill book because it “was of practical help to the students in the writing of compositions [and] it was useful . . . as a reference when the written work was corrected.” The instructors perceived the constant drill in writing to be the most useful approach to instruction, although they found drill in paragraph, précis, and paraphrase writing to be more useful than drill in grammar. “Any lecturing which they do,” the report says, “is of doubtful benefit.” The instructors recommended the continuation of the laboratories, and in 1950, under the new department head, Carlyle King, a clear division between literature and composition was officially adopted by the English department and the university (USA RG 1 Series III B-70).

Carlyle King: democratic attitude (1949-64)

Upon assuming the headship, King altered both the junior curriculum in English and the attitude towards writing instruction at Saskatchewan. His thoughts on the subject and the changes he implemented resist the move away from writing instruction that began to unfold between 1935 and 1957 at most western Canadian English departments. Three points illustrate his attitude clearly: (1) King expresses his views about students and the importance of English studies to them in a letter to President W. P. Thompson; (2) he represents the department’s approach to writing instruction in the publication *The First Fifty: Teaching, Research, and Public Service at the University of Saskatchewan*; and (3) he represents his own method of writing instruction in a departmental memo on the use of the lab time in the literature and composition class. King’s approach to and attitude towards writing instruction can be characterized as democratic in the Horatio Alger tradition Brereton associates with John Matthews Manly, but also more sharply political and anti-capitalist in the social-democratic tradition of John Dewey and progressive education.⁷⁰

King's ideas about writing instruction and the profession in general are well represented in two papers—one detailing his career, the other “On Being a Professor of English”—he sent to President W. P. Thompson in 1949. King's views are drawn from Emerson's “American Scholar,” although he also applies his vision to his local situation. He identifies three kinds of students the English professor at Saskatchewan encounters: “(1) all freshman students, who are required to take an introductory course in English literature and composition; (2) those students who, because they are interested in the subject, voluntarily take one or two or three English courses in addition to the compulsory introductory course; (3) those students who wish to make literature their major field of study and proceed to an Honours and/or a Master's Course” (USA PR RG 1 Series III, B-70). The majority of time is spent with freshman, King says, and he, like Lothian, identifies the balance between expression and appreciation first-year English strives for:

Everyone recognizes that an overwhelming percentage of our Saskatchewan students comes to college with little experience in reading and little still in writing. The tasks of the English teacher are: (1) to persuade these students of the importance of clear and accurate expression and to help them achieve it; (2) to show them what books can mean for thoughtful and purposeful living and to win them to the lifelong habit of reading books. (USA PR RG 1 Series III, B-70, 5)

Compare these two tasks of the English teacher to Lothian's list of the three functions of English classes and one sees the difference between respecting students as equal members of a community and pathologizing students as not yet fit to be part of a community. King's and Lothian's different conceptions of student agency are particularly striking. King sees the need to persuade students of the importance of clear and accurate expression rather than simply assume it, as Lothian does. In turn, he wants to help students achieve that clarity and accuracy of expression, rather than “remove the residual illiteracy” as Lothian recommends. What for

Lothian is “no light task” is a co-operative task for King. Lothian also sees the instructor as having to provide basic skills, provide students with an appreciation of literature in life (not necessarily their own), and provide students with the knowledge appropriate for an educated person. King is equally interested in convincing students of the importance of literature, but he both recognizes the need to show and convince students of this fact, and to direct his persuasion towards *living* and not just life. One gets no sense of this task being a burden for King.

The second clear expression of King’s attitude is seen in his publication, *The First Fifty*. King notes the English department’s commitment to service by citing a report from R. A. Wilson in 1916 recommending that “Each student should be required to write a short essay every week for the first ten weeks of each term.” He then goes on to explain the curricular change he instituted:

In 1950 the Department of English introduced the Saskatchewan Plan of attack upon freshman illiteracy. Since that year freshman English has consisted of two classroom hours a week devoted to the study of literature and two to instruction in English composition. The latter is given in a continuous two-hour period; this provides time not only for instruction but also for practice—much practice—of writing in the classroom. Furthermore, the instruction is given, not by honours or graduate students, but by all regular members of the departmental staff, who are also the students’ teachers of literature. . . . Every freshman student takes the composition class; but if he proves, or as he proves, his mastery of the fundamentals of writing, he may be excused from attendance at the composition period and instead given outside-the-classroom writing assignments commensurate with his skill. (14-15)

Writing for a general audience, King is very aware of some key concepts those outside English expect to see related to composition. He emphasized the practices that went into the

composition period as if addressing the question of “what really goes on in composition classes?” He stressed that regular members of the department staff taught the writing, suggesting both the quality of the instruction and the fact that the department claimed writing instruction as part of its jurisdiction. And finally, King invoked a progression narrative: students *do* improve, and move on to writing assignments that, by virtue of being outside the classroom, recognize the maturity and independence of the students.

The third source that provides insight into King’s attitude towards writing instruction is a document simply called “The English 102 (103) Composition Period” (USA RG 13 S.20 n.d.). His history of the inception of the Saskatchewan Plan details the faults of the Remedial English program run under Lothian: haphazard selection of student, instruction given by inexperienced teachers, additional hours proved to be a burden for students, and students resented being labeled “second-class citizens” in their first year. The purpose of the composition period, King writes, is “to make up for deficiencies in the students’ writing and thinking before their coming to college.” As with writing instruction throughout North America at this time, the remedial model simply was not thoroughly questioned. King’s approach, however, did not focus on remediation and drill as did the laboratory class of 1944. He offers what he does in the class not as prescription, but as a guide:

In the composition period I do four things mainly:

- (1) Give lessons in the chief difficulties the students encounter in composition, grammar, punctuation, etc. I use The Elements of Style regularly, but develop points and devise illustrations to suit my own purposes.
- (2) Use the Essay book to examine with the students how the principles of writing I have expounded under (1) above are applied, that is how writing is written by reputable authors.
- (3) Try to teach the students to think by having them follow the argument in an essay and reflect on the validity of the argument. . . .

(4) Supervise the writing of themes. I aim at getting a piece of written work from each student every two weeks. I assign short essays (400 to 500 words), in the belief that good or bad writing is revealed in two or three pages just as certainly as in 12 or 13, and that students' errors are only repetitive in lengthier themes. (USA RG 13 S.20)

The primary purpose of this document, as indicated by the emphasis that King puts on the phrase, is "that the composition period shall be used effectively to teach composition." He encourages teaching, not lecturing, in the literature section and asks that "in the composition periods we work hard at getting freshmen to write the English language accurately and clearly."

King's account of, and motive for teaching composition seems no worse than other statements of writing instruction throughout North America. His commitment to having full-time faculty, rather than junior or part-time faculty members teach writing, is better than the practice of exploiting graduate students and sub-professionals. His socialist political views quite possibly influenced his perception of the division of labor within his English department. Socialists, however, were certainly not enamored with the practical only; King still valued literature, and would not "hesitate . . . to use a composition period or two for literature if I find that I am behind hand there" (USA RG 13 S.20). We will also see in chapter 7 how unique King's views were to English departments in western Canada; very shortly after moving out of teaching and into administration, the integrity of composition lab-time is tarnished, and King himself is brought back into the fray to try and sort out what the English department is and is not responsible for. It seems unlikely that Saskatchewan would have shown the same commitment to writing instruction had not King, or someone like him, occupied the most important position in the department.

From the end of the R. A. Wilson years through the Lothian years, the English department at Saskatchewan followed the patterns suggested by Harris and Hubert—the idealist curriculum with an emphasis on British literature. Under Lothian's direction, the

department clearly followed the pattern suggested by Nan Johnson: a decline in rhetorical education and in increase in teaching writing as criticism. Carlyle King, despite receiving his PhD from Toronto, broke those patterns by introducing Canadian literature as a viable subject of study and by requiring that his staff commit themselves to writing instruction. King's description of his own practices in the composition period is clear evidence that writing instruction was explicitly taught at Saskatchewan, and was not taught implicitly through the grading of papers on literary topics. The difference in Lothian's and King's attitudes towards writing instruction provides the clearest contrast of aristocratic and democratic attitudes in western Canada, and the label for King resonates strongly with his political commitments, an issue Brereton does not address with Manly or Foerster. The privileging of first an aristocratic and then a democratic attitude towards writing instruction illustrates the struggle that is characteristic of North American political and intellectual history: both countries have strong aristocratic and democratic traditions in politics and education, and a simple characterization of America as primarily democratic and Canada as primarily aristocratic glosses over the important conflicts within each country.

King's sense of professionalism and nation-building has much in common with E. K. Brown's views on these points. King like Brown was a very capable scholar, but interested in North American literature. A commitment to national literature, for scholars in both countries, seems to have carried with it a commitment to writing instruction, or perhaps a more basic concern for ensuring a literate and educated population. Ironically, perhaps, the two American scholars most frequently associated with institutionalizing both a national literature and composition are Barrett Wendell and Norman Foerster—strong proponents of aristocratic attitudes towards writing instruction. The aristocratic tradition in America, however, can be traced to a *native son*, Thomas Jefferson, while the aristocratic tradition in Canada leads to a vision of Canada as part of the British Empire. Continentalists like Brown and King largely rejected the aristocratic tradition in Canada, promoted the institutionalization of Canadian

literature, and regarded writing instruction as within the proper domain of English departments. They did not work to institutionalize writing instruction in the same way as Canadian literature, however, and when they or their supporters left positions of power, writing instruction could be easily dislodged from within. Composition's position deeply embedded within the structure of American universities ensured its survival and professionalization during the cold war era; composition's rather more tenuous position in western Canada relied for its survival upon the attitude and commitment of the powerful members of individual English departments. And sometimes, as we will see with the case at Alberta, even a commitment to writing by the department head did not ensure departmental support.

The University of Alberta: A Dominant Aristocratic Attitude

Writing instruction in the junior curriculum at the University of Alberta was on the way out by 1936, but an advanced course in composition had been introduced in 1924.⁷¹ Advanced composition, or creative writing, could be more easily justified as a humanistic endeavor than could first-year composition, and therefore was palatable to an aristocratic scholar like Broadus and his colleagues at that time, R. K. Gordon and J. T. Jones. In this section, I will describe the attitudes towards writing instruction of Gordon and Jones both of whom became department heads between 1937 and 1957. I will also describe the attitude of F. M. Salter, who was hired after Broadus died and served a three-year term as department head between the Gordon and Jones years. Gordon and Jones continued the Broadus aristocratic tradition, and when Salter attempted to introduce a more democratic attitude towards writing instruction to Alberta, he was met with strong resistance by his staff.

R. K. Gordon: Continuing the aristocratic tradition (1936-1950)

With the passing of Broadus in 1936, the department came under the leadership of R. K. Gordon, a medievalist and the first PhD graduate of the English department at the

University of Toronto. While Gordon was the first to teach the advanced composition class in 1924, there is little indication that he worried about weakness in student writing to the extent that Broadus did. Gordon did author a composition textbook for high school students in 1927, but like his teacher W. J. Alexander at Toronto, Gordon seems to have regarded high school as the proper jurisdiction for writing instruction. His attitudes towards writing instruction are evident in three instances: (1) in a letter to Lothian of Saskatchewan, he fully describes the work of the department at the junior level; (2) in his resistance to including writing instruction in courses designed for non-arts majors; and (3) in his attempts to limit the number of hours spent on composition. Pressure exerted on the department throughout his tenure forced him to increase writing instruction, but in all three instances, his reluctance is apparent.

Responding to Lothian's request for information about the junior curriculum at Alberta, Gordon details the four different courses the department offered. He begins this letter of November 19, 1940 by noting that "[a]ll students, except those intending to enter the faculty of agriculture, must enter the University with complete Senior matriculation" (USA RG 1 Series III B-70). This policy was relatively new to Alberta, but parallels the development at Saskatchewan. Gordon indicates that about 30 agriculture students were enrolled in English 1, a course in literature and composition, but most students were in English 2 (130), the Arts course, or in English 4 (140), a new course for "freshmen in medicine, pharmacy, commerce, & household economics." English 1 had been the larger freshman course when most students entered the university with junior matriculation.

Agriculture students who completed English 1 went on to take English 3, a one hour course described in the 1945-46 Calendar as a course offering "practice writing English with consultations with the instructor." P. G. Perrin's *Writer's Guide and Index to English* was listed as the textbook for the class. English 2 did not neglect writing instruction, but certainly emphasized the study of literature over the practice of composition. Gordon writes to Lothian:

I meet the whole group [130] twice a week; and once a week the class is divided into 5 sections, each under a different instructor. This is for quizzing and discussion. Each instructor marks the essays done by his section. This breaking up of the class is a fairly recent experiment. We began it when we added the essay-writing to the course. (November 19, 1940; USA, RG 1 Series III B-70)

The reconfiguration of English 2 is the first instance of Gordon accommodating writing instruction, but also clearly privileging literature. This class arrangement seems similar to the arrangement at Saskatchewan under King, but Gordon's attitude towards writing differs markedly. The debate about the nature of the junior curriculum in English between Harris and Morton on the one side, and Hubert and Jasen on the other side, is problematized by the fact that Saskatchewan and Alberta could offer introductory course that, in the respective calendars, seemed to cover the same ground—literature and composition—but in practice could differ significantly. The only answer to the question comes through examining local practices; no generalization sufficiently accounts for even the four western Canadian universities.

Besides clearly privileging literature in the junior curriculum, Gordon also actively sought to limit the amount of writing instruction. Debates about writing instruction centered on courses for non-Arts students: English 4, the general course, and English 3, what Clarence Tracy describes at a staff meeting as a “watered down” senior course (December 22, 1943). At the February 21, 1942 departmental meeting, Gordon reported that:

students in his division of English IV, an introductory Literature course for Home Economic, Commerce, and Pharmacy, and Medicine students, appear to be more keenly interested in work on composition than in work on the prescribed literary texts. Consequently, he suggested that next session one lecture a fortnight should be devoted to composition. The treatment of

composition is to be informal, and designed to answer definite questions which arise from time to time. (UAA Minutes 72-107-1)

Gordon's suggestion of a fortnightly lecture is the second instance of an accommodation for writing instruction, but again his commitment is limited. His resistance to applying any kind of method to composition is consistent with an aristocratic attitude towards writing instruction: if the quality of students' thought is improved through the study of literature, no method of writing instruction will be necessary to improve their ability to communicate.

Tracy, the person most responsible for teaching English 1 and 3 at the time, argues that when 1 and 3 were a necessary sequence, the higher-level course functioned well as a "reading and discussion course." But now "the majority of students in Agriculture have come from rural schools and Schools of Agriculture, where English is badly taught and where almost no training is given in composition." From his experience, Tracy says "a definite need is apparent for a full-time elementary course in English composition and literature, to be taken in the first year." He, with the endorsement of the English department, proposed four changes, including converting English 3 into a three-hour course with "the addition of two hours a week on English composition" (UAA Minutes 72-107-1). Tracey at this time exhibited a more democratic attitude towards writing instruction than Gordon. He authored the department's *Manual of Writing* and went on to spend sixteen years at the University of Saskatchewan under Carlyle King (1950-66).

The agriculture department responded to Tracy's proposal with a proposal of their own that the English department accepted:

English 3 should remain a one-hour course, but that no reading should be required and no lectures given. The work will consist of composition and fortnightly interviews between instructor and students. The course will be required in the second year from all students entering from Schools of

Agriculture, and in the first year from all other students in the faculty. (April 27, 1944; UAA Minutes 72-107-1)

The minutes note that the course in this form is to be experimental only, and after both the war and the Harvard Report on General Education, the curriculum was re-organized again so that Agriculture students took a three-hour course in literature and composition, English 5. This version of English 3 was, however, implemented until 1952.

The war effort more-or-less forced the English department into teaching more writing, but the end of the war brought an end to writing instruction.⁷² The September 24, 1943 department meeting reported that “A course in Military Writing will be given this winter to the enlisted men in No. 2 Canadian University Course, at the University of Alberta. It will be given by Mr. Tracy. The group of 60 men will be divided into 2 classes each meeting one hour a week” (UAA Minutes 72-107-1). A less direct but likely effect of the war was a proposal made in April of 1943:

A suggestion was discussed that a new course be instituted in composition, intermediate between English II or IV and English 65 [the advanced composition/creative writing course], mainly for students who wish to improve their ability at applied writing, as for example in the preparation of reports, research papers, and theses. Some work might be included on bibliography and the use of library references. It was decided to keep the suggestion in mind, but to take no action for the present. (April 30, 1943; UAA Minutes 72-107-1)

This course was discussed again November 27, 1944, although Gordon simply suggests that it be withheld “until the future should become clearer.” An outline of the course, entitled “Advanced Course in Practical Writing” is appended to the minutes:

This is to be a course in the writing of English designed to meet the needs of students who wish to use English as a practical vehicle for the transmission of

ideas, rather than for creative expression. . . . Work will include: review of functional grammar; principles of composition; style and form in the preparation of papers; the use of the dictionary; etc. (November 27, 1944; UAA Minutes 72-107-1)

This course in practical writing was never offered, and the senior course in English composition, essentially a creative writing class, continued to be the only upper level writing course. While many factors would have contributed to the failure to get this course off the ground, the shift in external pressures in the post-war culture from utilitarian nation-building to national-culture building undoubtedly enabled the department to keep the limits of its jurisdiction to literature, and not expand into applied writing.

F. M. Salter: A democrat among aristocrats (1950-53)

Although Gordon was the first to offer the advanced composition course in 1924, it was Frederick Millett Salter who became the driving force behind this course, and was the mentor for Canadian writers like W. O. Mitchell, Rudy Wiebe, and Sheila Watson.⁷³ Salter, like Sedgewick at British Columbia, was first a student of Archibald MacMechan's at Dalhousie before going to the University of Chicago to study under John Matthews Manly. Manly's influence is evident in "Scientific Method in Literary Research,"⁷⁴ a paper Salter delivered to the Faculty Club at Alberta in 1944 (UAA 77-37-342), but it is also evident in Salter's democratic attitude towards writing instruction. John Brereton, as we have seen, contrasts Manly's democratic approach to writing instruction to the aristocratic approach of Norman Foerster (42), a contrast that is relevant in distinguishing Salter from his two predecessors as heads of the English department at Alberta: Broadus, the aristocratic Virginian, and Gordon, a product of the aristocratic University of Toronto's English department. Salter's attitude towards writing instruction can be seen in his book *The Art of Writing* and in a

controversy over grading first-year papers Salter stirred up early in the second year of his tenure as department head.

Robert H. Blackburn, remembering Salter's introduction to "the 'writing' course" at Alberta in 1939 (the first year Salter taught it), writes that Salter knew of only one good textbook on writing: the one he was about to write (v). That book was not published during Salter's lifetime, but was edited and published six years after Salter's death as *The Art of Writing: The Way of the Makers*. McMaster describes it as "an odd book, full of learning, full of feeling, full of vivid example. It is not a drill book in composition; it gives no solace to anyone naive enough to think good writing can be achieved by a quick servicing with the wrenches and spanners of grammar and correctness" (10). Salter does cover some basic skills in the book's section on "The Craft of Writing;" he addresses Wendell-like principles in the section "The Virtues of Writing" (Brevity and Simplicity, Comparison and Contrast, Variety); he suggests rhetorical tropes like alliteration, onomatopoeia and euphony, and irony under the heading "The Graces of Writing;" and concludes with three key points that establish "The Art of Writing": Significance, Enthusiasm and Restraint, and Sincerity.

The Art of Writing suggests that Salter combined a romantic notion of creation with the belief that even creative writing could, to some degree, be taught. He exhibited a generous and caring attitude towards his students. In an October 24, 1945 letter to one of his most successful students, W. O. Mitchell, Salter commends his class of 1945: "There is quite a nice Comp. class—one girl who will give some of you professionals a run for your money, and a fifty-year-old salesman who takes the course as a special and to satisfy an old itch. He isn't bad either. Nice sense of humor" (UC WOM, MsC 19.11.6). Salter's own aid to Mitchell came through informal discussions and work with the aspiring young writer, and not through the course itself.

Salter's commitment to creative writing from 1939-1964 was paralleled by a concern for the practical issues of composition in the first-year course. He taught composition at

Chicago, and even in Edmonton where he would be faced with classes as large as 150, he still demanded weekly themes.⁷⁵ As department head, his primary concern was for consistency in grading. R. D. McMaster describes Salter's plan jokingly: "Once in his short term, he exacted rigours from his colleagues in the way of essay marking which even he could hardly have sustained, asking them to mark not only all their own essays but all one another's and then bring them to him so that he could correct the corrections. Faces grew haggard, wives wept, and the air was filled with lamentation and woe" (10). McMaster's account of the plan is accurate, but letters from staff members Henry Kriesel and Almyer Ryan, and a letter from Eleanor Broadus, wife of E. K. Broadus, all to J. T. Jones who was on leave, describe in more detail the tension Salter's plan caused within the department. These letters also suggest that Jones's perspective brought a sense of calmness and order back to the department.

Henry Kriesel's letter to Jones on December 9, 1951 indicates how much of a challenge Salter represented to the aristocratic status-quo of the English department at Alberta. Even once the elaborate marking system was abandoned, Kriesel sees the need for Salter to come around on one more point:

There is only one matter on which Salter must now be brought round to see the majority view, and that is the matter of essays. For he still insists, albeit less vociferously, that essay marking is, or should be, a pleasure and a privilege, and the rest of us steadfastly refuse to buy that line of reasoning. I have even now a stack of 60 essays on my desk, and I feel depressed every time my eye falls on it. Since we all know your views of this subject, we are looking forward to your return that you might lend the "authority of your seniority" to the good fight. (UAA JTJ 82-162-3)

While Salter's argument that essay marking should be a pleasure and a privilege is dubious, Kriesel's resistance to that argument, and Jones's opposition to Salter's approach generally,

indicated the extent to which the department as a whole in the early 1950s defined its work through literary instruction, not writing instruction.

Ryan's letter of May 14, 1952 tells Jones that tension had dissipated somewhat. He primarily reports on the changes Salter made, and the degree to which they failed:

Salter doubled the amount of essay work in English 2, and organized the markers into a "lab" meeting two afternoons a week. The experiment was a total failure this year—we had to remark everything and were glad to do the jobs ourselves finally without help. Next year he plans to extend the system and to put Miss Robertson in charge of the markers. Let us hope it works better. If we have English 2 to ourselves we can arrange our exercises much better than when there were so many sections. (UAA JTJ 82-163)

Ryan's resistance to Salter's reforms which required more writing instruction and greater standardization is characteristic of the resistance to writing instruction in western Canada exhibited by individuals who adopted an aristocratic attitude towards writing instruction. Salter's reforms, which seem intended to give students both more instruction and more standardized instruction, are rejected by Ryan in favor of he and Jones being able to control their own course content, presumably involving less writing instruction. A belief in the organic relationship between thinking and writing often led to the familiar belief that writing was best taught through reading.

The letter most critical of Salter came from Eleanor Broadus on December 30, 1952, and her condemnation of Salter accentuates the degree to which democratic and aristocratic attitudes towards writing instruction were extension of individual's personalities and politics. Mrs. Broadus's letter begins "I have wondered how a group of gentlemen could get along under such a head [Salter] of the department as you have had. Neither a scholar nor a gentleman." She goes on to commend the department for revolting, and says "I wish your ex-head would be man enough to resign altogether. After this storm it would make for peace"

(UAA JTJ 82-162). Eleanor Broadus obviously saw Jones as a proper gentleman in the tradition of her husband, and harbored some deep animosity towards the man who replaced her husband. The *gentlemen* in the department rightfully had some concerns about Salter's pedagogical practices, but Salter also clearly embraced values that were not generally embraced at Alberta. English 2 under Gordon had, as we have seen, become a Toronto-like course focusing on literature and requiring only two papers a semester, four for the course. Like Daniells at Manitoba, Salter did not offer particularly innovative approaches to writing instruction for the University Alberta, and he had to rely upon sub-professionals like Miss Robinson to help carry out his reforms because his ideas were soundly rejected by the other professionals in the department. But he did bring a concern for writing to the department in western Canada that most closely emulated Toronto. The English department at Alberta did not completely abandon writing instruction under Jones's leadership, but Jones embodied the aristocratic attitude towards writing instruction that traditionally characterized this department.

J. T. Jones: Returning to aristocracy (1953-61)

Jones was the first graduate of the University of Alberta to assume the headship of the department. After completing his MA at Alberta, "he took an Oxford BA and returned [to Alberta] in 1928 as an assistant professor" (McMaster 10). There is little evidence from the departmental minutes to suggest that Jones as head of the department took much interest in writing instruction; discussion at meetings began to move away from a focus on the junior curriculum and towards a focus on the honours program. His attitude towards writing instruction can be seen most clearly in his (and the department's) response to requests for remedial instruction and writing instruction for engineers. Throughout Jones's tenure, the department did not initiate new programs to improve writing instruction, and any attempts to reform writing instruction came from outside the English department.

Concern for remedial instruction, from Manly's Horatio Alger attitude to the work of people like Daniells at Manitoba, King at Saskatchewan, and Salter at Alberta, is part of the democratic attitude towards writing instruction. When the issue of writing instruction is not addressed by English departments, external forces often make it an issue. The President of the University met with the English department on December 9, 1952 to both announce Salter's resignation and to request more accountability from the department in the handling of first-year courses.

The President said that he realized that students entering the University were often weak in English and that the Administration recognized the fact that special provisions had to be made to meet this difficulty.

He realized that it was impossible to attain complete uniformity in the type and number of assignments given to the various first-year sections, but he felt that it was desirable to have some uniformity in the amount of work and the type of correction given to the work. (UAA Minutes 72-107-1)

Ironically, the President's request is what Salter had been striving for in his attempt to achieve consistent grading in the department—the plan that had been so soundly objected to by Salter's colleagues.

The English department does not appear to have taken any measures to meet this request, but in 1957, a remedial program was established as an experiment. The minutes from the October 1 meeting indicate that a Mrs. Cutt has been hired to "help weak students in English courses and possibly students from other departments who may be referred to the Department of English." A new issue for western Canadian universities is also mentioned: "According to the President, students who have come recently from overseas are to be the responsibility of Miss Brine, unless she has too many, in which case some may be turned over to Mrs. Cutt." The President seems to have played an important role in establishing both of these remedial programs—for the international students and for English-speakers with weak

skills—and the work is distributed to the sub-professionals, Mrs. Cutt and Miss Brine. The professionals in the department, from Jones down through the ranks, took a limited role in establishing these programs.⁷⁶

At the same meeting in October of 1957 in which remedial instruction was discussed, a proposal for an English course for engineers is reviewed. Alberta was the only western Canadian university that was not, at the time, offering some form of special course for engineers, and the department continued to insist that if such a course were to be offered, it must receive the same weight (the same number of hours and the same literary content) as its other first-year English courses. Additional funding for staffing the course must also be assured; the English department could not offer the course with its current staff and budget. At this time, the department was clear and confident about its professional jurisdiction, and felt no need to compromise and meet the requests of other departments. The department's clear sense of jurisdiction is further re-enforced at the April 8, 1958 staff meeting in which Jones recommends that the Department of Education might be interested in subscribing to *College English* but that the English department had no interest in it. The English department had been receiving the journal for five years, but did not find the content relevant to their needs (UAA Minutes 72-107-1).

Alberta, more than any other English department in western Canada, fits the pattern of English studies suggested by Harris and Hubert. Gordon was the first PhD from Toronto's English department, and he followed the Toronto pattern for first-year English closely. Writing instruction in the junior curriculum at Alberta was limited primarily to instructor feedback on student papers about literature. When Salter doubled the number of essays assigned in English 2 and required group grading sessions, he was met with resistance and revolt by his staff. The difference in the aristocratic and democratic attitudes towards writing instruction at Saskatchewan were stark and very apparent, but did not lead to the kind of conflict that resulted at Alberta. These differences at Alberta, of course, were part of some

fundamental ideological differences, and because writing instruction was not firmly embedded within the structure of first-year English, changes in personnel resulted in some drastic changes to the work of the English department. The feminization of composition is also apparent at Alberta during this time: Salter's heavy teaching and grading demands relied upon non-tenure track women like Miss Robertson to carry much of the burden, and almost all remedial instruction performed by the department in the 1950s was assigned to sub-professionals like Miss Robertson, Mrs. Cutt and Miss Brine.

By the late 1950s, the department at Alberta had a clear sense of professional identity, and was successful in staking out its jurisdiction. The exclusion of writing instruction from this jurisdiction indicates the degree to which the nation-building project of the English department at Alberta had shifted from the combined instruction in literature and composition under Broadus, to the almost exclusive teaching of literature under Gordon and Jones. Canadian literature did not have as strong an advocate at Alberta as it did in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (although Salter's influence may have been more important to Canadian literature than the scholarly study of Canadian literature), and therefore the self-evident value of literature dominated the department's thinking about reading and writing. A reading nation would be a strong nation seemed to be the philosophy behind the department, its general reading courses, and its rejection of the need for writing instruction.

The University of British Columbia: Democratic and National Concerns

The English department at the University of British Columbia was headed by one of the most dynamic figures in Canadian letters, as we have seen from Watson Kirkconnell's assessment of Garnet Sedgewick at the national conference in 1928. And the department as a whole, as we have seen from Roy Daniells's report on first-year instruction at Manitoba, was regarded as second only to Toronto for quality among English departments in Canada.

Sedgewick, as we saw in chapter 3, was a member of the Vancouver Civil Liberties Union, and embodied a democratic attitude towards writing instruction throughout his career. He was succeeded by Daniells, his former student and the mildly democratic head of the English department at Manitoba from 1937-46. Daniells did little to alter the Sedgewick curriculum. He did, however, focus less on local issues than he had at Manitoba, and took a much greater interest in issues of importance to the profession as a whole. The professional stability of English Sedgewick established at UBC enabled Daniells to contribute to the professionalization of English studies throughout Canada.

Garnet Sedgewick: Democrat attitude, consummate professional (1918-1947)

As baffled as Sedgewick claimed to have been by the problems of freshman education in 1928, he experimented very little with the undergraduate curriculum, and believed very strongly in balancing composition and literature. He also was willing to commit his staff, if not himself, to writing instruction in the disciplines. Sedgewick's clearest personal account of undergraduate education is in his 1940 letter to John Lothian, new head of Saskatchewan's English department. Under three points, Sedgewick describes the arrangement of "elementary work in English" at UBC:

1. All university students (Arts, Agriculture, preparatory to Applied Science) take English 1, literature and composition, in the first year. One hour a week is given to literature, two to composition. This whole class is divided into sections—this year there are thirteen of them—of which all the senior men take one, and some of the junior instructors two. This year these sections have been brought down, thank God, to a number somewhere between 40 and 45. In the past they have run much higher. Each term, the department adopts general schemes and limits of work, but within the chosen scheme and limit each instructor goes his own way. One

examination is set for all the sections. Students who are in Agriculture or who are preparing for Applied Science are not segregated.

2. Second Year English, English 2, is given to Arts students only. It is a survey course in English literature. Unfortunately we have not been able for some years to give any work in English composition in this course. This is a very grave defect, but at the present we cannot remedy it.
3. For students in Agriculture and Applied Science special classes are provided in the second and third years of their course. This work is in charge of an instructor who does practically nothing else. And, as you may suppose, it is a grisly job. The instructor develops the composition work of the first year with a view to proper organization of scientific reports. He gives two hours to students of the second year, and one hour to students of the third.

(USA RG 1 Series III B-70)

This description of work at UBC suggests its English department was unique in western Canada, and quite likely in all of Canada, in two ways. First, it allotted more time to composition than literature in its first-year course. The general pattern, as Harris notes, was two hours of literature and one hour of composition.⁷⁷ Secondly, the department systematically taught writing to agriculture and science students all the way into their third year. No other department in western Canada made this commitment. The job is not one Sedgewick regarded as appealing, and neither he nor his department made any attempt to professionalize this position. It is on this point—the professionalizing of writing instruction in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s—that Canadian English departments consistently differ from American departments. Writing instruction was part of western Canadian curriculums, but not a firmly established part of the structure of the university. Writing instruction was feminized or marginalized to such an extent that the personnel responsible for this part of the curriculum did not form whole units

unto themselves as at Minnesota and Chicago, and a sense of professional identity did not emerge.

Sedgewick's curriculum may have proven more influential on Carlyle King, Lothian's successor, than Lothian himself. Saskatchewan's first-year course, we have seen balanced two hours of literature with two hours of composition, and King himself insisted that the composition portion be duly attended to. We saw in chapter 3 Sedgewick's belief in the tutorial system for teaching writing, the need for students to have frequent contact with instructors, and the necessity of keeping class sizes small. The last point influences the first two, and the English department at UBC seldom had the luxury of small classes. At no point in Sedgewick's career, however, did he suggest abandoning composition; only in his report on the Harvard Redbook does he even suggest that the composition portion of the English class not receive credit.

Roy Daniells: Taking up the national cause (1947-1964)

One might expect that Roy Daniells, coming from Manitoba and having been unable to fulfill his plans for general education there, might have pursued such reform at UBC with considerable vigor. There are no signs of that. Instead, Daniells's move from Winnipeg to Vancouver seems to have also involved a move from being an important figure in the local community to being an important figure on the national scene. The only noticeable curricular change he instituted concerned the second and third year Agriculture and Applied Science courses. A second-year course called "English Composition and Literature" "[d]esigned for students of the Faculty of Agriculture, and in Architecture, Commerce, Physical Education, Pharmacy, and Home Economics" was introduced (*UBC Catalogue 1950-51*, 144). The course was to offer "training in advanced composition, in research, and in the preparation of term papers and reports" but also offered "selected readings from various types of modern writing" (144). Daniells infused culture into a course that previously had been utilitarian in its

aim, but he did not go as far as the Alberta faculty in trying to exclude writing instruction from English courses.

Daniells may not have sought curricular reform because he respected and admired Sedgewick, and probably saw no need to change what was being done in the department. He also became concerned, particularly in the 1950s, with organizing scholars of English in Canada through associations and national events. In a poignant letter to Daniells on the occasion of Sedgewick's death in 1948, A. S. P. Woodhouse compares W. J. Alexander and Sedgewick, but unstated in the letter is the fact that Daniells and Woodhouse are the heirs of these two men:

My own belief is that after Alexander (who was great in quite another mode) Sedgewick did much more for English studies in this country that [*sic*] anyone else has ever done. We have better teams now than they had at the outset of their work, but no such individuals as they were. He touched the community, local and national, much more than Alexander, partly because he lived into the age of radio, but mainly for other reasons personal to themselves. It is a pity he did not write more since he wrote so well. (September 30, 1948; UBC RDP 6-8)

As heirs to Alexander and Sedgewick, men who established an international name for scholarship in Canada, Woodhouse and Daniells took up the task of securing a solid base for academic work throughout Canada. In other words, instead of continuing to produce a few world-class scholars, Woodhouse and Daniells concerned themselves with raising the level of scholarship throughout Canada, establishing a wider base of graduate studies than Toronto alone, and defining a distinctly Canadian form of scholarship. I argue in chapters 6 and 7 that this professionalizing of English studies drew the jurisdictional boundaries of English departments more tightly around literature to the exclusion of writing instruction. This effect

may not have been intended, but is clearly evident in the new aristocratic attitude towards writing instruction that emerges after 1957.

The end of the Sedgewick years continued to defy the Toronto pattern for the junior curriculum and the teaching of writing to other disciplines. Daniells's addition of literature to the practical courses for agriculture and science students is more consistent with the Toronto privileging of literature, but even those courses remain focused on writing instruction. The practices of English department members at UBC are not as evident as the practices at some of the other institutions in western Canada, but we saw from Sedgewick's 1926 exam and Daniells's concern for correctness at Manitoba that both combined their democratic attitudes towards writing instruction with current-traditional pedagogies. The terms aristocratic and democratic attitudes towards writing instruction do less to animate our understanding of the work and conflicts at UBC than at other institutions, but that is due in large part to the complexity of Sedgewick and Daniells as individuals and the lack of conflict in the curriculum at UBC. Significant conflict would emerge in Daniells's last few years as department head, but not because of conflict over the nature of the junior curriculum. Sedgewick curriculum and practices always resembled Harvard's, and he continued to draw on Harvard for guidance near the end of his career. Daniells work, however, began to promote the idea of a national identity in scholarship. Much of the contemporary tendency to interpret English studies in Canada as unique and distinct from American practices is the result of Daniells's success in re-defining English studies in Canada at mid-century.

It is no coincidence that the most highly professionalized department in western Canada would take the lead, along with scholars from Toronto, in re-shaping the profession. Re-shaping the profession meant re-shaping the pedagogical technology of nation-building. Literature and composition more or less co-existed peacefully in western Canada before mid-century, and served the dual role of culturing students and making them efficient workers in an industrialized modern nation. Focusing the profession on literature-only both recognized a

more mature and educated populace, but also attempted to *represent* to the public a mature and educated populace. Many more students were coming to Canadian universities well prepared by their high schools, but many more students who would not traditionally have come to university were also coming to Canadian universities. By refusing to accept writing instruction as part of their jurisdiction, English departments, at least for a short period, attempted to represent to the nation a well-educated, sophisticated youth population—a youth population drawn in contrast to the American students of the 1950s and 60s who were apparently in greater need of remedial instruction. To teach or not teach writing instruction became closely entwined with national identities and the success or failure of public education systems.

To understand more thoroughly the developments in English departments in western Canada after 1957, in the next chapter I look at the role of Woodhouse, Daniells, and others in shaping the Humanities Research Council, the Association for College and University Teachers of English, and the Canada Council. The local environments become less of a defining factor in English departments after 1957 as national funds for research and scholarship are established. Departments may have become more diversified in literary theory, as Heather Murray argues, but they almost all became the same in their concern for literature and literary theory at the expense of writing instruction (77). Canadian nationalism is also redefined in the Cold War years, and is defined more clearly in opposition to America than it had been since the 1890s. English departments played only a small role in shaping Canadian national identity, but the differences in Canadian and American trends in English studies between 1957 and 1976 are more distinct than at any other period in the twentieth century and provocatively suggest that each country perceived the need for very different kinds of pedagogical technologies of nation-building.

CHAPTER 6. GOVERNMENT AND EDUCATION IN NORTH AMERICA (1947-1966)

Chapters 2 and 4 illustrate the continental nature of higher education by tracing the influence of American institutions and educational trends on the universities in western Canada. More specifically, I have been arguing that claims about education, English studies, and writing instruction being made in the US were strongly influencing local practices in western Canada. The influence of these claims made higher education and English studies in both countries more similar than previous scholars have suggested. By contrast, nationalist interpretations of higher education in Canada emphasize the influence on the University of Toronto and other eastern schools on the development of education in western Canada.

This chapter may seem more nationalist in its emphasis as I show that Canadians in higher education made a concerted effort to distance themselves from American practices and American values between 1947 and 1958. But even these developments, I argue, still need to be seen in a continental perspective. The attempt to define higher education in a uniquely Canadian fashion reduced some of the similarities between higher education in Canada and the US—particularly the attitudes towards writing instruction—but the Canadian quest for self-sufficiency was a direct response to fears of Americanization, fears that continentalism had gone too far. The focused effort on the development of Canadian national identity and Canadian higher education was also a protest to the neo-imperialist practices of the US. The American military-industrial complex supported research in science and technology with some indirect support of the arts and humanities; the Canadian government radically improved its funding of the arts and humanities, with more modest increases to the sciences. Universities in both countries greatly benefited from government funding during the Cold War era, but the result was a greater differentiation in the university systems.

Many events contributed to the differentiation of higher education in the two countries, but 1957 was the watershed year. In this chapter, I will describe the impact of the Canada

Council, the founding of the Association of Canadian University Teachers of English (ACUTE), the publication of Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism*, and the launching of Sputnik—all occurring in 1957—on the professionalization of English studies in Canada. Specifically, I will argue that these events enabled English departments in western Canada and throughout Canada to draw their jurisdictional boundaries more narrowly than they had in the first half of the century. They could now claim literature as their proper jurisdiction, and teach writing as a humanistic endeavor rather than an exercise in correctness, if they wished to teach writing at all. The teaching of literature, now including Canadian literature, became the primary technology of nation-building in English departments for this country which was industrially advanced but culturally immature.

Throughout the chapter, and more comprehensively in a final section to this chapter, I will compare these developments in Canada with developments in the US—the founding of the NEA and NEH (1964), the founding of the College Conference on Composition and Communication (1949), American responses to *Anatomy of Criticism*, and American responses to Sputnik. In none of these cases did Canada follow the American lead, and the pattern of professionalization of English in the US can be seen as one of expanding its field coverage rather than narrowing its professional jurisdiction. In the case of the NEA and NEH, Canada had clearly taken the lead in involving its federal government in the funding of the arts and humanities. Canadians were aware of CCCCs, but few Canadians attended the conference or published in the journal. To the extent that CCCCs is a symbolic starting point for the professionalization of writing instruction in the US, the lack of Canadian interest in the organization is significant. Frye's work had a significant impact on English studies in the US, but it did not represent a sign of professional maturity for American scholars in the way it did for Canadian scholars. And finally, the American response to Sputnik is often cited as another key moment in the development of the professionalization of writing instruction, while it had no such effect on writing instruction in Canada. I will conclude the chapter with an

assessment of the importance of the 1966 Dartmouth Conference on Writing for the professionalization of writing instruction in the US, a conference Canadians were aware of, but only two attended. The lack of influence of the Dartmouth Conference in Canada suggests that Canadian English departments did not look to the US for guidance in the way they once had. During these crucial years for the development of writing instruction in the US, 1947-66, Canadian scholars of English were given the opportunity to focus on scholarship generally and literature specifically in a way previously unheard of in Canada. They felt no external pressure, nor external incentive, to professionalize writing instruction.

Harris and Hubert, as we have seen, argue that English studies in Canada began to change in the 1960s—the grip of Hegelian-Arnoldian idealism and British literature was finally loosened. I agree with this assessment, but stress in this chapter that the money made available to the humanities through the Canada Council and the other key aspects of the professionalization of English studies in Canada enabled English departments to focus on literature—whether Canadian, British, American, or world—and to marginalize writing instruction more thoroughly than it had ever been marginalized in Canadian university junior curriculums. Canadian English departments expanded their field coverage, to use Gerald Graff's term, but they did not include composition or rhetoric as one of their new fields. Creative writing was much more likely to be accepted as part of English departments' jurisdiction than was business and technical writing or composition instruction.

Roger Graves notes that writing instruction virtually disappeared at the University of New Brunswick at mid-century, and he argues that the influence of people like A. S. P. Woodhouse and Northrop Frye were largely responsible for the change (24-29). My argument is an extension of Graves's position, with a much stronger emphasis on the role of the federal government through the Massey Commission and the Canada Council. I can only refer cursorily to other events that also played into the end of writing instruction in Canada—the revival of the meeting of English instructors in 1952, the attack on progressive education in

Canada in the 1950s, and the exclusion of Marshall McLuhan from the Canadian mainstream of arts and letters—and can therefore only suggest the abundance of evidence available to support the argument that during the period in which writing instruction professionalized in the US, it was excluded from the jurisdiction of English departments in Canada.

The Canada Council and its Effects

The founding of the Canada Council in 1957 by the Liberal government of Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent influenced the professionalization of English studies in Canada more than any other single event. Combining large gifts from two Canadian philanthropists with federal money, the Council had an initial fund of one hundred million dollars which was divided into \$50,000,000 in capital grants to be spent over ten years and \$50,000,000 as an endowment for scholarships and grants-in-aid of scholarly research and the Arts.⁷⁸ The money had an immediate impact on the performing and fine arts in Canada, and a long-term effect on scholarship. Watson Kirkconnell, who we will see was a key figure in the development of the Canada Council, reports some of the concrete effects the Council had. Between 1958 and 1963, he says, “there were 2993 candidates for grants in the humanities and the social sciences . . . and 989 awards were made” (247). Canadian graduate students and scholars today regularly compete for Canada Council funded grants.⁷⁹ Two key events led to the formation of the Canada Council: the 1947 publication of *The Humanities in Canada* and the 1949-51 Massey Commission, named after its chairperson was Vincent Massey. All three events—the publication of *The Humanities in Canada*, the Massey Commission, and the founding of the Canada Council—are significant elements in Canada’s cultural and intellectual history, and parallel other post-war nation-building events in other countries of the British Commonwealth. A brief account of these events leading up to the Canada Council is necessary to illustrate the focused effort of national-culture building in Canada between 1947 and 1957.

The Humanities in Canada was prepared by A. S. P. Woodhouse, who was by now one of Canada's most influential scholars in English, and Watson Kirkconnell, head of the English department at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. They were both founding members of the Humanities Research Council of Canada (HRCC), which was formed in December of 1943, and as executive officers they took on the task of preparing a report assessing the state of the humanities in Canada.⁸⁰ The organization had no money, but received \$8,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation to support two years of research (Kirkconnell 243). The result of this research, *The Humanities in Canada*, was so successful in illustrating the paucity of the humanities in Canada that the Rockefeller Foundation responded with \$115,000 every year between 1947 and 1957 and the Carnegie Corporation provided \$80,000 per year over the same time period. The ten-year period was chosen in order to give Canadian humanists and the Canadian government time to find their own funding. Finding Canadian sources to support the humanities was a matter of national pride. Woodhouse tells Malcolm Ross as late as 1954 that "sooner or later Canada must pick up her own funders" (January 26, 1954; UC MRP Section V, 2.24). In the mean time, the American money enabled humanists in Canada to begin to shift their professional identity from that of teachers to that of researchers.

The Humanities in Canada was also a defense of liberal education in Canada. Kirkconnell and Woodhouse write in the introduction to their recommendations, "If we are to rank as a civilized nation, and not merely as an enormously wealthy and heavily industrialized Siberian hinterland to the civilized world, we shall need to come of age in our academic life as well" (203). Earlier in the report they had identified what they saw as the Canadian tradition of education: "The idea of a liberal education based on great books has entered deeply into the Canadian conception of courses in the humanities" (47). This emphasis on establishing culture in what otherwise might be an industrialized hinterland, and drawing on an Arnoldian sense of teaching great books meant that reform in postsecondary education generally and English

studies specifically was being focused on the improvement of resources and opportunities for the study of literature and culture, not student writing.

The Humanities in Canada only cursorily addresses the issue of writing instruction. Kirkconnell and Woodhouse blame high school and the home for the poor preparation of students, and imply that all experts are in agreement that writing instruction should be dealt with at the secondary level:

All educators are united in attaching special importance to the study of English at the secondary school level. There is not the unanimity as to the best method of teaching it, nor is there general satisfaction with the final result. Inadequacy in English is only too evident to parents, teachers, employers, and university professors, who are quick to criticize the apparent deficiency in training. . . . University authorities, both in the United States and Canada, express the gravest concern over the standard of English among freshmen. Even such institutions as Harvard, to judge by the recent report, *General Education in a Free Society* (pages 199-200), must give special attention to remedial work in composition for students of the first year.

My explanations for this situation are advanced under such headings as insufficient reading, poor teaching, excessively large classes, unattractive and difficult courses of study, and failure to engage the interest of the student who, through undue stress on an examination objective, misses the central importance of the subject, possibly through the illusion of familiarity. . . . Homes with no books, parents who read only the daily paper and an occasional magazine, have a negative influence which the teacher of literature finds hard to overcome. (34-35)

Such an account of why students need “remedial work in composition” is a familiar jeremiad of Canadian humanists. Its presence in *The Humanities in Canada* was particularly influential in

defining what the humanist, and particularly the teacher of literature, should and should not be expected to teach.

The immediate pay-off of *The Humanities in Canada*, as noted, came in the form of money from the American philanthropic organizations. The longer-term payoff came in the report's influence on the formation of the Canada Council, although the influence was not direct. The HRCC report influenced the establishment of the Canada Council through its influence on the Massey Commission. The Commission's work is succinctly, if somewhat sardonically, described by Blair Fraser in his history of Canada since World War II:

It worked for two years, traveled ten thousand miles, held 224 meetings, patiently received 462 briefs and 1200 live witnesses from 13 federal Government agencies, 7 provincial Governments, 87 national and 297 local organizations that considered themselves organs of culture, including 35 private radio stations. Its report, published in the summer of 1951, was irreproachably bland. (104)

This account does indicate the seriousness with which the commission investigated the state of culture in Canada, and the extent to which it, at least in appearance, sought to hear popular opinion. The NEA and NEH, by way of contrast, were established on the basis of a report that took one person, August Heckscher, six months to prepare.⁸¹

Paul Litt's *The Muses, The Masses, and the Massey Commission* places the commission's work and eventual publication in a richly drawn historical and cultural context. Feeling that Canada had emerged as a county with stature in the international community during the Second World War and that the literal process of nation-building had been completed with Newfoundland joining confederation in 1949, Litt says that Canadian politicians felt a need to establish a unique Canadian identity to present to the world (17). The Liberal governing party established the Massey Commission as part of a nation-building process. The commission was given the task to find and support a Canadian identity distinct from the forms of mass culture

being produced in the US. The unifying concept the Commission returned to over and over, Litt argues, was liberal humanism: "Liberal humanism required cultural nationalism's desire for identity with a set of moral values and aesthetic standards that were coherent enough to serve as a basis for national unity and distinct enough from those of American mass culture to provide a unique Canadian identity" (108).

This national endorsement of liberal humanism suggests the extent to which the 1890 Arnoldian views of literature were still alive and well in Canada at mid-century and the extent to which literature could still be conceived of in Canada as the most effective pedagogical technology for nation-building. The universities rather than the artists' studios were considered by the Commission to be the "real centre of cultural life in Canada," and therefore began to receive increased funding in the 1950s (Litt 147). The most significant recommendation of the commission, however, was that the federal government establish the Canada Council to directly fund the humanities (Litt 242).

The Council was to be a funding source "set up," J. L. Granatstein says in his account of the first ten years of the Canada Council, "as an 'arm's length' agency, funded by the state but virtually independent of it in day-to-day operations" (141). The tasks of the Council are nicely summarized by F. W. Watt of the English department at Toronto, writing for an Australian audience very interested in the fate of the Canada Council:

The Council has responsibilities analogous to those of the British council and the Arts Council of Great Britain combined, and others as well; its task, so large it can only be sketched briefly, is to provide scholarships, grants, or loans for study and research in the arts, letters, and social sciences for foreigners in Canada and for Canadians at home and abroad; to make awards for accomplishment in the arts, humanities and social sciences; to provide for the representation and interpretation in other countries of Canadian work in these fields; to facilitate cultural exchanges with other countries; to make grants to

institutions of higher learning for their construction projects; to enlist the aid and coöperation of other organizations towards the same goals. (357-58)

The Council, Watt's description notes, was intended to promote Canadian culture not only at home but abroad. It strove to offer funding of the kind and scope available through Fulbright or Guggenheim scholarships.

Initial responses to the Council were generally positive. A. S. P. Woodhouse, co-author of the 1947 *Humanities in Canada*, assessed the state of scholarship in an article entitled "The Humanities in Canada, 1959." He sees the establishment of the Canada Council as recognition of the importance of the humanities to the nation: "Even in this era of large expenditures, one hundred million dollars is not for Canada a negligible sum. With its capital endowment of fifty million for arts and letters, the humanities and the social sciences, and its additional fifty million for building grants to the universities, the Canada Council offers the most tangible evidence that any country could give of public concern for these areas" (10). As far as Woodhouse was concerned, Canada had not simply caught up to the Americans or British in terms of resources available to scholars: "What seems quite certain is that in no other country is public support for scholarship in the Humanities more nearly adequate than in Canada today" (11).

Clarence Tracey, a member of the English department at Alberta from 1942-1945 and at Saskatchewan from 1950-65, spoke of the impact of the Canada Council in an interview:

The Canada Council has been one of the most important and most valuable things that have happened in the academic world in Canada in my time and I think the academic community is not sufficiently grateful. . . . [I]t has made a tremendous difference to everybody in the profession. Just think of the number of students who have been virtually supported on Canada Council grants. I've had three research grants from the Council myself and without them I don't think I would have been able to publish my later work. (147)

We will see in the next chapter that graduate students at Saskatchewan very clearly benefited from Council funding between 1957 and 1976, and graduate students in Canada today continue to benefit from funding to the extent that some of them do little or no teaching through their graduate careers. Most Canadian universities today do not make first-year composition a requirement unless it is staffed in part by full-time faculty members.

The Council, of course, had its critics. Watt lists two kinds: “The ‘practical’ man was indignant that so much money was to be expended at all, and so much was put in the hands of intellectuals to be wasted on cultural ‘frills.’ . . . More liberal minded critics, including one of the best known and most truculent of contemporary novelists, Morley Callaghan, were disturbed by the dangers inherent in a state-bred culture” (362-63).⁸² A criticism of the arrangement, rather than intent, of the Council was raised by those humanists who were very thankful for the money, but wanted an even higher profile for academic work. To the public’s eye, the Canada Council funded the performing arts. The humanists and social scientists lobbied and succeeded in having a funding body “which would raise their image and rationalize research programs and subsidies.” The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council was formed in 1978 (*Humanities Research Council of Canada: A Short History* 8-9). The Canada Council not only enabled the professionalization of the humanities in Canada, but the humanists recognized the importance of establishing a publicly visible professional identity.

This support for the humanities, and specifically the study of literature, made composition expendable. Universities did not immediately drop writing instruction, but it became increasingly marginalized, both to the domain of the new graduate student population in Canada—limited almost exclusively to the University of Toronto before 1960—or to the work of writing labs or clinics, often set up in conjunction with student counselling. The overall effect of the Canada Council according to Paul Litt was that teachers of literature were granted federal money in order to “conserve and disseminate high culture” (147). A concrete manifestation of Canada Council money other than individual grants was its financial support

of the Association of Canadian University Teachers of English (ACUTE) and other similar professional organizations. ACUTE was officially formed in the fall of 1957, taking immediate advantage of the windfall for the humanities.

Professional Development and the Founding of ACUTE

At the end of chapter 5, I suggested that Roy Daniells's move from Winnipeg to Vancouver shifted his interests from local concerns to national concerns. I also suggested that he and Woodhouse were heirs to Sedgewick and Alexander in the work of professionalizing English studies in Canada. The work they carried on in the 1950s, specifically as seen through the founding of ACUTE, accomplished three vital tasks: (1) it created a sense of professional community, a sense particularly lacking in western Canada; (2) it made a strong claim for defining the jurisdiction of English departments in Canada as literature-only through the keynote address of Northrop Frye at ACUTE's initial meeting; and (3) it made strong claim for improving the working conditions of junior members of the profession through the other keynote address of the same meeting, delivered by Murdo MacKinnon.

Daniells and Woodhouse were the primary organizers of the first meeting of ACUTE. There had only been one national conference for English teachers since the 1928 conference in Toronto—a 1952 meeting which had ended with the directive to continue organizing national gatherings. The significance of the founding of ACUTE, according to Clarence Tracy, was the sense of comradeship, or professional affiliation, that had been lacking in Canada before 1957. Tracy had been teaching for twenty years prior to the founding of ACUTE, and had spent most of those years

in the West in a state of isolation from colleagues who were interested in the same things I was. . . . So the foundation of ACUTE for me, at any rate, primarily marked the establishment of a scholarly community to which one could belong, and the annual meetings not only provided interesting papers but

even more than that an opportunity to meet and talk with one's colleagues and to turn over ideas. (129)

The problem of isolation may not have been as pressing for scholars from Toronto, Tracy notes, but he remembers "Mr. Woodhouse expressing the view on more than one occasion that the Canadian scholarly community simply had no way of getting together" (129-30).

The two keynote addresses at the first ACUTE meeting were very influential in shaping the new direction of English studies in Canada. Frye defined the ideal of English teachers through a teaching of literature, not composition nor communication: "The English teacher's ideal is the exact opposite of 'effective communication,' or learning to become audible in the market place. What he has to teach is the verbal expression of truth, beauty and wisdom: in short the disinterested use of words" ("Study" 5). Frye's statement at the ACUTE meeting, coming in the same year as the publication of *Anatomy of Criticism*, set the agenda for English studies in Canada for the next twenty years. Any interest in research in composition or rhetoric was excluded from the intellectual project Frye and others were outlining, and the Canada Council, as we saw, fully supported the liberal humanist research agenda.⁸³

The other key-note addresses at the first ACUTE meeting, "Problems Past and Prospective of English Departments," was delivered by Murdo MacKinnon of the University of Western Ontario. In it, MacKinnon addressed the nuts and bolts issues of teaching English in Canada. It is MacKinnon's speech, not Frye's that was discussed at a University of Saskatchewan English department meeting in the fall of 1957.

The protracted debate which followed [the reading of the ACUTE report] centered on the paper presented to the conference by Professor Murdo MacKinnon of the University of Western Ontario, and particularly on those parts of the paper dealing with the fare of the junior instructors apparently doomed to a lifetime of teaching freshman classes. . . . The last proposal [that portions of senior classes be assigned each year to junior staff members]

seemed to meet with most general approval. (November 25, 1957; USA Minutes RG 13 s.20).

Saskatchewan, under Carlyle King's leadership, may have been more sensitive to labor issues than most departments, but what MacKinnon's paper and Saskatchewan's response suggest is that first-year classes, and by implication composition, were still regarded as the alienating labor of English departments and that rather than reconceive the kind of work being done in first-year classes, the solution was to redistribute the work more fairly. One cannot fault the Saskatchewan faculty for being concerned about their juniors colleagues, a concern which in some ways prevented the professionalization of writing instruction in Canada.

Abbott argues that a profession is defined by the work it does and not the organizations it forms, but those organizations obviously play an important role in forming professional identity, authorizing the work being done, and shaping the working conditions of the profession. American scholars of English had professional organizations since 1883 (MLA) and a host of other professional groups since then. Canadians have been welcome as members in those organization, but they obviously felt the need for an organization that addressed their concerns specifically. The founding of ACUTE in 1957, and particularly the defining of the purpose of English as opposed to "effective communication," could not have provided a sharper contrast to the founding of the Conference of College Composition and Communication in 1949. Obviously CCCCs was a small part of the professional environment in the US, but there was no parallel to CCCCs in Canada, and no branch of ACUTE was established to address this issue. Northrop Frye, the most internationally acclaimed Canadian scholar of English to date, continued to marginalize "effective communication" in *Anatomy of Criticism* and other works, firmly institutionalizing what Hubert calls the antirhetorical philosophy in Canadian English departments (*Harmonious* 178).

The Influence of Northrop Frye

The publication of *Anatomy of Criticism* in 1957 established Frye's international reputation as a profound synthesizer of literature and literary theory. He had, however, already been an important member of the Canadian intellectual community for fifteen years, and he reached a wide audience through radio lectures and public engagements. The success of *Anatomy of Criticism* was important for Canadian scholars' sense of professionalism at home and abroad, but I will touch on three points concerning Frye's influence: (1) his influence on the Massey Commission; (2) his influence on the profession of English studies through *Anatomy of Criticism*; and (3) his influence as a public spokesperson for English and the humanities in Canada through radio broadcasts, particularly his lectures *The Educated Imagination*.

Northrop Frye is a key figure for understanding how English scholars were able to influence national cultural policy and how the nature of work in English studies was being defined at the national political level. Frye was uniquely positioned to lobby the Massey Commission as both a literary critic and a clergy man—he was an ordained minister with the United Church of Canada. “The presence of Professor Frye,” Litt writes, “was a reminder of how the church's interest in culture was related to their traditional concern with education as a central part of an individual's intellectual and spiritual formation” (94). This tradition of educating the whole man, was particularly engrained in Canadian values about education, and Frye embodied both the intellectual and spiritual dimensions of this tradition.⁸⁴

Anatomy of Criticism is an argument for the importance of rhetoric in literary criticism, but Frye's notion of rhetoric excludes, as we have already seen from his ACUTE address, “effective communication.” Frye acknowledges the pervasiveness of rhetoric in his discussion of non-literary verbal structures: “Anything which makes a functional use of words will always be involved in all the technical problems of words, including rhetorical problems. The only road from grammar to logic, then, runs through the intermediate territory of rhetoric” (331).

The study of rhetoric in literature may help individuals communicate, but literature has the more important task of communicating civilization to its readers. Seen in its historical and cultural context, this civilizing function of literature was deemed by Canadian intellectuals exceedingly important to a young post-colonial nation like Canada. Frye's "Polemical Introduction" to *The Anatomy of Criticism* was a re-statement of Matthew Arnold's "The Function of Criticism" for a twentieth-century audience, and had been originally published as "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time." Frye illustrates the importance of the archetype for in connecting isolated Canadians to the larger (literary) world: "Because of the larger communicative context of education, it is possible for a story about the sea to be archetypal, to make a profound imaginative impact, on a reader who has never been out of Saskatchewan" (99). Poetry, Frye says, "is one of the techniques of civilization" and western Canadians in particular need to be *civilized* through poetry rather than *trained* through writing instruction. Jonathan Hart, in a thorough assessment of Frye's career, notes Frye's experience with the prairies early in his career: "The barrenness of nature without humanity is a view that the young Frye shared with Blake as he read him on the Canadian prairie or Great Plains in the spring and summer of 1934" (30). Frye's argument for "ethical criticism" was both a compelling argument for the relevancy of literature to contemporary life in Canada and elsewhere, but also a critique of technical education, including writing instruction.⁸⁵

Assessments of the impact of Frye's work in Canada have generally focused on his impact on Canadian literature. Many of Canada's best known writers have been students of Frye, and Frye spent ten years editing the annual review of Canadian poetry for the *University of Toronto Quarterly*.⁸⁶ Canadian scholar, poet, and novelist Robert Kroetsch describes the prophetic wisdom of Frye for young Canadian intellectuals: "Northrop Frye, writing in 1943, describes the experience I was to have over a period of two decades. Though I had not yet read him, he had already described, forecast, the condition of the spirit, the weather of design, that I was about to endure; his act of writing, then, had already offered the long lesson in narrative

shape and prophetic foreclosure that I had yet to hear” (152). That experience Kroetsch refers to is the experience of being a colonial nation, which meant in Frye’s words the tendency to seek “a conventional or commonplace expression of an idea.” What Kroetsch learned from Frye, then, was the need to be anti-colonial (152). Frye’s impact on the scholarly community outside Canada was the first clear example of Canada’s postcolonial status in the world of arts and letters. Ian Balfour, in a short biography of Frye, says “It is one of the unspoken ironies of cultural life in Canada that it produced a great critic before a great ‘writer’” (78). A press release following the ACUTE conference declared “OLD SCHOLARS ON WAY OUT” and reported Frye as saying that “scholars” were giving way to “intellectuals” in the modern university (Ayre 260). While Frye alone was not responsible for this transition—he had written to Roy Daniells before the ACUTE conference asking Daniells what he should say (RDP 7-11)—his international reputation had a significant impact on the professional self-image of Canadian scholars of English. What Frye said of the impact of the now internationally famous Stratford Shakespeare Festival could also be applied to his impact on English studies in Canada: “it helped to foster a school of Canadian actors, and the lift in morale it represented fostered Canadian playwriting as well” (83 in Balfour). One only needs to substitute “intellectuals” for “actors” and “scholarship” for “playwriting” to understand the importance of Northrop Frye to the professionalization of English studies in Canada.

Frye’s most explicit and thorough treatment of education came through a series of six lectures aired on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in 1962 and published as *The Educated Imagination*. Frye argues that only through a literary education might one hope to gain fluency in public discourse.

In every properly taught subject, we start at the centre and work outwards. To try to teach literature by starting with the applied use of words, or ‘effective communication,’ as it’s often called, then gradually work into literature through the more documentary forms of prose fiction and finally into poetry, seems to

me a futile procedure. If literature is to be properly taught we have to start at its centre, which is poetry, then work outwards to literary prose, then outwards from there to the applied languages of business and professions and ordinary life. Poetry is the most direct and simple means of expressing oneself in words: the most primitive nations have poetry, but only quite well developed civilizations can produce good prose. (51)

Frye's return to this contrast between effective communication and literature suggests that he was responding to external pressures to offer writing instruction. His rhetorical strategy is not to deny the importance of writing instruction, but to put the study of literature and "applied languages" in their proper places. In other words, these lectures broadcast to the nation were a chance for him to define the jurisdiction of English studies for Canadians.

Frye was also establishing a standard by which to measure the success of Canada's nation-building project: not until good prose is produced will Canada be considered a well-developed civilization. Canadian poetry, particularly a group of late-nineteenth century poets known as the Confederation poets, had already achieved an international reputation. But as Balfour notes, Frye was a great critic before any great Canadian novelists had emerged (78). Good prose and great poets, according to Frye's conception of a literary education, will only be produced through the study of literature. He seems not quite so willing as E. K. Brown at Manitoba was in 1935 to closely connect the study of literature and writing. For Frye, the applied language of business was outside the circle of university education. His sense of educating the students from the center-out proved to be an influential model for literary education in Canada and the US, but American educators quickly supplemented Frye's text-centered approach to education with student-centered pedagogy.⁸⁷

Frye's influence on the cultural life and the professional life of English scholars in Canada was considerable: he was a consultant to the Massey Commission, he was the first Canadian to publish a profoundly influential work of criticism, he largely set the agenda for

Canadian scholars of English, and he clearly drew the jurisdictional lines of English around literature by excluding writing instruction in public addresses that potentially reached all corners of Canada.⁸⁸ Frye also taught at the University of Toronto, which until the 1960s was the only Canadian institution offering a PhD in English. Between 1940 and 1960, the English department at the University of Toronto established a sufficient international reputation to draw many of Canada's most talented and aspiring scholars.⁸⁹ The most influential scholars of this period—Frye, Woodhouse, and F. E. L. Priestly—all held the same views about the proper jurisdiction of English studies in Canada, and set the boundaries which English departments throughout Canada could emulate.⁹⁰

Sputnik and the Humanities

If the most significant event of 1957 in English studies was the publication of *Anatomy of Criticism*, and the Canadian cultural/political event of the year was the founding of the Canada Council, the world event of 1957 was the Soviet launch of the Sputnik space craft. The Sputnik-generated crisis in education around the world came at a time when the Canadian government had already committed itself to funding the humanities and high culture, not practical, low arts like composition. Canada's leading literary critic, Northrop Frye, had just published a well-received book asserting the status of literary criticism as science. In this section, I will analyze the response of one Canadian humanist, Claude Bissell, to the Sputnik launch. Bissell saw the sputnik crisis as a chance for the recently endowed humanities in Canada to fully assert their importance in contemporary society.

Bissell, a professor of English at Toronto in 1958 who would later become president of the university, was one of the few Canadian scholars who befriended both Frye and McLuhan, but his primary allegiances were with the mainstream liberal humanists in Canada. This allegiance is obvious in Bissell's most substantial scholarly work, a two volume biography of Vincent Massey, chair of the Massey Commission. His address to the Humanities Association of Canada on June 10, 1958 on the topic of "Sputnik and the Humanities" acknowledges the

continuing importance of the sciences to contemporary society, but he speaks with post Canada Council confidence of the possibilities of the humanities.

“Sputnik” is merely convenient shorthand for referring to the intellectual environment in which we all live—an environment that suddenly pressed closely upon all of us when the Russians launched their first earth satellite. The first effect of sputnik was to place science more firmly than ever at the centre of our civilization. In addition—and this was where sputnik had a direct influence on the universities—it became clear, even to the layman, that great technological triumphs like earth satellites could not be produced by a technological society alone, but depended on the work of pure scientists, working to uncover fundamental laws of nature. (11)

The threat to the humanities posed by this second influence is not that they will be overwhelmed by the sciences, but that “pure learning” in all fields will become subservient to the production of gadgets, “the universities reduced to vast production lines” (11).

While admitting this threat, Bissell is more interested in identifying the possibilities that a sputnik climate creates for the humanities. His arguments are similar to the arguments made during the second world war: the humanities should “strengthen and consolidate their traditional position within the university” as well as “embark on a frank campaign of cultural imperialism that will take them outside of the university” (12). Frye and Woodhouse are noted as exemplars of Canadian scholarship, a kind of scholarship noted not for exacting research, but for its “synthesis, the taking of the long view, the imposition of ideas on miscellaneous facts and of unity on discordant theories.

Bissell’s cultural imperialism reflects a new age of confidence in Canadian humanism. While unlikely to compromise in an epideictic speaking moment, Bissell speaks with confidence of what the humanities can give the professional faculties, not what it is they might take. He acknowledges that the professional faculties may turn to the humanities for writing

instruction as they have in the American schools. “[T]his has for many years been a major industry in which hoards of young instructors are employed, with the inevitable tendency for all this activity to be encompassed under what is, in effect, a separate department, sometimes with the unhappy title of The Communication Arts” (13). Bissell suggests, however, that the humanities will grow in “more interesting and challenging ways,” and he is a rare, but cautious supporter of McLuhan’s notion that culture is our business and business is our culture (13-14). Bissell’s primary vision of the role of the humanities, however, comes back to the vision offered by Woodhouse and Frye: “What the humanities can offer to the business man and the administrator, in addition to an introduction to the problems of human relations, is a training in the grasp of the whole” (14).

Bissell concludes with similar bravado for the humanities. He rejects the notion that humanities education is cheap compared to education in medicine or the sciences by insisting “that if an education in the humanities makes small demands in equipment, it makes big demands in human time” (15). He also notes that the library resources needed for a humanist may exceed the cost of equipment required in other fields (16). Rather than explain how English departments could do more with less, Bissell is arguing that the humanities should take their fair share:

The sputnik era has released, and will continue to release, more resources for education, and in these expanded resources the humanities can share. The sputnik era may well be an era of intellectual rivalry and ferment, in which the humanities can join as full partners with the sciences and the social sciences. Within the university, the humanities must continue to give first place to scholarship, and without, they must move into new areas with boldness and dispatch. I am convinced that on all sides the humanities have powerful friends and supporters, and that in the coming struggle they have nothing to lose but their own self-doubts and inhibitions. (16)

The money Bissell speaks of was spent easily and quickly invested, as we have seen from the discussion of the Canada Council above. His concluding remarks acknowledge the professional inferiority-complexes that had dominated the humanities in Canada before the Canada Council, but he also speaks with confidence and about a new role for humanists: researcher.

The professionalization of English studies in Canada has by no means been a bad thing. As Brian McCrae argues in his introduction to *Addison and Steele are Dead*, an assessment of the professionalization of literary criticism in the US, “the specialization of fields within the university and within literary studies, while it has narrowed our work’s range and its public, and thus frustrated all of us, probably has been more of a blessing than a curse” (13). What I have been arguing is that professionalization and specialization of English studies in Canada between 1947 and 1966 resulted in the exclusion of writing instruction from the field. I argued in chapters 3 and 5 that writing instruction had indeed been part of the junior curriculum in western Canada before mid-century, but when we look at the curriculums there between 1957 and 1976, we will see that writing instruction disappears, is marginalized to remedial classes only, or is transformed into something closer to creative writing than what we think of as composition classes or expository writing.

The Humanities in the US

Before looking at those curriculums in western Canadian English departments, however, I offer a brief account of the changing nature of the profession of English studies in the US between 1947 and 1966, covering the same points as I covered above: (1) government involvement in the arts and humanities; (2) the formation of professional organizations; (3) responses to Northrop Frye’s *Anatomy of Criticism*; and (4) response to the sputnik crisis. What I am arguing here is that the American government invested less time, energy, and money in supporting high culture in the woolly and pious sense than did the Canadian government.

The American government instead invested in university education in a very broad-based fashion, enabling the development of new professional fields including that of writing instruction. Frye's work influenced the intellectual climate and pedagogical practices of American universities and high schools, but it was also supplemented with work in developmental psychology that promoted student-centered, rather than text-centered learning. His work did not have the same symbolic value for Americans as it did for Canadians.

The US federal government has a history of funding the Arts that dates back to the 1930s. American federal support for the Arts, however, has consistently been a practical, rather than philosophical issue. According to Lawrence Mankin in "Federal Arts Patronage in the New Deal," President Roosevelt's New Deal funding of the Arts was directly tied to a larger relief project during the depression (83). Milton Cummings Jr., in his analysis of the Kennedy Administration's Arts policy, describes how the Arts and the universities fell out of favor with the federal government during the McCarthy era of late 1940s and early 1950s, the very time that the Massey Commission and the Canadian government showed increased support for postsecondary education (96). Cummings also compares the founding of the NEA and NEH in 1965 to the New Deal arts programs, founded not upon idealistic or philosophical goals, but largely because support for the arts appeared to play well with voters (98; 113). Something like the cultural lobby in Canada did push the development of the NEA and NEH along, but where Canada had invested the time and effort in a five member Royal Commission, a single man, August Heckscher, was hired as a Special Consultant to the President for the Arts to prepare a report and policy suggestions (Cummings 106). J. Hillis Miller suggests that Cold War mentality, and not a philosophy of liberal humanism, drove the development of arts and humanities in the US: "The expansive development of humanities programs was an ancillary part of our need to be best at everything in order to defeat the Soviet Union in the Cold War. This goal was made explicit in the legislation establishing the National Endowment for the Humanities [in 1965]" (10).

The arts and humanities in the US even before the NEA and NEH were in much better financial and institutional shape than the arts and humanities in Canada before the Canada Council. A variety of professional groups and specialized journals within English studies were created in the 1920s, 30s and 40s, indicating the active development of the profession. The American Literature Group of the MLA, for example, was formed in 1921, and the journal *American Literature* was established in 1929. In 1948, the NCTE published a study, *American Literature in the College Curriculum*, illustrating the extent to which American literature had been institutionalized.⁹¹ ACUTE, which did not concern itself exclusively with Canadian literature, was not founded until 1957, and *Canadian Literature*, the first journal devoted exclusively to that subject was not founded until 1959. The institutionalization of American literature in the US academy without challenging the established order is part of what Gerald Graff calls the flexibility of the field-coverage model.

With American literature part of the university structure by 1948, the field was open to further expansion, and a group of professionals within the US was willing to pursue writing instruction or composition as a professional field. The first meeting of CCCCs in 1949 was a sign of the organization of teachers in English into a professional organization. William Irmischer's brief history of the conference notes its beginning in "practical needs," but he also identifies CCCCs contemporary role in "maintaining professional standards and winning professional recognition in the hierarchy of higher education" (138). Stephen North identifies 1963 as the watershed year. Albert Kitzhaber published the first full-length study of college writing, *Themes, Theories, and Therapy*, and he also delivered a challenge to CCCC at its annual meeting. He said that it was time for CCCC to show leadership in the profession of English studies and provide guidance to the teaching of writing (14-15). North argues that this call to professionalize was answered, and composition moved out of the age of lore and into the age of research.

There was no similar call for writing instructors in Canada to professionalize; the agenda for the discipline, we have seen, was set by Frye in 1957 and again 1962. Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* had a tremendous influence in the US as well as Canada, but his other key texts for the professionalization of English studies in Canada—the ACUTE address and *The Educated Imagination*—had less of an American audience.⁹² Frye's liberal humanism and idealism seemed hollow and irrelevant to some Canadian students of the 1960s influenced by the emergence of a New Left (Jasen, "In Pursuit" 255). Frye was also the subject of sharp criticism by his professional peers in the US for similar ideological reasons, the kind of criticisms that his work and thought seldom met from peers in Canada.⁹³ Frye's work, in short, received a fair and ample reading in the US, but did not have the lasting effects on the profession nor on professionalization that it had in Canada.

The event between 1949 and 1963 that is most frequently cited as influencing composition in the US symbolically if not literally is the Sputnik launch of 1957. Stephen North, in his brief history of the transition from small "c" composition to big "C" composition, says English in America did not benefit from the National Defense Education Act of 1958, but after the NCTE produced *The National Interest and the Teaching of English* in 1961, more federal money came to teachers of English in the form of Project English (1962) and an extension of the NDEA in 1964 (11-12). This funding did not last long, but according to North it launched modern composition on its way to professional status. The irony of this increase in funding, he points out, is that the study of literature could not attract federal support, but "composition, the 'service' course, so long considered academic dirty work, *could* attract such money" (13). Unlike the American government's funding of practical skills, the Canadian federal government created no need nor incentive to professionalize composition.

Even if one is suspicious of this reading of composition *directly* riding the coat-tails of the military-industrial complex, Richard Ohmann's recent essay on English and the Cold War provides a subtle reading of the *indirect* effects of government funding during this same period.

Ohmann argues that all of higher education benefited from the tremendous increase in funding during the Cold War, and that English did not benefit directly. The fate of English and composition studies, because they were part of the university structure, rose with the fate of higher education generally (79). Canadian higher education received a similar boost in funding, but because writing instruction had not professionalized, and key figures in English studies like Woodhouse, Frye, and Priestley actively sought to exclude writing instruction from English departments' jurisdiction, it did not rise with the fate of English studies generally.

Whether because of Cold War funding, or simply in co-incidence with Cold War funding, historians of writing instruction in the US can identify a "revival of rhetoric" in the 1960s. The revival of rhetoric, David Russell says, "not only gave composition teachers a professional identity apart from literature but also provided institutions with recognized experts who could design and implement curricular reforms in writing instruction" (274). The new professionals in the US were particularly influenced by the psychological-empirical research of James Britton. Britton, a British educator, had come to the US for the Dartmouth conference on writing in 1966 and brought with him, according to Russell, "a new theory, a new set of tactics, political and pedagogical, and, most important, a new title for their response to the most recent literacy crisis: writing across the curriculum" (278). Britton's theory was that "children develop writing ability by moving from personal forms of writing (what he calls *expressive* and poetic) to more public, workaday forms, which communicate information (what he calls *transactional*)" (278). His tactics, as researcher-mentor, were to "enter classrooms to listen and observe, to learn from teachers and students not to prescribe "teacher-proof" methods and test them in controlled statistical trails" (279). These innovations were adopted by American secondary schools, but also by places like Carlton College in Northfield Minnesota, Central College in Pella Iowa, and Beaver College in Glenside Pennsylvania (Russell, *Writing* 282-86).

The new professional who emerged in Canadian English departments in the 1960s was decidedly opposed to writing instruction of any kind. Frye's theory of language instruction, expressed throughout his career, was based almost exclusively on the *reading* of texts, not student *writing*. He agreed with Britton to the extent that he thought language should be learned from the poetic out to the transactional, but for Frye that meant starting with reading myths and then reading successively more complex literature. Frye and many of his Canadian contemporaries were also opposed to the progressive education that Britton's work resembled. In 1953, Hilda Neatby, a professor of history from the University of Saskatchewan and one of the five members of the Massey Commission, wrote *So Little for the Mind*, a scathing critique of the progressivists infiltration of primary and secondary schools in Canada. She, like most members of Canadian universities, were proud traditionalists in their educational philosophy.

Two Canadians did attend Dartmouth: Robin Harris, Canada's pre-eminent historian of education and also a specialist in English education, was a consultant at the conference and Merron Chorny from English education at the University of Calgary, attended the Dartmouth conference (UA 19, Box 17, Folder 10). Their presence at the conference had little influence on the work done in English departments in Canada after 1966, but they did make some changes to English education in Canada. In 1967, the Canadian Council of Teachers of English was formed and the publication *English Quarterly* was initiated. Professional scholars in Canada interested in writing instruction now had an organization and a publication. It has not achieved the visible presence of the NTCE, and has remained almost exclusively the domain of scholars in English education. By 1966, English literary scholars in Canada had clearly drawn their jurisdictional boundary around literature and left writing instruction to the English education specialists who would be training Canada's high school teachers.

This chapter illustrates that at mid-century, Canadian higher education generally and English studies specifically began to set its own course and not look to the US for guidance. I have reversed the pattern of exposition—focusing on Canadian developments first and the

American developments second—in order to reflect this change of pattern. The Canada Council enabled English studies to specialize in such a manner that writing instruction could feasibly be excluded from the professional jurisdiction of English departments. ACUTE gave Canadian teachers of English a professional identity at the national level, and the success of Northrop Frye at the international level paved the way for Canadian scholars to privilege research and to think of their work as potentially being on-par with the best scholars in the world. English studies in Canada during the Cold War was also able to define itself against the technocratic impulse in American education, although it drew on traditional liberal humanist values to ground its opposition to the dehumanizing effects of the military-industrial complex, rather than draw on the Marxism of the New Left that had significant influence in American English departments. It is this politicizing of English departments in the US, Ohmann says, that is the real legacy of the Cold War for English in the US (100-06). English studies in Canada continued to contribute to the nation-building project in Canada; English studies in the US began to question the empire-building project of their nation.

My argument in this chapter extends the argument Roger Graves makes about the influence of the Woodhouse-Frye-Priestley alliance at the University of Toronto between 1947 and 1966. I also agree with Harris and Hubert that English studies in Canada began to open the canon during this era, but I emphasize where they don't that this period institutionalized the resistance to offering writing instruction that had always been a part of the profession in Canada. The English department at the University of Toronto had been able to uphold its late nineteenth-century curriculum and practices because of its resources and the sophisticated nature of its students. Only from the 1950s on, however, could English departments in western Canada conceive of research as being a priority to teaching, and only from the 1960s on would universities in western Canada consider dropping English as a universal requirement.

In the next chapter, I will show the impact of the Canada Council and the new sense of professional identity on English departments and their definition of work between 1957 and

1976. At the University of Manitoba, English was dropped as a universal requirement; at Saskatchewan, Carlyle King's program for writing instruction was almost completely eroded and substituted with more literature instruction, and at Alberta and British Columbia, writing instruction was accepted as part of departmental jurisdiction only when it was reconfigured as part of humanistic study and clearly opposed to the writing instruction of their predecessors.

CHAPTER 7. DISTINCT NATIONS, DISTINCT CURRICULUMS (1957-1976)

This chapter will focus on the transformation of English departments in western Canada between 1957, the beginning of the Canada Council funded era, and 1976, the year F. E. L. Priestley and H. I. Kerpneck published a report on undergraduate English education in Canada. Canada Council funding affected English departments directly: it shifted the nation-building role of the humanities away from character-building and towards culture-building. It did so through the support of scholarly research and the legitimization of the professional authority of the humanities. Canada Council founding also enabled western Canadian English departments to extend graduate studies beyond the Master's level: all four provincial universities began to offer PhDs in English during the 1960s. The new graduate students of these departments, however, were not asked to teach composition; the Canadian English professors were more reluctant than ever to accept writing instruction as part of their jurisdiction.

Two changes outside the English departments also contributed to the re-shaping of the English departments in western Canada. University-wide pressure to offer practical writing courses, or practical instruction in writing within literature courses, abated. Introductory English courses as a requirement were often dropped when the universities re-organized the faculties of Arts and Sciences into separate entities. This change was not universal, nor long lasting, but it reflected a different attitude upon the part of professionals outside of English as to the ability of their own students, and the role of English in a university education. The second change may have enabled the first. High school education throughout the provinces improved significantly during this era. The provincial-wide exams that had previously been used to guarantee standards coming out of high school were dropped, in large part as a recognition of the competency and autonomy of high schools in western Canada. Although the

universities still blamed the high schools for students' poor writing, they showed greater trust in the schools' ability to prepare most students for a university education.

Some of these factors—increased Canada Council funding improving professional identity, the rise of graduate education, the end of English as a universal requirement, and improved high school standards—were more important in shaping or reshaping the curriculum at one university than another. The end of a universal requirement and the trust in high schools, for example, was more important in Manitoba than in Saskatchewan, where the real issue in dropping composition was the department's sense of professional identity. Alberta and British Columbia, already the two departments most secure about their professional jurisdiction, made elaborate and concrete statements about the proper nature of their work. The development of graduate studies at those two institutions shifted the focus of attention away from undergraduate education and towards graduate education. I will conclude this chapter with an analysis of Priestly and Kernneck's study of the English Undergraduate Curriculum in Canada. This analysis will illuminate the extent to which the western Canadian English departments were no longer significantly different in their missions from the eastern Canadian departments, and it will accentuate why 1976 might be considered the apex of the Hegelian-Arnoldian or antirhetorical tradition of English studies in Canada.

In terms of the four tasks of this study, this chapter is moving in two directions: it is re-connecting the history of writing instruction in western Canada with the generalizations made by Harris and Hubert and it is moving away from an emphasis on the similarity of writing instruction in western Canada and the US. English studies in western Canada between 1957 and 1976 reconnected with the pattern Harris and Hubert argue was set in 1890. The connections is established not through a curricular focus on British literature exclusively, but by its focus on literature and its exclusion of writing instruction. First-year courses in western Canadian English departments during this time were committed to teaching literature and not writing; many of the departments, we will see, were also very aware of distancing themselves

from their predecessors practices of writing instruction. In re-connecting with some of the nineteenth-century values, English departments in western Canada distanced themselves from American practices. There was no “revival of rhetoric” in western Canada during the 1960s like the one Jim Berlin describes in *Rhetoric and Reality*, and there was no equivalent for what Susan Miller calls “bread or circuits” (money or managers) for writing instruction in the modern Canadian academy (Berlin, *Rhetoric* 120-138; Miller, *Textual* 142-73). The continentalist perspective on the history of writing instruction during this period has to emphasize Canadians’ attempts to differentiate themselves from American in many facets of life. They distanced themselves not only from educational practices but from the violence of America’s large urban centers, the social strife of the civil rights movement, the political assassinations of the sixties, and America’s involvement in Vietnam.⁹⁴

The four key concepts for understanding writing instruction in western Canada during this period—increased Canada Council funding improving professional identity, the rise of graduate education, the end of English as a universal requirement, and improved high school standards—have no significant equivalent in the US history of writing instruction, and even these concepts play themselves out differently in each Canadian institution. Writing instruction does not so much disappear completely from the junior curriculums in western Canada during this period as it gets re-defined, limited, and pushed off the priority list of English departments. English departments and the humanities in general, as we saw in chapter 6, were instrumental in defining the role of education for national-culture building, and that role no longer included writing instruction. Composition did not become part of the institutional fabric in any significant way, and therefore was continually open to re-negotiation or exclusion in the system of professions.

The University of Manitoba: The End of Universal Requirement, Improved High Schools

Although all four factors important to re-shaping the nature of work in English departments during this period can be seen to have an effect on the work at Manitoba, in this section I focus on the end of English as a universal requirement, and the professionalization of high school education as the most important factors in reconfiguring the University of Manitoba's junior curriculum. The other two factors—the introduction of the PhD and the influence of the Canada Council—can be treated quickly. The introduction of a PhD in English (1964) was seen by the new head of the department, Geoffrey Durrant, as an important step in attracting “lively minds to the Department” (December 21, 1965; PSaP UA26 11-2). The awarding of Canada Council research funds, like those awarded to Dr. Joseph Gold for his study of Dickens' moral vision, would have been important for keeping those lively minds at Manitoba (PSaP UA26 13-19). But it is the end of English as a universal requirement, and the commitment of high school educators to teaching composition that most clearly allowed the English department at the University of Manitoba to concern itself with literature, and not composition.

The End of the Universal Requirement

In the late nineteen fifties and early nineteen sixties, Canadian universities were becoming increasingly specialized and the faculties of Arts and Science were being separated into distinct administrative bodies. The University of Manitoba did not split its faculties during this decade, but it closely watched the developments at other Canadian institutions.⁹⁵ In 1964, Manitoba did emulate other institutions by dropping English as a universal requirement. This change happened to coincide with the retirement of Lloyd Wheeler as head of the department, and marks the end of the department's long commitment to offering practical instruction in writing.

Throughout Lloyd Wheeler's time as head of the department (1946-64), courses in the junior curriculum provided some writing instruction. English 101, Special English, was a remedial course that used a drill book as its primary text. English 110 served as the literature and composition course, with one hour per week given to composition, three hours to literature. Foerster and Steadman's *Writing and Thinking* served as the text throughout this time. The Commerce students continued to have their one hour per week English class, 202, with an emphasis on weekly writing. The Agriculture students took 203, a four-hour class with an emphasis on composition. The Engineering and Architecture students had yet another form of writing class, a two-hour per week class that emphasized the study of prose. *Writing and Thinking* was used as the textbook for the Agriculture, Engineering, and Architecture students. Until 1964, first-year English at the University of Manitoba was not significantly different than first-year English at American universities: writing instruction was taught in conjunction with literature, and the influential *Writing and Thinking* re-enforced for Canadian students a sense of the organic relationship between these two crucial acts: writing and thinking.

In 1964, Manitoba's science students were no longer required to take an English course. Those students did have to choose three course from among literature, history, and philosophy courses, but a document entitled "A Brief Summary of the History of Arts and Sciences" says that the "calibre of such previously compulsory classes improved" (UA 6 49-2, 11). Although this point is not discussed in any detail, it suggest that Manitoba's students did not need remedial instruction, i.e. writing instruction. The "Brief Summary" is suggesting that students thrive if they choose their own courses, and that students will continue to choose literature courses if given an option. This attitude was not entirely new—teachers of English had been offering this situation as an ideal since they were first required to teach first-year writing courses. American English departments in the 1960s were expressing the same

opinion, but composition was so thoroughly a part of the institutional structure of American universities that it was more difficult to unseat.⁹⁶

While it may be difficult to directly connect this change to the effects of the Massey Commission, the Arts as independent faculties were clearly in much better shape than they had been in the 1940s, and non-compulsory (or less compulsory) courses suggest a trust in the calibre of the students being enrolled. This trust was fostered in large part by the improving quality of high school education in Manitoba.

Improved High Schools

The English department and the university as a whole worried less about the writing ability of students than they had up till this point in the university's history because the matriculation standards had been raised. In the "Brief Summary," 1964 is again noted as the crucial year in which "an applicant for admission to University was required to have completed grade 12 senior matriculation" (13). Prior to this time, applicants could be admitted with junior matriculation (grade 11) to take the prescribed first-year course, the year in which composition was most heavily emphasized. The first-year course was dropped as an option because "the standards of the grade 12 matriculation course had been increasingly improved" (13). Eliminating this year also helped alleviate the overcrowding at Manitoba, a problem for Canadian and American universities in the 1960s.

Indication of the improving quality of high school education in Manitoba came in another form in 1970. Grade 12 matriculation in Manitoba until 1970 had included passing provincial-wide set examinations. The Manitoba Department of Education Annual Report for 1970 notes as the "most important development of this calendar year . . . the decision to discontinue the external examining and marking conducted by the High School Examination Boards" (38). The report suggests that the universities will rely on Canadian Scholastic Aptitude Tests (CSAT) for verbal and mathematical scores, and the Canadian English

Language Achievement Test (CELAT) to indicated “a degree of competence in the English language” (38). These standardized tests did not get wide-spread use in Manitoba, nor elsewhere in Canada; students were admitted to university almost exclusively on the basis of their high school standing. Alexander Gregor and Keith Wilson, in their history of education in Manitoba, note that the end of province-wide exams was an important change in education at both the secondary and post-secondary level: “The move was generally seen to be a beneficial one pedagogically and professionally; teachers now felt they had a wider latitude to organize and present the curriculum in the fashion they felt most appropriate” (141). In dropping the exams as a requirement, the University of Manitoba generally recognized the professionalism of their high school colleagues.

The professionalization of high school English teachers clarified the jurisdictional battle over writing instruction: it belonged in the high schools. A special course on the teaching of English was held at the University of Manitoba July 7-August 1, 1969 sponsored by the Faculty of Education and the provincial government’s Department of Youth and Education. The three guest lecturers were also British educators and, one John Dixon, was a key figure in the 1966 Dartmouth conference (UA 19 AAP 17-10). This conference, the nationality of its guest speakers, and its intended audience all conformed to traditional ways of looking at writing instruction in western Canada: it should be the purview of the Faculty of Education; if writing is to be taught, the British probably teach it better than the Americans; and it should be taught in the high schools, not in the universities. The Dartmouth Conference had some influence on the teaching of English at the high school level in Canada and on the work being done in departments of education, but it did not, as we saw in chapter 6, have much impact on English at the university level, unlike in the US.

The English department at the University of Manitoba, as we have seen throughout this study, struggled to achieve the same kind of professional authority and autonomy that the departments in the other provincial universities were able to achieve. For English as a

universal requirement to be dropped in the 1960s, and for the first-year course in English to be exclusively literary studies, indicates a sense of professional growth and improvement in Manitoba's students. English as a profession drew its jurisdictional lines around literature, and excluded composition. The Department of Education at Manitoba accepted writing instruction as a legitimate area of study, both for themselves and for their students who were to teach in the province's high schools. The jurisdiction for writing instruction was finally sorted out as the English department wished it to be, although this arrangement came to be a century after the nation's and the province's founding.

The issue of poor student writing, of course, did not die in the late 1960s. Special English 101 was dropped in 1965-66, but ten years later a remedial course, 091 English Composition, was offered again. During the period without writing instruction, students at the University of Manitoba with writing problems were directed to the Writing Clinic, which was to be housed in the same space as Counseling Services.⁹⁷ Short-lived solutions to the problem of poor student writing continued to be implemented and dropped. During the decades of composition's professional growth in the US, however, no sign of a similar process has appeared at Manitoba. Outright resistance to teaching writing was, and remains, a common response to calls to improve students' literacy. The resistance to teaching writing is not so new, but the department's authority to refuse to offer writing instruction suggests a very different attitude and authority than existed between 1918-26 and during E. K. Brown's tenure (1935-37). The virtual absence of writing instruction at Manitoba from the sixties on is distinctly different from the practices and attitudes at the university before this time, and begins to explain why students in western Canada *no longer* receive instruction in writing.

The University of Saskatchewan: Professional Identity and Jurisdictional Battles

The pressure on the English department at the University of Saskatchewan to continue

to offer writing instruction as an integral part of the English universal requirement was much stronger than at Manitoba, but the department's sense of professional identity and authority allowed them to draw their own jurisdictional boundaries. This growth in professional identity at Saskatchewan was due in large part to the impact of the Canada Council, which in turn enabled the improvement of graduate studies at Saskatchewan. In this section, I will describe the funding the Council provided to the department and its graduate students, then trace out the effects of this improved professional identity in ensuing jurisdictional battles.

The Canada Council and Professional Identity

The effects of Canada Council founding on the Department of English at the University of Saskatchewan are quite concrete. In 1949, the very existence of the humanities was threatened by the university's third president, W. P. Thompson, a biologist. Thompson's dislike for the humanities and even the social sciences was pronounced. Michael Hayden, in his history of the University of Saskatchewan says, "Thompson eventually came to respect some social scientists and under external pressure he was willing to give some of them some money. The salvation for the humanists came almost entirely from outside—from the federal government through the Canada Council" (202).

The English department at Saskatchewan benefited from Canada Council support in various ways. In 1965, Clarence Tracey requested funds for the establishment of a Johnson Society in western Canada and the western United States, and received \$1,100 from the Council (March 22, 1966; USA RG1 Series 4 B 114). The May 3, 1968 faculty meeting reported that five of the department's temporary faculty received pre-doctoral support from the Canada Council, and that five faculty members received summer support (USA EMP MG 27 S1). The department as a whole had also been benefiting from Canada Council support in the form of money used to purchase research material. The December 4, 1969 department minutes reported that "Since 1966 the Department has been submitting requests to the Canada Council

for grants to purchase fundamental research materials. In 1967 we were given \$7,500, in 1968 \$3,900, in 1969, \$5,000; in 1970 we will be receiving \$3,500. The Canada Council has now announced that it is discontinuing these grants” (USA EMP MG 27 S1).

As we saw in chapter 6, Clarence Tracey, a member of the department from 1950-66 and an academic in Canada from 1936-76, said that “The Canada Council has been one of the most important and most valuable things that have happened in the academic world in Canada in my time and I think the academic community is not sufficiently grateful” (147). In particular, he noted the importance of the Council for graduate studies in Canada. The Council’s funding for new graduate studies programs in western Canada, as Tracey claims and the evidence of the five doctoral students at Saskatchewan supported suggests, did not make the teaching of composition a necessary means for graduate students to support themselves. Tracey, like many other Canadian scholars, had more time and resources to devote to research than he had at any other time in his life, a fact that did not detract from teaching in Canada, but certainly changed the sense of professional identity away from teacher-only to teacher-researcher. This new-found sense of professional identity also created a sense of professional authority when discussing jurisdictional boundaries with professional faculties.

Tracey, in various publications throughout his career, also documented what he saw as an increasing interest in vocational or professional training in Canadian universities. In 1943, while teaching at Alberta, he described the problem of the faculty of Agriculture requesting that English courses be “adapted to the needs and background of the student—a modern way of asking that the wind be tempered to the shorn lamb” (“Future” 178). In 1956 while at Saskatchewan, he saw the compulsory first-year English course as the “frantic gesture towards a liberal education” (“Subsistence” 235). As this course became increasingly eroded and irrelevant to students who took it as their only Arts course, he did not see a nation maturing culturally; he saw the university becoming more and more concerned *only* with students’ economic needs and not their “spiritual and economic” needs (“Subsistence” 232). From

Tracy's perspective, the end of the compulsory English course at Manitoba and other universities would undoubtedly have been an admission that liberal education in Canada was dead and that specialized, vocational education was the only form of education Canadian universities offered. His own department's decision to reduce writing instruction in their first-year course after he and Carlyle King left in the late 1960s is a sign of Saskatchewan's English department participating in that specialization by defining literature as the only subject within its jurisdiction.

Jurisdictional Battles

Carlyle King was the last long-serving English department head, stepping down in 1964 after fifteen years in the position. As we saw in chapter 5, the English department under King did not abandon composition in the 1950s and 60s, but maintained the literature-composition course as the only required course in the university. Not all members in the department were as willing or as enthused as King about teaching composition, an attitude which resulted in a curricular struggle late in 1974. The Agriculture faculty began discussing the possibility of dropping English 102, the literature and composition course, as a requirement for their students. King, now vice-president of the university, addressed a memo to President Begg informing him of the history of required English in the university. King said he was sympathetic with the Agriculture faculty's desire to jettison English 102 as it was now taught because "Shortly after I retired from the Headship of English, the Department abandoned the two-hour practicum in writing—from laziness, I think, because trying to teach freshmen to write clearly and logically is very hard work" (December 30, 1974; USA RG 1 S.VII.4.B ix). King saw the present course, which devoted very little time to writing, as being of little use to the students of agriculture. King also saw some of the "far-out choices" for literature being used in 102 as contributing to the general bafflement of freshmen students. The agriculture faculty did not act on its threat, but in 1979-80, students in professional schools could take a

half-course in English while students in Arts and Science and Education continued to take the full-year course.

This debate over English 102 did not end with the agriculture faculty's concerns. A memo from D. R. Cherry, Dean of the College of Arts and Science and former head of the department of English, to N. K. Cram, University Secretary, reveals a contradiction in the English department's resistance to teaching writing: the faculty in English did not want to teach writing, but they also did not want to have courses dropped. Lost courses potentially meant a cut in faculty. Cherry writes to Cram about the College of Agriculture's intention to change English 102 from a required course to an elective:

While the dropping of one class by a college may not seem to constitute the sort of major curriculum change which [University] Council should debate, I think that the implications are significant enough to warrant discussion in Executive and Council: such action in the professional colleges may seriously affect staffing in this [Arts and Science] college; and if Agriculture and other colleges propose to teach half-classes in technical report writing themselves, they will be asking for funds to do so. (December 20, 1974; USA RG 1 S.VII.4.B ix).

What is striking about Cherry's complaint is that English departments in western Canada and throughout North America had implicitly, if not explicitly, understood that much of their stock in the university rested upon them teaching first-year English, and specifically writing, to students from other faculties. Rather than take the position that English should indeed be teaching writing, as King argued, Cherry suggests that other faculties should require their students to take English regardless of the content of the English course. Cherry's attitude also suggests a sense of professional and jurisdictional confidence that English departments in western Canada did not possess before the 1960s or 70s.

The saga of English and agriculture did not end in 1974. The Dean of the College of Physical Education, H. R. Nixon, exploited the disagreement between agriculture and English

to complain about the English department's attempts to cap enrollment in English 102 for 1976-77. Nixon wonders why English 102 is limited to thirty-five students whereas other first-year courses in the Arts and Science College range from "45 in Political Science to 300 in Psychology, a vast discrepancy which appears to favor the lectures in English" (2). Nixon tries to catch the English department contradicting its stated role in first-year English:

I remember very very clearly, in the Agriculture issue, that spokesmen from the English Department emphatically stated that it was not their responsibility to teach composition but rather to teach English Literature, and this is why they had eliminated the writing laboratory from English 102. . . . On the other hand, if the English Department is now saying that they are going to assume writing skills as their responsibility, then I would expect they will re-institute the laboratory session (this is not in the time table book for 1976-77). (June 25, 1976; 2)

Cherry responds to Nixon and claims not to remember what was said in the Council debate, but says "it is clear that the department of English, in requiring a minimum of eight essays in English 102 classes, plus tests and examinations, is very much concerned with improving the ability of students to write" (June 29, 1976). The efficacy of assigning writing without providing writing instruction, however, seems to side-step the very issue that Nixon is pointing out: the English department was not offering as much writing instruction as it had during the King years. Students at the University of Saskatchewan were *no longer* receiving writing instruction like their predecessors or their American contemporaries.

These kinds of claims to teach writing, by assigning numerous tests and papers, are particularly characteristic of the writing instruction in western Canada during this period of professionalization. This approach is distinct from the pre-Canada Council approach which, while by no means innovative, did in fact see writing instruction as part of the English department's domain. Carlyle King, who lived and worked in eras on either side of the

Canada Council divide, clearly had different ideas about writing instruction than did the English department he left in 1964. Whether the first-year students were more cultured and sophisticated, or more career-oriented and less patient with English, they were no longer given the kind of writing instruction that previous generations had received. English at Saskatchewan began to look more like English at Toronto, and the junior curriculum did significantly privilege literature over composition.

The University of Alberta: The Curriculum, Long-Range Planning, and the Humanistic Study of Writing

Between 1957 and 1976, the Department of English at the University of Alberta progressively shifted its interests from undergraduate education towards graduate education.⁹⁸ The undergraduate curriculum was by no means ignored, but the topic of writing instruction was seldom a point of discussion at departmental meetings during this period. Three documents express the attitude of the department towards writing instruction. In 1958, the department prepared a brief on the English curriculum from elementary through to university education to be submitted to the Royal Commission on Education. The authors of the brief clarify what they saw as the proper jurisdictions for elementary, high school, and university instructors of English. In 1965, the department prepared a document for a university-wide Long Range Planning Committee. The document, however, was not so revealing as the discussion which ensued in departmental meetings. In 1970, the English department's Curriculum Committee conducted a review of its undergraduate curriculum and clarified the work that its members thought most appropriate. Writing instruction is deemed a secondary concern of the department, and any writing instruction provided must not be remedial. These documents provide evidence that the English department at Alberta would consider writing instruction part of its jurisdiction *only if* writing was defined as a humanistic, and not remedial, study.

The most striking point about this period, both at Alberta and throughout Canada, is that university enrollment grew rapidly, but commitment to writing instruction by English departments fell-off. On the one hand, this development makes sense: large enrollment numbers meant more students which meant more grading if traditional practices were continued. On the other hand, the increased enrollment meant a more diversified student body now attended the University of Alberta, and the need for writing instructions was more acute than ever. The University of Alberta established Committees to address the needs of foreign students and remedial students in 1957, but both were short lived. The archival evidence from this period suggests that the English department established a clear sense of professional identity between 1957 and 1976, and the faculty was successful in marginalizing writing instruction as a function of the sub-staff at worst, as a high school skill at best. Writing was valued as a humanistic discipline in itself, but was scorned as a service for other disciplines.

Curriculum Report, 1958

The English department's recommendations to the Royal Commission on Education included particularly clear statements of the value of literature and the place of writing instruction.

The English Department recommends that literature in the High School (and in the Junior High School and the Elementary School) should not be considered an adjunct to other academic disciplines, or as a part of a technique of ideological or social or personal adjustment, or as a dilettante's pastime, but that it should be taught as a humane study having the unique purpose of communicating the special values of literature. (February 25, 1958; UAA Minutes 72-107-1)

The department's dislike of the progressive education movement is evident in the criticism of literature being considered as "part of a technique of ideological or social or personal adjustment," and its recommendation that language instruction should be connected to

literature, not the social sciences as it currently was. The brief also requested that “formal training in grammar and in composition be increased in the Junior High and High School” (February 25, 1958; UAA Minutes 72-107-1). Such an increase would assure English departments that they were not, and should not be, responsible for addressing issues about students’ writing.

While the department clearly saw writing instruction as the jurisdiction of the public schools, they also conceived of writing instruction as intimately connected to literature, even for high school students. They specifically recommended that greater emphasis be given “to the writing of essays dealing with subjects taken from the classics of English literature (by which term is to be understood, of course, British literature, Canadian literature, American literature, etc.)” (February 25, 1958; UAA 72-107-1). They recommended that all students in Education degree programs, regardless of which subjects they intended to teach, should take a first-year and a senior English course. What seems clear, although not explicitly stated, is that the English department at Alberta believed thoroughly in Northrop Frye’s notion of teaching language from the centre—poetry—out.

Long Range Planning

In the fall of 1961, the department prepared a submission for the university-wide Long Range Planning Committee. The university and the department were planning how to be prepared for the “astounding” number of future students that were being predicted for the university. Graves notes the high percentage of the US population that has historically attended college or university as a reason for composition in American colleges; a similar explosion in Canadian postsecondary education did not occur until after 1945 (Graves 31). This post 1945 explosion, however, was also concurrent with the emergence of a sense of professional identity among scholars of English in Canada. English departments in western

Canada before 1945, as I have shown in chapters 3 and 5, were in fact more likely to teach composition than were their colleagues of the postwar era.

Departmental beliefs about the shape of the curriculum were particularly evident in discussions of the report, rather than in the report itself. The first item for discussion of future planning by the English department at the University of Alberta was its responsibility for teaching writing.

It was argued [at the department meeting] that the statistics used in support of the brief tied the number of students in a class to the amount of writing they did, yet the introduction did not emphasize that we are teaching skills as well as content. Replies to the argument stated that it was dangerous to emphasize this function lest the present literary emphasis should suffer. It was also pointed out that the literary content was emphasized in drawing up the Engineers' course.

(September 14, 1961; UAA Minutes 72-107-1)

Some department members, in other words, were still wary of letting the university as a whole know that anything resembling "skills" was being taught in English courses, yet they also wanted to make clear that the amount of essay writing in courses would decline if enrollment in individual classes exceeded thirty-five: "the figure of 560 pieces of work (8 each for 70 students in two classes of freshmen) should be recognized as a practical maximum" (September 14, 1961; UAA Minutes 72-107-1).

The department appears to have been trying to appease the university community as a whole, while holding on to a sense of their professional identity. The overall effect, however, must have been to assert a sense of autonomy because department members also wanted to make clear that "we are not merely training students in the mechanics of writing" and that remedial English was "peripheral to the main concerns of the Department (Sept. 14, 1961; UAA Minutes 72-107-1). The department's most audacious claim, however, came in support of small class sizes: "English involves appreciation of a kind not found in philosophy or

history; . . . English is a more complex subject than history; . . . essay writing in English is not merely an aesthetic experience but is also an exercise in thinking” (Sept. 14, 1961; UAA Minutes 72-107-1). Obviously such statements were not included in the department’s report to the Long Range Planning Committee, but these remarks illustrate the kind of professional identity this English department was shaping for itself. Not only were its members above remedial instruction in writing, they were above other humanistic disciplines in complexity of thinking and writing. As at Saskatchewan, they desired small classes, but not because they were committed to teaching writing.

The issues of increasing enrollment and long range planning did not die in 1961. In 1965, an English department ad hoc committee on planning discussed the future of the first-year course in light of projected enrollment figures. All present assented to the need for small classes because of the grading load. Dr. Baldwin, head of the department, proposed that one way to alleviate overcrowding is for first-year English to be made an elective course. Dr. Kriesel and Mandel defended the need for compulsory English; they argued that English is performing a service function for all departments. Dr. Baldwin, acting as devil’s advocate, then asked why such a course could not be a direct communication/rhetoric course. Dr. Mandel replied that in the experience of this department one can only teach English literature. Communication courses as such become courses in watered-down logic and philosophy. Dr. Kreisel then read a statement to the effect that communication courses are not satisfying the need to acquaint students with literature. Dr. Rose and Dr. Anderson both indicated that a satisfactory defense of the freshman course must be included in the brief.

The English department at the University of Alberta in 1965 was clearly aware of new North American trends in first-year English, but held firmly to a literature-based course. Kreisel’s suggestion that students need to be acquainted with literature is not supported by any particular argument, but presumably rests upon the notion expressed in the 1958 report, that literature should be “taught as a humane study having the unique purpose of communicating the

special values of literature.” The argument for teaching literature in the early 1960s, in both Canada and the US, was still grounded in Arnold’s belief that literature contained the best that has been known and said. The arguments against teaching writing or communication were still the same—they were not considered appropriate for university instruction. The significant difference between the first-half of the century and the second-half, however, is that the western Canadian universities had become so specialized that English departments now had the professional authority and autonomy to either refuse to offer this service, or offer it on their own terms.

The English Curriculum, 1970: Humanistic study of writing

The Curriculum Committee of 1970 offered a report, “The English Curriculum: A statement of General Aims and Principles, with their implementation at the Freshman level” in March of 1970. The report begins with a brief discussion of developments in educational theory—Bruner’s *The Process of Education*—and developments within English—that the only underlying structure in English as a discipline might be heterogeneity rather than homogeneity. Theoretical issues, the authors say, have been at the forefront of their discussions, but this report does not neglect practical issues nor “institutional pressures and influences on the Department’s work” (UAA Minutes 72-107-1). In a statement that recognizes a sophisticated conception of professional identity, the authors says: [The Committee] accepts . . . that there are legitimate objectives, external to the nature of the discipline itself, that must be kept in mind if the Department of English is not to exist in bleak isolation from other university departments or even cut itself off from the academic community altogether” (UAA Minutes 72-107-1).

That said, writing instruction is not listed among the seven general aims and principles of the report’s recommendations; these primary set of aims all relate to the appreciation, study, and criticism of literature. “To teach writing as a humanist pursuit” is the first of the secondary

aims that the committee thinks the department should consider. The report elaborates on this point considerably:

The teaching of writing and self-expression through the art of literature is a quite different thing from the discharge of an obligation to improve the standard of composition in the university. We believe that it should be separated from the teaching of literature, so that it can be carried on in small workshop groups, which seek their own materials and are not bound to any syllabus in literature. It should be continuous and optional at all levels, and not regarded as either a service to any department or faculty, or as a specialist training, as our present Creative Writing courses essentially are; it would simply be another humanist pursuit. (UAA Minutes 72-107-1)

This principle, when applied to the first-year curriculum, is presented as “Practical Writing.” The course in Practical Writing is described exactly as above: “Its aim would be to encourage writing as another humanistic pursuit rather than to discharge any obligation to improve the minimal standard of freshman composition” (UAA Minutes 72-107-1). The course name seems particularly misleading, and suggests the extent to which the committee is thinking of audiences who will want courses in practical writing, while they themselves want to offer something quite different: writing as a humanistic endeavor, not a practical skill. The description in the Committee’s report re-enforces and elaborates on the point that “[The course] would have to be sharply distinguished from the usual freshman composition offerings with their aim of remedial training. Minimal competence in writing we regard as more properly a matter for liaison with the high schools” (UAA Minutes 72-107-1).

A version of this course, and other recommendations from this report were adopted. What the English department was able to do in 1970, then, was to shape its own curriculum more thoroughly than it ever had in the past, and particularly shape it around its own values. In 1975-76, the department was still offering its survey course and its appreciation course,

now called “English Literary Forms.” In addition to these two full-year courses, the department offered six half-year courses: five on literary topics, the sixth called “The Craft of Writing”—the reformed “Practical Writing” course. The course is described in the Calendar as “A study of techniques of expository writing, intended to increase awareness of the resources of English prose, and to provide intensive practice in using these.” Students needed to have taken one of the literary half-courses, and to have received consent from the department to enroll in this class. The department offered this writing course not as remedial skill or as a gate-keeping mechanism, but as the kind of humanistic course in writing the Curriculum Committee envisioned.

This arrangement is not unlike a literature and composition course, although it insists upon privileging literature by making literature the pre-requisite to writing instruction. The department exhibits considerable professional autonomy by insisting on the priority of literature to writing instruction, and then defining writing instruction in humanistic terms. This course's position in the curriculum would limit the number of students taking it, and it was not offered any more frequently than the other literature half-courses. Alberta approached writing instruction differently than did Manitoba or Saskatchewan by defining it on its own terms—a powerful professional move—but it did nothing to encourage the professionalization of writing instruction as a field within the English department at Alberta.

University of British Columbia: General Education Fulfilled and Writing Instruction Redefined

The curriculum in English at the University of British Columbia between 1918 and 1965 saw few changes. During this time, only Garnet Sedgewick and his student, Roy Daniells, were heads of the department, and the two held very similar views about English studies. Daniells did usher in the study of Canadian literature and was department head when graduate studies beyond the master's degree became viable, but he did nothing to alter the

literature and composition element of the first-year course, and he neither encouraged nor discouraged writing instruction for other disciplines. Creative writing emerged as a prominent aspect of UBC's English department, influenced particularly by Earle Birney. Birney and Daniells, as Ernest Sirluck notes in his autobiography, "got into a towering battle" due in part to egos, and in part to jurisdictional issues (48).

Two significant developments affecting the English department between 1957 and 1976 were the introduction of the Arts I program for first-year students and a rethinking of English 100, the literature and composition course. Both the Arts I program and the remodelled English 100 fulfilled professional goals for the English department that simply had not been possible in times of tighter budgets and greater external pressure on the English department. With Arts I, the English department took a leading role in the kind of liberal education experiment that Daniells had tried to get off the ground in Manitoba during the 1940s. By focusing English 100 almost exclusively on literature—writing proper, as at Alberta, was seen as a humanistic endeavor distinguishable from composition—the English department was clearly demarcating its professional boundaries.

Arts I: General education fulfilled

An endowment for the Arts at the University of British Columbia enabled the establishment of a successful liberal arts experiment in 1967. An informational brochure written by Ian Ross of the English department outlines some of the costs and aims of the program: "Arts I will seek to teach the student that the humanities and the social sciences must complement each other when a thorough understanding is desired of man and his work" ([9]). The 240 students enrolled in Arts I would receive nine credits for course work organized around such themes as War, Tyranny, Love, and Death ([4]). Writing was not to be neglected in this program, but the method of instruction seems to have been trial and error: students "will receive in ample measure the criticism of his peers and instructors" ([10]). The program was

intended to draw students interested in the Arts rather than a professional education, so the issue of offering writing instruction of a practical nature was not pressing.

The program is still in operation today, and provides a challenging and vibrant experience for some of UBC's first-year students. What its existence suggests, however, is that UBC's English department was and still is fundamentally committed to a liberal education perspective that privileges the interpretation of texts and not the production of discourse. The department's attitude towards writing instruction was evident at the same time, 1967, in a Curriculum Committee's re-evaluation of the first-year course in composition and literature.

English 100: Writing instruction redefined

The discussion of English 100 by the Curriculum Committee was motivated by a departmental decision to emphasize the study of literature from the 16th to the 20th century in the first-year course. The Curriculum Committee implies that composition, and particularly composition as a "science of writing" had historically been emphasized in the composition and literature course. The Committee's proposal contrasts the science of writing—"the work of school training"—to the "art of expression, as against a science of writing, . . . necessarily tied to a critical appreciation of good writing" (n.d.; UBC CMP 1-14). This document served as part of the fashioning of a professional identity within the UBC English department. It provided a jurisdictional explanation for why it is that the English department would teach the art of expression and not the science of writing: "as with all art, beyond the mastery of elemental rules, its only requirement is practice and experiment, a delight in making words say what one wants them to say" (n.d.; UBC CMP 1-14). In this formulation, composition is necessarily tied to literature, and it is unteachable. English 100 was simply a literature class with writing assignments.

The document was intended to present a choice for the department, but the presentation of the issues clearly favors "art of expression," and in fact the authors go on to elaborate what

the department must do if this emphasis was to be given. Such one-sided representation either means that composition was taught as a science of writing before now, and that the department is familiar with policies for operation, or it means that the authors cannot conceive of the department choosing the science of writing as an appropriate form of work. The policies the committee suggests are:

1. Work that falls below standard will automatically be rejected for grading.
2. Rudimentary lapses in composition will be pointed out by the marker and commented on in class by the instructor, but nothing approaching systematic drill, in the form of exercises taken from a composition book or put on mimeographed sheets, should be done by the instructor.
3. Instructors can choose from texts outside the twentieth century because no longer is composition to be a major component of the course.

This proposal is clearly intended to shape the kind of work that the department does: it should not teach formal composition; it should not do anything that approaches remedial work; it should draw on the whole of English literature in order to help students “discern aesthetic values and recognise literary forms” (n.d.; UBC CMP 1-14).

This document describes reformulating the literature and composition course in a way that Hubert and Jasen suggest the literature and composition course in Canada throughout the twentieth century has always been formulated. Yet the authors of this proposal are clearly defining their course in contrast to what they perceived to have been the work of their predecessors. They want composition as a study separate from literature to be dropped; they want literature to be privileged. Their views of writing instruction are similar to those being expressed at the same time at Alberta: that writing is an art (or craft) that is intimately tied to literature. The formulation of courses in these terms between 1957 and 1976 is a sign of a shift in the nature of the profession: it has achieved a sense of maturity and can clearly demarcate its own jurisdiction.

As at Manitoba, this thoroughgoing commitment to “aesthetic values and literary form” did not make the issues of poor student writing go away. Richard Coe, an instructor at UBC in the late 1970s, describes the creation of a 1974 “literacy crisis” in British Columbia. In “Teaching Writing: The Process Approach, Humanism, and the Context of Crisis,” Coe notes that British Columbia’s high schools were still using provincial examinations—the kind that had been dropped in Manitoba in 1970—and the published results of these exams showed that 22.5 percent of the students taking the English exam failed (276). The English department at UBC added to the making of a literacy crisis by administering its own test in 1974, what they called a “Grade 9” English exam; over forty percent of first-year university students failed (276). Coe explains that the latter exam, administered for the next seven years, had no validity or reliability, but it was politically effective for the English department to declare that the problem with student writing was a high school problem, and not a problem they could address.

UBC English professors . . . wished to avoid both the teaching of writing and complaints from colleagues in other departments that writing was not being taught. The solution was to make certain that entering students were already minimally competent writers. With logical consistency, therefore, the department dealt with the literacy “crisis” in part by abolishing its remedial writing courses. (277)

The way to make certain the students were minimally competent was to insist on better high school preparation, and abolishing university writing courses was one way to force high schools to improve their students’ writing. Other Canadian universities at this time, as we will see in the summary of the Priestley and Kerpneck report on undergraduate education in English below, were agreeing to short-term plans for offering writing instruction until the high schools could permanently take on this work. The pattern of so-called literacy decline throughout North America, however, could be traced to the increasing number of students attending

postsecondary education. The high school dropout rate in the 1950s was over half, but “by the 1970s more than 80% were continuing past Grade 10” (Coe 277). Students continuing in high school also continued on to university; many students who would not have attended university in the 1950s now filled classrooms throughout North America (277).

Coe’s argument about the UBC English department’s role in the construction of a literacy crisis in British Columbia is very similar to the argument that I have been making throughout this study. My argument is that English departments in western Canada have always claimed that writing instruction was not within their professional jurisdiction, but not until after the Canada Council did they have the authority to limit their jurisdiction to teaching literature. By refusing this job in the mid 1970s, the English department at UBC looked more like the English department at the University of Toronto than it had at any other time in its history. The junior curriculum privileged literature and treated writing instruction as an extension of the study of literature, and not a skill that should receive any further or specialized instruction. UBC did, for a short period in the late 1970s and early 1980s, make a greater commitment to rhetoric than any other English department in Canada, but in 1976, its attitude was strongly antirhetorical.⁹⁹

Undergraduate Education in English, 1976

Western Canadian universities between 1957 and 1976 faced the same set of challenges US universities faced at this time—increased enrollment, a new kind of student body, and specialization throughout the university, including in English. The significant differences concerning writing instruction, however, are that American universities had worked composition into the structure of the university—it was, in most institutions, a universal requirement. The availability of teaching opportunities through composition classes was also absolutely necessary to support graduate students in American universities. English had been a universal requirement in western Canada, but composition had always been a negotiated

element of the curriculum, not institutionally ingrained. English teachers before the Canada Council generally accepted teaching writing as part of their professional domain because they defined themselves primarily as teachers. Scholars of English after the Canada Council, however, saw themselves as researchers and literary scholars, certainly not teachers of composition. The new graduate students in western Canada were not thrown into composition classes to fend for themselves: many received Canada Council funding through part or all of their graduate careers, and did not teach until actually accepting a faculty position. The institutional pressure for English and writing instruction continued, although somewhat abated through this period, and English had achieved the professional authority to state the limits of its jurisdiction. More and more departments took charge of writing instruction on their own as the only means of introducing students to the discourse of their community.

The concerns about the quality of students' writing, however, lingered and a report on Undergraduate English Education in Canada prepared by F. E. L. Priestley and H. I. Kerpneck of the University of Toronto was particularly outspoken about the problems of students writing. The Priestley and Kerpneck report, as Graves notes in his analysis of it, admits to the serious problem of students coming to university unprepared to write standard English yet Priestley and Kerpneck are reluctant to define writing instruction as within the English department's, or even the university's jurisdiction (Graves 28). The report blames the problem on poor preparation in elementary and secondary schools and on television (Priestley and Kerpneck 14). The proposed solutions are writing laboratories or short term commitment to writing instruction until the public schools can be re-configured to properly address the problem (21-22, 35-36). As Graves notes, the problem with this report, from the perspective of today's professionalized writing instructor, is that Priestley and Kerpneck had an "inadequate conceptualization of writing and writing instruction" (28).

Even if there had been significant commitment to writing instruction in western Canada at this time, an obvious hurdle for English departments was finding the funds to properly

address the needs of all of their students. Priestley and Kerpneck see the issue of resources, however, not as a regional or local need, but a national concern (21). They staunchly defended the need for national standards of speech, once modeled by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, and they conceive of education in language and literature as a national concern (14). They see no place for *politics* in English departments, but they implicitly understand the political work that the old, unified curriculum in English did to define Canada as a modern nation (82). English departments in Canada in 1976 were still complicit with the nation-building process, particularly the 1957 version of nation-building which supported scholarly research. The perceived short-comings of incoming students were conceived of in national terms, therefore putting the responsibility on the federal government to supply funds for the *new* nation-building project: homogenizing a more diverse Canada. Scholars of English in Canada had taken their Canada Council money to the bank, and could claim autonomy until more money was forthcoming.

American scholars of rhetoric and composition had established themselves firmly within the institutional structure of American universities, and benefited from the rising tide of Cold War funding. They benefited directly from some funding, but on the whole their ability to become a field with professional authority within the discipline in English has assured their growth and propagation. As the study of literature goes the way of Classics, rhetoric and composition begins to emerge as a central function of many English departments. Scholars of English in Canada who might now wish to move undergraduate and graduate education in the direction of rhetoric and composition are still trying to get a foot in the door. The Canadian Association for the Study of Language and Learning (CASLL), the Canadian professional organization most interested in rhetoric and composition, began a newsletter in 1982 and mailed to about 130 people; in February of 1997 they mailed to 128 (Craven 7).

Writing instruction in all of Canada has not professionalized in any systemic way since 1957, and 1976 marks a clear moment in the definition of English studies in Canada. Heather

Murray has made an argument similar to mine about the ability of Woodhouse, Frye, and Priestly to enable “English to maintain its footing even during post-Second World War calls for practical education for national prosperity,” but she adds that “How English gained, and then lost, this position provides matter for rueful reflection” (76). I am suggesting, but cannot fully document here, that Canadian English departments have lost their footing because they have not made a thorough commitment to rhetorical studies and writing instruction. A closer study of English departments between 1976 and 1997 would undoubtedly reveal some interesting and informative struggles to define professional jurisdiction, but such a study would also require a significant shift in methodology—away from archival research to a reliance upon oral histories. University archives seldom hold recent documents, and some materials relating to this period are restricted. Gerald Nelms, in “The Case for Oral Evidence in Composition Historiography,” offers a convincing argument about the need for oral histories in composition, but that task is beyond the scope of this project. The final chapter instead re-assess the four tasks of this study, and speculates on the future of English studies in a post-national age.

CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSION: FREE TRADE AND THE FATE OF WRITING INSTRUCTION IN WESTERN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

This chapter will revisit the four main tasks of this study: (1) challenging generalizations about English studies in Canada by providing the first history of writing instruction in western Canadian universities; (2) examining in detail the question of “what went on in first-year English classes?”; (3) extending the scope and implication of terms from existing histories of writing instruction in the US; and (4) providing a continentalist rather than nationalist interpretation of the history of writing instruction. In the process of revisiting these tasks, I will also speculate about the future of writing instruction in western Canada. Finally, I will revisit the issues of nation-building and professionalism, and raise questions about the fate of writing instruction and our discipline in a post Cold War, post-national, global economy.

The first task of this project—to provide the first history of writing instruction in western Canadian universities—has challenged the central generalization about English studies in Canada: Hubert’s and Harris’s arguments that the English curriculum was set by 1890, and varied little until the 1960s, and largely remained in tact into the 1980s. The junior curriculum in English in the four western Canadian universities changed considerably during the twentieth century, from a balance of composition and literature before mid-century, to an almost exclusively literary curriculum after mid-century. Within each university, different curricular histories are evident. Manitoba’s junior curriculum changed frequently in the first twenty-five years before stabilizing as a literature-composition balance between 1935 and 1964. English as a universally required course ended in 1964, and at that point, the junior curriculum in English conformed to Hubert’s and Harris’s pattern. Saskatchewan’s first-year course has always been described as a literature and composition course, but reports to the president and other sources indicate that in the first twenty-five years of operation, writing instruction was the central concern of the course. Writing instruction gave way to a more thoroughly literary curriculum in the 1940s, only to have the first-year course become a balanced literature-

composition course under Carlyle King. After King's retirement, the course was literature and composition in name only, and like Manitoba, the junior curriculum at Saskatchewan looked most like Hubert's and Harris's pattern at this point. The Alberta English department during E. K. Broadus's career drew on Harvard rather than Toronto as a model. His successors, particularly R. K. Gordon and J. T. Jones, followed the Toronto model more closely than did any other western Canadian English department, and the Alberta junior curriculum consequently does fit Hubert's and Harris's pattern. The brief tenure of F. M. Salter, and the strong resistance to his demands for writing instruction, indicates the degree to which the Toronto pattern of privileging literature over composition informed English studies at Alberta. The English department in the early 1970s was able to define writing instruction on its own terms as a humanistic study, appropriate only to those students who would elect to take such a course. G. G. Sedgewick of the University of British Columbia, like Broadus of Alberta, defined his junior-curriculum in the Harvard tradition of teaching literature and composition, and maintained that balance throughout his career. Roy Daniells shifted the junior curriculum towards literature, and the department in the late 1960s clearly defined writing as a humanistic study, a definition they posited as being in opposition to their predecessors' writing instruction practices.

Having documented the degree of change and flexibility in the junior curriculum, I consequently have some different ideas about where English studies in Canada is going than do two of the most active and interesting scholars in this area, Henry Hubert and Roger Graves. As much as I agree with Hubert's conclusion at the end of "Babel After the Fall"—"The fully integrated study of rhetoric in all its facets can assist us in the continued struggle towards community in the face of chaos" (394)—Canadian universities are not in a position to make significant changes towards a rhetorical education as long as they continue to be staffed primarily by faculty trained in literary study. Literary studies in Canada continues to maintain its hegemony by virtue of having made the *rhetorical turn*, a turn that Hubert identifies with the

work of Mikhail Bakhtin, Kenneth Burke, and Clifford Geertz (393). The work of these three, while important to scholars of rhetoric, contain few if any arguments or strategies for writing instruction. All three offer compelling arguments for studying literature or culture rhetorically, but they do not offer arguments for teaching writing. The rhetorical turn of contemporary theory is as much concerned with textual studies as was the English department at the University of Toronto in 1890, A. S. P. Woodhouse at Manitoba in the 1920s, and the English department at the University of Alberta in the 1950s.

My history shares with Roger Graves's short history of writing instruction in Canada a sense of finding the past inadequate for fulfilling the future. Graves, however, finds in E. K. Broadus of Alberta a hero for writing instructors in Canada. Broadus was aristocratic and elitist in his attitude towards writing instruction and current-traditional in his practice. By the end of his career, he sought to end writing instruction at Alberta in favor of an exclusively literary curriculum. Jean Bayer and Carlyle King of Saskatchewan would be better models for contemporary writing instructors. They were the two most committed teachers of writing instruction in western Canada and they saw how writing instruction belonged within the jurisdiction of English departments. To invoke them and especially King as a model for writing instruction and English studies in western Canada, however, is to imagine a different future than the one Graves posits. Graves's vision of the future of writing instruction in Canada focuses on the importance of meeting the needs of a twenty-first century capitalist economy. He adopts economist Robert Reich's view that students should be educated to be symbolic analysts and should have four primary skills: abstraction, system thinking, experimentation, and collaboration (78). King was anti-capitalist and represents a tradition of writing instruction and English studies that we now associate with early twentieth-century scholars like Fred Newton Scott and Gertrude Buck, and contemporary scholars like Jim Berlin, John Trimbur, and Susan Miller. Because writing instructors in western Canada presently have little institutional power, Graves view of what they must do to professionalize

may in fact be quite accurate. To the extent that history has value for shaping the present, however, the democratic-socialist practices of King and the University of Saskatchewan could anchor a professional identity that provides critical resistance to the dominant trends within the new transnational universities.

The second task of this study has been to clarify the debate about the content of the junior curriculum in western Canadian universities. Harris and W. L. Morton initially argued that first- and second-year English courses in Canada were practical in nature, and the courses were meant to ensure that all university students could write acceptable English. Jasen and Hubert admit that such was the argument, but they argue that the courses were almost always about literary appreciation. My study has found that a single answer or generalization about what went on in the junior curriculum is simply not sufficient to address this issue. Manitoba's junior curriculum oscillated between exclusively literary courses and composition and technical writing courses. The course at Saskatchewan has been consistently described as literature and composition, but as we have seen, the practices within that course changed significantly when Carlyle King became head of the department, and changed again when he left. The junior curriculum at Alberta has generally favored literature, while the curriculum at UBC was evenly balanced through the first sixty years of this century. The question of what went on in any university's first-year course must be investigated closely: one must go beyond calendar descriptions to find out what pedagogical philosophy dominated the English department, who taught the course, and how she or he taught it.

What is going on in first-year courses in western Canadian universities today? The basis of Graves's *Writing Instruction in Canadian Universities* was a 1990 survey of Canadian universities. His survey confirms that in 1990, first-year courses did not offer much if any writing instruction: "the prohibitive expense of large, multi-sectioned, first-year writing courses rules out courses like freshman composition" (48). To the extent that there has been an increase in writing instruction within Canadian universities, Graves attributes this increase to

the proliferation of professional programs and their demands for writing instruction. Almost two-thirds of writing instructors in Canadian universities, Graves found, were part-time instructors (47-51). Even in 1990, writing instruction held little prestige within institutions, and English departments continued to keep writing instruction outside of their professional jurisdiction: "In Anglo-Canadian universities, English departments appear reluctant to accept writing as a legitimate area of study and research; consequently they refuse to assume overall responsibility for the teaching of writing" (57).

A few changes within English departments in western Canada suggest that professional jurisdictions are being re-negotiated, but changes will continue to be slow. The University of Manitoba in 1996 experimented with an "orientation" class to help students make the transition from high school to university. The course included considerable writing instruction. Although, as Graves noted, Canadian universities will not likely be able to implement large, multi-sectioned, first-year writing courses, they do seem to be directing writing instruction at students who might need it the most. In 1996, The University of Saskatchewan hired an instructor to teach business communication. Hiring full-time staff to teach a non-traditional course is a unique development for Saskatchewan and most western Canadian universities. In 1997, the University of Alberta created a new position within the department: Writing Coordinator. Graves cites the absence of a powerful writing administrator as a significant difference between writing instruction in Canada and the US (36). The development of such positions in Canada may align English department practices on the continent more closely. Since 1994, the University of British Columbia has been offering a first-year composition course, although it is not a universal requirement. The English department has begun to rebuild its rhetoric faculty from its peak commitment to rhetoric and composition in the later 1970s and early 1980s.

Since the 1960s, university education in western Canada has also become much more complicated than I have been able to suggest in this study. Colleges affiliated with the

provincial universities—United College in Winnipeg, Regina College in Regina, Saskatchewan, Calgary College in Calgary, Alberta, and Victoria College in Victoria, British Columbia—have all become independent, degree-granting universities. United College, now the University of Winnipeg, is far and away the Canadian institution most committed to writing instruction. The University of Calgary, on the other hand, dropped its composition course in 1994. As I have been arguing throughout this study, one cannot answer in any generalized fashion the question: “what ratio of writing instruction to literature instruction do Canadian universities offer?” The differences between the University of Winnipeg and the University of Calgary, or the difference between the University of Manitoba and the University of British Columbia, are significant enough to resist even a qualified generalization.

The third task of this study has been to apply key terms from the history of writing instruction in the US to the history of writing instruction in western Canada where applicable. I argued in chapter 3 that Manitoba’s and Saskatchewan’s English departments, and junior curriculum’s specifically, had been enlisted by other faculties, much as David Russell describes the enlistment of English and Engineering at MIT. I also argued that English at Alberta and British Columbia followed the pattern of Harvardization described by Donald Stewart: the privileging of research over teaching, the privileging of literature over composition, but the recognition that composition was a necessary if regrettable part of the English studies. At Saskatchewan, and to a lesser extent at Alberta, the feminization of composition was evident. Jean Bayer at Saskatchewan embodied both the positive and negative aspects of the feminization of composition: she was a committed and innovative teacher, but she also took on a work load much heavier than the men in her department for undoubtedly less pay. A Miss Martin is identified at Alberta as taking on much of the remedial teaching there, but no other information about her or her work is available. In chapter 5, I used John Brereton’s terms “aristocratic” and “democratic” attitudes towards writing to describe the range of attitudes and practices in western Canada between 1937 and 1957. The terms take on slightly different

connotations than Brereton's original use; those scholars possessing an aristocratic attitude towards writing instruction are generally opposed to writing instruction, while the democratic attitude often signals a greater commitment to writing instruction. In chapter 7, no key terms from US histories, like "revival of rhetoric," were applicable to developments in western Canadian English departments. Finding (or not finding) terms from American histories of writing instruction that apply to the Canadian situation is significant for my continentalist perspective on writing instruction in North America, a point I will return to in a moment.

Canadian universities and English departments in western Canada in the 1990s are faced with some of the same concerns as American universities, but the absence of a professional commitment to writing instruction is leaving Canadian English departments much more vulnerable to post Cold War cuts in funding than American English departments. Lester Faigley and James Berlin, for example, note that the political turn to the right in American federal politics has resulted, according to Faigley, in a "back to basics" movement, and according to Berlin, a "narrow utilitarian insistence on career training" (Faigley 52; Berlin, *Rhetorics* 4). This political turn on the one hand has resulted in the growth of business and technical writing courses and degree programs within English departments in the US—an attempt by English departments to re-connect with the system of professions and the (trans)national-building process. On the other hand this political turn has forced teachers of writing who, in Faigley's words, "remain committed to progressive goals for education" to redefine English studies. Berlin in many of his writings has suggested that English should properly balance rhetoric and poetics. Susan Miller has argued that composition studies should define itself as "counterhegemonic," using its institutional position to resist back to basics movement (*Textual Carnivals* 186).

Because English departments in western Canada do not include writing instruction within their jurisdiction, any growth in business and technical writing courses has occurred in other departments or through the hiring of part-time faculty. The English department at the

University of Manitoba, because it has not expanded its jurisdiction during the past 15 years has lost 15 full-time faculty positions in that same time. Adapting one's profession simply for the sake of survival and not for the benefit of those the profession serves is a problematic strategy within professional organizations, but for English departments in western Canada to continue to deny the place of writing instruction in English departments is to continue to devalue scholarship in composition studies and to invoke the largely discredited hierarchy that privileges reception of texts over the production of texts.

The fourth task of this study has been to provide a continentalist perspective on the history of writing instruction in North America. The continentalist perspective works from the assumption that higher education in Canada and the US is more similar than different because education has served a similar nation-building project in two settler, frontier countries. It also works from the assumption that any difference in higher education in the two countries can best be understood by looking at Canadian-American relations, and not simply at national developments. This assumption is particularly true for understanding higher education in Canada because Canadian institutions so frequently emulated American institutions. But understanding Canadian-American relations also illuminates the nature of developments in the US that Canadians *do not* emulate. The continentalist perspective on writing instruction in the twentieth century suggests a pattern of practice very different than the nationalist interpretations of writing instruction offered by Harris and Hubert. Western Canadian English departments largely emulated American practices throughout the first-half of the century—composition and technical writing courses, balanced literature and composition courses, a commitment to expository writing about topics other than literature, a commitment to small classes and student conferencing. The language of American histories of writing instruction, as I argued above, applies easily to the history of writing instruction in western Canada before mid-century. Only through divergent paths of professionalization during the Cold War era did western Canadian English departments define their professional jurisdiction so narrowly as to virtually eliminate

writing instruction. The key force behind the professionalization of English studies in Canada—the Canada Council—was a force organized and implemented by the Canadian federal government to build a national culture and stem the tide of American influence on Canada. Writing instruction in the US during this time professionalized and secured its institutional position, largely buoyed by Cold War funding that benefited universities generally. The divergence in professional practices during the Cold War era is best understood in continentalist terms: the Canadian government and Canada's professional scholars of English worked to establish a national identity on the continent that was home to a new empire.

The divergence in professional paths, however, is beginning to look more like a bubble than a fork in the road as some western Canadian English departments show an interest in writing instruction again. The professional identities shaped in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s were enabled by state funds, and the Cold War Canadian governments sought to distance themselves from the American government and American mass culture. Canada, like the US, took a political turn to the right during the Mulroney years (1984-93), and the political climate in the two countries is now more similar than different. As the nation-states weaken and universities are increasingly funded by and shaped by transnational corporations, English studies in both countries may begin to look more and more alike again.¹⁰⁰ The professional writing instructors in the US are in a better position to define their professional jurisdiction than are Canadian professionals because they have attained some institutional power and some internal authority through scholarship. Their attempts to connect rhetoric and composition to the long tradition of rhetoric is another strategy for establishing professional authority. Canadians who wish to professionalize writing instruction will have to draw on the disciplinary authority—the scholarship and the precedents—of their American colleagues in the process of negotiating their jurisdiction. This situation may work to their advantage if Canadian writing professionals are not saddled with a universally required composition course, but these negotiations have not yet

occurred on a wide-scale basis.¹⁰¹ If western Canadian English departments professionalize writing instruction, the models and attitudes will be adopted from American sources.

My goal in addressing these four tasks has been to draw from them a larger picture about the relationship between professionalism and nation-building. The first two tasks of this study—to examine the generalization about the hegemony of Hegelian-Arnoldian idealism through a study of writing instruction in western Canada and to specifically document the nature of the work in the junior curriculum in English—should be seen as working together to emphasize that the work a profession does is not determined by a dominant ideology in the profession, but that work is negotiated through the system of professions. A profession with little money and little prestige, as English in western Canada was for the first half of this century, is more easily enlisted to serve the needs of other professions than is a profession with what Susan Miller calls “bread and circuits.” Professions with money and institutional stability, however, often attempt to remove themselves from the system of professions and from public need, only to find themselves obsolete or irrelevant. English studies in western Canada may not yet have reached that stage, but many departments are moving in that direction. This study of writing instruction in western Canadian universities has been primarily a study in professionalism, although I have attempted to sketch the nature of the profession through its pedagogical and scholarly work.

Professionals engaged in modern higher education have been participating in a nation-building project. That project in Canada has changed throughout the century from a pioneering project, to a civilizing project, to a national-culture building project, and English departments have generally been willingly enlisted by these various projects. The Canadian professionals frequently followed the lead of their American colleagues, particularly in the teaching of writing, until the American nation-building project turned into an empire-building project. At that point, English departments in western Canada turned almost exclusively to the teaching of literature; American English departments were able to absorb writing instruction as an equal

field in the profession. Writing instruction in the US was initially enlisted to the empire-building project until its professional authority could successfully determine its own jurisdiction. This study of the professionalism of writing instruction in North America has also been a study in nation-building, or more generally a study of the relationship between government(s) and education.

A comparative history of writing instruction in Canada and the US is particularly pertinent at this time. This study shows the extent to which higher education in Canada has been influenced by US higher education throughout most of the twentieth century. Since Canada and the US signed a Free Trade Agreement in 1991, and incorporated Mexico in their agreement in 1993, the potential for American influences on Canada in economic, cultural, and educational fields has increased significantly. The real influence on education in the coming years, however, may not be the nation-states, but the transnational corporations whose reach and influence has been extended by NAFTA. Historian Benedict Anderson argues that mass education has traditionally provided cadres for government and corporate hierarchies, moral education for nations, and the ability for colonialist to control their colonies (106). These roles for education, and who controls education, are now open for questioning: Will nations continue to shape their educational policies, or has the control of universities already come into the hands of multinational corporations? Are there still national values that an educational systems can coherently deliver? Will Canada and Mexico become (increasingly) the colonial, but sovereign, territories of the US? In very general terms, what will be the role of the nation-state in education in a global economy?

Bill Readings, in *The University in Ruins*, argues that the nation-state will not maintain its modern role in higher education, and those of us within the institution will be faced with options like choosing professionalism for professionalism's sake—the position Readings associates with Stanley Fish—or choosing what he calls “institutional pragmatism”:

Institutional pragmatism thus means, for me, recognizing the University today for what it is: an institution that is losing its need to make transcendental claims for its function. . . . As a bureaucratic institution of excellence, it can incorporate a very high degree of internal variety without requiring its multiplicity of diverse idioms to be unified into an ideological whole. (168)

Readings position sounds like a re-statement of Graff's field-coverage model, and one of its implications is that western Canadian English departments, or the universities as whole systems, should be able to accommodate rhetoric and composition as a professional field, even if there is ideological dissensus within the institution. The fate of writing instruction in western Canadian universities, it seems, will be one barometer by which to measure the influence of transnational corporations on education in North America, and/or measure the willingness of English departments in western Canada to redefine the professional identity they have nurtured for the past forty years.

APPENDIX. REVIEWING AND REDESCRIBING “THE POLITICS OF HISTORIOGRAPHY”: OCTALOG I, 1988

In “The Young and the Restless,” Stanley Fish argues that New Historicists often find themselves arguing into a corner when they try simultaneously to assert the instability and textuality of history while trying to present historical narratives of political and social consequence. The problem with these New Historicists, according to Fish, is that they do not recognize that theorizing about history—history is textual—is a distinct practice from doing history—from investigating historical evidence and writing history. Both are legitimate but separate practices. What the New Historicists are doing, Fish says, follows the same methodology that historicists have always followed, but that continuation of practices is not a bad thing. Their *newness* does not come from their methodology but from their ability to reform professional practices, to encourage awareness of “imperialism, slavery, and gender differentiation” (Catherine Gallagher in Fish, 315). Just like the consequences of theory that Fish is willing to acknowledge—consequences for professionalization—New Historicism has been successful and has “made a difference in the institutional setting that gives it a home” (315).

In the preceding study, I have chosen to concentrate on investigating historical evidence and writing history because I felt that I could make a more substantial contribution to the self-understanding of the field of rhetoric and composition by writing a history of writing instruction in western Canada than by making an argument about the nature of history writing. In the words of political theorist Ernesto Laclau, who I will discuss below, my history is an attempt to provide a “general form of fullness” to the history of writing instruction in western Canada, a history that matters to Canadians like me who were never sure why we had to go to the US to study rhetoric. Further investigations of this subject will reveal the aporias of my study and the politics of my interpretations, but for me to assume too self-reflexive a position would have been, as Fish suggests, to argue myself into a corner.

That said, I have been thinking about my historiography—my theory of writing history—and the implications of writing in the realist mode. Most historians of rhetoric should be able to locate their historiography, their views on the nature and composition of history, somewhere within the spectrum of views represented in “The Politics of Historiography,” a eight-person panel or “octalog” from the 1988 CCCCs. The octalog was moderated by James Murphy and included some of the most prominent historians of rhetoric as participants: James Berlin, Robert Connors, Sharon Crowley, Richard Leo Enos, Victor Vitanza, Nan Johnson, Susan Jarratt, and Jan Swearingen. Elsewhere, Vitanza and Crowley have organized the perspectives of these individuals and other historians into discrete categories: Vitanza suggests histories are informed by traditional, revisionary, or sub/versive historiographies; Crowley identifies essentialist, constructionist, and performative historiographies.

As useful as these categories are, when I began to think about and engage in writing a history of rhetoric, I found myself identifying with disparate statements from the octalog, rather than identifying with one of Vitanza’s or Crowley’s categories of historiography. I agree with statements by Connors, Vitanza, and Crowley, yet Vitanza and Berlin see Connors and Crowley as the most conservative, traditional, and essentialist historians in the discussion, and they see themselves as revisionary and sub/versive. Relying on a small range of categories to characterize historians and historiographies obviously creates limitations for scholars trying to work out their own historiography. The history I have written—a history of writing instruction in western Canada that employs archival research and is written in the realist mode—looks traditional, yet my thinking about history is what Richard Rorty would call “antirealist.”¹⁰² My history does not correspond to reality—the realist position; it is an argument about what is good for us to believe—the antirealist position. The realist mode of representation should not fool any rhetorician about this history’s relationship to reality.

“The Politics of Historiography” continues to serve an important role for historians of rhetoric because of the diverse views represented by its participants, particularly because the

octalog problematizes categorizations of historiography. By looking at the acts of interpretation, representation, and authorization, rather than categories of historiography, I will suggest ways in which writing history is intersubjective rather than dialectical, the mode of thought most often associated with historical work in “The Politics of Historiography.” Such a redescription can: (1) avoid the problem of interpretive relativism raised by the assumption that interpretations are largely determined by terministic screens; (2) identify and emphasize political dimensions of representation more clearly than a generalized concept of politics at work in the octalog; and (3) account for the process of authorization that has privileged certain voices over others, yet also provide hope that the field of historical representation will be open to interested players. I focus on redescribing historiography as presented in the *Rhetoric Review* octalog because it offers a wide range of important views on historical methodology relevant to historians of rhetoric. The participants of the original octalog, “The Politics of Historiography,” have also been reconsidering their ideas on historiography; my re-view reminds us of some of the statements made in 1988, and suggests ways in which those of us outside the conversation have been thinking about the problems of interpretation, representation, and authorization in the writing of history.

Reviewing “The Politics of Historiography”

“The Politics of Historiography” contains many descriptions of what historians do, but none of the descriptions move very far beyond the notion that writing history is the product of the historian interacting with historical materials. Victor Vitanza challenges traditional historiography most explicitly, but is concerned primarily with subverting the dominant historiography: “common sense realism” (8). Susan Jarratt offers two tropes of historiography—“the rediscovery and possession of forgotten treasures” and “dar[ing] usurp[tion]”—but neither rely upon any clear conception of the role of others in writing history (9). Nan Johnson works from the basis “that historical research and writing are archaeological

and rhetorical activities,” but sees the rhetorical activity primarily as a responsibility to the tell ““true stories”” (9-10). Only Richard Leo Enos even suggests that readers might be involved in the process of making meaning, but making meaning as he describes it is distinct from writing. He says, “It is the burden of the historian of rhetoric to articulate views in a manner that enables readers to participate in, to share in, the making of meaning. In a sense, readers of *Rhetoric Review* are engaging in that activity while reading this work” (41). Enos, in other words, privileges the role of authorial intention as the key to enabling meaning making.

Robert Connors and James Berlin have made important statements about historiography in “The Politics of Historiography,” as well as brief exchange alluded to in the panel discussion. Connors’s “Dreams and Play: Historical Method and Methodology” provides a thorough description of how historians generally work:

1. They start with a hypothesis, question, or theory.
2. They build from that hypothesis, question, or theory by going to the archives and playing.
3. They consult external criticism (any sources relevant to their research).
4. They perform internal criticism and look for corroboration among other secondary sources.
5. They synthesize materials in the writing of history: dreaming. (21-29)

The master tropes Connors uses—*playing in the archives* and *dreaming a narrative*—are images of solitary work. The former he sees primarily as the historian searching or playing alone in the archives, and dreaming, short of being the dream of the collective unconscious, could not be a more solitary image. His formulation, “The Archive is where storage meets dreams, and the result is history” eliminates the historian from the picture altogether (17). I do not think the intent of Connors’s tropes is to deny the importance of historians interacting with their materials and others; however, he has described a process in which the Archives and the Dreams take precedence over the people.

James Berlin's discussion of methodology in *Rhetoric and Reality* is a direct response to Connors's ideas of methodology and representation, and specifically a response to Connors's review of Berlin's *Writing Instruction in Nineteenth-Century American Colleges*. Berlin says "[Connors's] assumption here and in much of his own historical research is that it is possible to locate a neutral space, a position from which one can act as an unbiased observer in order to record a transcendental object, the historical thing-in-itself" (17). Berlin insists repeatedly in his work that the historian's terministic screen is a governing factor in writing history, although he does see that screen interacting with the historical material in a dialectical fashion:

The historian of rhetoric must deny pretensions to objectivity, looking upon the production of histories as a dialectical interaction between the set of conceptions (the terministic screen) brought to the materials of history and the materials themselves. The data chosen for interpretation and for exclusion will be determined by this governing framework. The data itself, however, can also disrupt the scheme which selected it, challenging in a genuine dialectic its adequacy to events. ("The Politics of Historiography" 6)

My objection to these various descriptions of writing history is that none of them go far enough towards describing the writing of history as an act of communicative interaction. Thomas Kent's description of communication as *paralogic* rather than systematic can both recognize the role of frameworks or something like terministic screens, while emphasizing that the role of other communicants is more important in shaping a history than the framework or screen the historian employs:

When we communicate, we make guesses about the meaning of others' utterances, and we, in turn, guess about the interpretations that others will give our utterances. This guesswork is paralogical in nature because no logical framework, process, or system can predict in advance the efficacy of our

guesses. Clearly, we require a framework, process, or system in order to make our paralogical guesses, but this fact only amounts to an admission that we require a language in order to communicate. The knowledge of a language is necessary but not sufficient for communicative interaction; we also must know how to make moves within the language games we play, and these moves are thoroughly paralogical in nature. (*Paralogic Rhetoric* 5).

While most participants of the octalog might readily agree that writing histories is much like a conversation, few actually talk about it in those terms, preferring instead the dialectical and archaeological metaphors. Redescribing the work historians of rhetoric do will not radically alter the nature of that work, but it will suggest some solutions to problems of interpretation, representation, and authorization.

Redescribing Interpretation

Berlin's description of interpretation—terministic screens interacting dialectically with materials—is heavily influenced by Kenneth Burke and Hayden White. Burke and White recognize the danger of interpretive relativism in their accounts of historiography, and offer complex, if not always satisfactory, solutions to this problem. Burke suggests that terministic screens are not merely relative to one another, not just one more terministic screen after another. He sees human agency, and therefore the ability to choose and be judged, as being grounded in a “collective revelation” from away back [involving] the pragmatic recognition of a distinction between persons and things. . . . [W]e [also] make a pragmatic distinction between the ‘actions’ of ‘persons’ and the sheer ‘motion’ of ‘things’” (52-53). His insistence upon reality being mediated by symbols, however, makes it difficult to see a screen as anything but another screen.

Hayden White's argument is:

Every proper history presupposes a metahistory which is nothing but the web of commitments which the historian makes in the course of his interpretation on the aesthetic, cognitive, and ethical levels. Are such commitments wholly arbitrary? . . . [I]f the correlations between modes of emplotment, of explanation, and of ideological implications which I have made are valid, we must entertain the possibility of the grounding of these modes in some more basic level of consciousness. . . . This ground is that of language itself, which, in areas of study such as history, can be said to operate *tropologically* in order to prefigure a field of perception in a particular modality of relationships. (71-72).

The trope, in other words, determines the historian's commitments, and on that basis his or her history is not arbitrary, but it is relative to the trope.

Berlin's solution to the problem of relativism is to advocate self-consciousness. He suggests in *Rhetoric and Reality* that an historian has to be "aware of her point of view"—*singular*—and "its interpretive strategies" (17). Being open about one's biases, however, cannot account for the complex subjectivity of historians, their diverse interpretive strategies, nor for the importance of interaction with others in the writing of history, the latter being the point I will focus on in this section.

Burke's *terministic screen* is a powerful explanatory concept because it explains an often unconscious relationship between an historian's biases and his or her use of language. One picks up or adopts a particular language or terminology, and is visibly influenced by that way of talking. Bias and language-use, however, can also be understood through an account of communicative interaction and triangulation that does not posit that any one thing "*necessarily follows*" from one's biases nor that one terminology is as good as another (Burke, *Language* 52). Triangulation is an idea, partly metaphorical, developed most significantly by philosopher Donald Davidson. Davidson says in an interview with Thomas Kent:

the idea of triangulation is this: if you have two people both reacting to stimuli in the world and to each other—that is, to each other’s reactions to the stimuli—you’ve completed a triangle which locates the common stimulus. It doesn’t locate it in one person’s mouth; it doesn’t locate it five thousand years ago. It locates it just at the distance of the shared stimulus which, in turn, causes each of the two creatures to react to each other’s reactions. It’s a way of saying why it is that communication is essential to the concept of an objective world. . . . In other words, the source of objectivity is intersubjectivity. (Kent, “Language Philosophy” 8).

Davidson’s view of objectivity following from intersubjectivity and specifically triangulation is a way of redescribing a concept that is clearly going to be important for interpretative authority, but Davidson redescribes it in a way divorced from metaphysical objectivity.

Before developing this notion of objectivity, however, triangulation needs further elaboration. Kent provides a description of Davidsonian triangulation as literary hermeneutics, a description that could be applied to historical hermeneutics as well. “As we read,” Kent says, we formulate passing theories^[103] in order to align our sense of what we are reading both with the interpretations held by others and with the language in the text itself. Although these passing theories never match precisely, they nonetheless allow us to interpret well enough the meaning in a text by triangulating among what we know, what the text says, and what others say about it. We should remember that this kind of triangulation is thoroughly diachronic in the sense that what we know cannot be separated from what others know and from what the text means both to us and to others. (“Interpretation” 53)

The diachronic nature of triangulation most clearly offers an alternative description to the dialectical process described by Berlin and Enos. The dialectical descriptions of historical

interpretations consists of two operations: historian interpreting materials and historians communicating with others. As long as the image of historians reading books that no one else reads, finding archival materials that no one else knows exists, the third side of the triangle—the other person—is not invoked until the interpretation has been determined.

As archival and historical materials become more frequently read and interpreted, perhaps this problem or this dialectical image will begin to disappear. The publication of books like John C. Brereton's *The Origins of Composition Studies in the American College, 1875-1925: A Documentary History* makes the archival material and dusty textbooks more widely available. More significantly, however, a view of historical interpretation as triangulation suggests that even if a particular researcher is the only one to have read a particular book or archival item in the last fifty years, his or her interpretation of that book will have to cohere with interpretations of the material that the source under consideration is related to. No materials will exist in a vacuum, and an historian's account of the significance of that material will have to be triangulated with others who will agree or disagree with that interpretation based on their knowledge of related texts, regardless of whether or not they have read the same material.

How does triangulation avoid interpretive relativism? Davidson, Rorty, and Hilary Putnam, among other philosophers working in the analytical tradition of philosophy, have argued convincingly that relativism is a self-refuting position. Reed Way Dasenbrock, drawing primarily on Putnam, shows the extent of confusion in discussions over historical arguments that arise when the "truth" of an interpretation is seen to "conform to a set of conventions held by a community" (552). To say that "truth" conforms to community conventions either must be a truth-claim that conforms only to one community or it must be a universal claim about how the world is. And if the claim is the latter—which most social constructionists believe—then it refutes the former.

Dasenbrock extends Putnam's argument to describe the ways in which we write history which are clearly not dependent on terministic screens, or what Dasenbrock calls "theory-dependence":

As Putnam has argued, when we engage in argument or when we point to evidence as support for our position, when we advance any substantive position whatsoever, the very act of engaging in that activity commits us to a belief in truth beyond simply the views our community accepts. For if my interlocutor doesn't agree with me, then theory-dependence suggests that he or she holds a different theory; otherwise, we would already agree. It therefore makes no sense to try to argue for my views in the presence of disagreement or to introduced evidence supporting my view. If I give reasons or present evidence for my position, I must think that my reasons and evidence transcend my specific position and can convince others who do not share it; otherwise my task would be a hopeless one. (558-59)

Dasenbrock, of course, is saying that we do think that reasons and evidence transcend specific positions or terministic screens, and that our task of convincing others who do not share our beliefs is not a hopeless one. Berlin or Burke might say that we have to convince others to shift their terministic screens, but once the filter loses its powerful role, the claim for terministic screens, as Kent says, "amounts [only] to an admission that we require a language in order to communicate" (*Paralogic 5*). Giving reasons and presenting evidence are moves in the language games through which we try to convince others of our interpretations of texts, events, or phenomena.

The account of interpretation offered by Davidson, Kent, and Dasenbrock is not meant to radically change the way we go about doing history, although Dasenbrock thinks that we will "read evidential claims very differently" depending upon our view of evidence, truth, and objectivity (560). While Berlin, for example, may have claimed to have given up on

objectivity, he was in fact triangulating with others, and presenting arguments to others, most of whom rejected a positivist notion of objectivity. Berlin and most historians have dismissed objectivity as an impossible goal for their stories. But if objectivity is redescribed along with interpretation, we see that objectivity is not defined as unbiased or disinterested research. Kent draws on Davidson's coherence theory of truth for this redescription: "Although objectivity does not correspond to something outside our beliefs or outside the languages we employ to utter those beliefs, we can still be objective in the sense that we utter coherent beliefs. . . . *Our* beliefs are objective to the degree that they cohere with *other* beliefs" (*Paralogic* 69).

Objectivity is a matter of triangulating with others and matching up beliefs, which may also entail meeting others' standards for empirical, historical, or literary research. But objectivity is never a matter of meeting *abstract* standards for empirical, historical, or literary research.

If we stop thinking of our interpretations as being preceded by terministic screens, we may also stop thinking of the *politics* of historiography as something that precedes interpretation. In other words, *politics* is often used interchangeably with theory or terministic screen, and this use includes the assumption that our politics—our conservatism, liberalism, or radicalism—guide our actions. This notion is so embedded in our thinking that the CCCCs participants did not even raise the issue of how you identify one's politics. Berlin characterized Connors and Crowley as "the most conservative members of this group" ("Politics" 35), yet a conservative in Berlin's eyes seems primarily to be one who does not proclaim his or her ideological point of view. The greater mistake, I think, is to think that proclaiming one's politics or one's biases clarifies the politics of one's representation. The force of our representations is our politics, and our representations, like our interpretations, are worked out intersubjectively.

Redescribing Representation

Richard Leo Enos' suggestion that historians need to articulate their views in such a way that readers can participate in the making of meaning emphasizes authorial intention as a guiding factor in writing. A more thoroughly intersubjective notion of representation would acknowledge the role of others throughout the research and composing process of history writing. One's politics and one's genre, I believe, are intimately connected, as the selection of genre in fact becomes a form of political expression. Following Bakhtin's notion of genre, and Kent's integration of Bakhtin and Davidson in his account of communicative interaction, we can see that genres, and thus politics, are formed intersubjectively. To open up this field of intersubjective politics, however, I will start with a summary of Ernesto Laclau's vision of being political in the postmodern era.¹⁰⁴

Among the characteristics of politics in the modern era that Laclau identifies, their radical representability is the most pertinent to my redescription of writing history (277). In the postmodern era, representation is *everything*. What Laclau sees in this contingent world of representation is an expanded field of politics—expanded from the modernist view that *politics* means radical social transformation (277). If contingency is a necessity, he argues,

this means that there is a necessary undecidability inscribed within any structure (by "structure" I mean a complex identity constituted by a plurality of moments). For the structure requires the contingent connections as a necessary part of its identity, but these connections—precisely because they are contingent—cannot be logically derived from any point within the structure. (282)

The structure Laclau refers to does not fully constitute the subject, although it may constitute the elements of "community property" that Stanley Fish identifies with the subject.¹⁰⁵ The subject is constituted through the decisions that he or she makes in an attempt to close the structure, to achieve identity. The undecidability of the structure prevents the possibility of

essential agents, of agents able to fill the lack; instead, agents are always in the process of making further decisions, making further attempts to close the structure. These decisions, including acts of representation, are also always acts of force as they try to bridge a gap that will not close. The contingency of these representations is always visible through the double function of filling the structure. No matter what the content of a representation, it takes on significance as the “general form of fullness” (285). Knowing that *any* content can attempt to fill this function exposes the act of force inherent in representation; the selected content can be deconstructed and its contingency made evident. Laclau illustrates this point:

In a situation of great disorder the need for *an* order becomes more pressing than the concrete content of the latter; and the more generalized the disorder, the greater will be the distance between these two dimensions and the more indifferent people will be to the concrete content of the political forms that bring things back to a certain normality. (285)

The implications of Laclau’s views for the writing of history are considerable. Writing a history is quite literally an attempt to fill a gap, whether as a social need, a disciplinary gap, or as part of an individual’s sense of identity. If we accept the necessity of contingency, however, that gap can never be filled. Histories meet a need, take on the general form of fullness, but their content from generation to generation or from situation to situation no longer fills the need as adequately as it did for its author(s). And, of course, some histories will fail in their own time. The contingency of history becomes visible, but that visibility does not alleviate the need to once again fill the gap, nor should it make one uneasy about the need and responsibility for representation.¹⁰⁶

What is missing from Laclau’s account of the politics of representation, however, is the dimension of intersubjectivity that I suggested was missing from dialectical accounts of interpretation. The act of making the decision, as Laclau represents it, is an act of an individual only. But, as James Murphy says in his introductory remarks to “The Politics of

Historiography,” history is public (5). The decision to represent a time period, an event, or an individual is one that cannot be made without considering what has already been written, nor can it be made without considering who a history should be directed to. The political act of making a decision about writing history is manifest most clearly in one’s decision about genre.¹⁰⁷ This decision is not simply an individual decision, however, if one considers genres as heavily influenced by one’s addressee. Bakhtin, writing on speech genres, suggests that “Accounting for the addressee and anticipating his responsive reaction are frequently multifaceted processes that introduce unique internal dramatism into the utterance (in certain kinds of everyday dialogue, in letters, and in autobiographical and confessional genres). These phenomena are crucial, but more external, in rhetorical genres” (96).

While I agree with Bakhtin’s emphasis on addressivity, the implication that one does not account for the addressee quite as concretely in rhetorical genres (including history) needs further examination. If we can speak of intellectual histories, sub/versive hysterics, and revisionary histories as separate genres or variations on a genre, a very important factor in choosing one’s genre is the audience one would hope to reach. Intellectual histories might have a very small audience in today’s politicized academy, and in fact few historians of rhetoric and composition are writing intellectual histories. Victor Vitanza’s sub/versive style may reach a wide audience, but he may find sympathetic ears primarily among those who are versed in poststructuralist theory and who enjoy word play and typographical jokes woven into their hysterics. Revisionary histories appeal most to those dissatisfied with the status quo, uncomfortable with the story that is being told about their discipline.

What I am emphasizing in this redescription of representation, then, is that our politics does not guide our representation. The argument, in other words, is virtually the same argument as I was making in section one: terministic screens do not guide our interpretations and politics do not guide our representations. Representations are worked out intersubjectively and are addressed to a particular audience or audiences. The final shape and content of our

representation is what others will identify as our politics, and we may be read as falling somewhere on the political spectrum. We may wish to be read a particular way, but we will only have recourse to further explanations to try and clarify and unifying how it is that others read our histories, just as Berlin clarified his use of terministic screens after Connors' review.

In saying this, I am arguing for a restricted definition of politics in much the same way Fish argues for a strict definition of theory in "Consequences." Fish draws on the Knapp and Michael's definition of theory as "a special project in literary criticism: the attempt to govern interpretations of particular texts by appealing to an account of interpretation in general" (315). He acknowledges that this definition may seem arbitrary and narrow, but then shows how it is the same definition E. D. Hirsch uses to distinguish between local and general hermeneutics, a more widely accepted definition of theory (315-16).

The benefit of such a definition is that we clarify who and what we are responsible to in our representations. Nan Johnson, in "The Politics of Historiography," refers to the "business of accounting for the past a baffling responsibility," but she is not clear about who or what historians are being responsible to (18). Enos says that it is historians' responsibility to articulate views so that others can share in the making of meaning; if others do not share in the making of meaning, we have not made meaning. My redescription of representation suggests that representation most clearly is not responsible to an abstract notion of pure representation: of being able to represent the thing-in-itself. Our responsibility, or accountability, is to the audience that we address. The responsibility, however, does not come with strings attached. We do not have to make meaning accessible, if we try along with Vitanza to resist closure, if not meaning. And we may not be read as we intended; our histories may turn into exam questions, as Sharon Crowley fears ("Politics" 14).

Redescribing Authorization

To be responsible to our audiences, to others, is not the same as saying that we simply meet and respect their values. Enos's view that "there is some sort of jurisprudential function that our community has which weighs and sifts evidence" may seem ecumenical for a young scholar with little or no reputation to make his or her way in the academic world (21). But if the view of interpretation I have suggested in the first section of this essay holds, our interpretations will always be authorized by the community by the time they are published. We will have worked out our interpretations with colleagues, with supervisors, and with review boards on journals. Short of independent publications, it is hard to imagine an interpretation of an historical period or figure that has not already met the academic standards of some members of the community—and no interpretation is likely to meet the standards of all members of the community.

The task of authorizing our interpretations further, to the point where they are recognized as being in the same league as a Berlin's, Connors's, or Johnson's scholarship, is a matter of establishing our ethos. Sharon Crowley states this position very clearly in "The Politics of Historiography":

We know Jim [Berlin]'s work well enough now to *know* what his attitude toward historiography is and if we want that version of the 19th-century history, that's what we read. If we're more comfortable with a more traditional rendition, we pick up Bob Connors' work or Nan Johnson's work. I think they all argue reasonably, and they all assess evidence carefully, they're all excellent scholars. What makes us read a history is the authority that it bears, its *ethos*." (21)

We begin to establish professional ethos by associating with certain people, by choosing a particular dissertation director and committee, by meeting and impressing people at conferences, whether or not we convince them of our argument. Does this mean that it never

matters if we convince anybody of our arguments? Again, this situation is hard to imagine, because part of establishing one's ethos with one's dissertation committee, for example, would be a matter of making at least some convincing arguments. My point is that one does not need to convince somebody else of one's own position in order to establish ethos or authority.

The reason for this goes back to the view of representation I put forward in the second section of this essay. If the notion of a correct representation is dropped, and representation is seen as an act which fills a lack in a structure, readers of histories will not be looking to have their arguments and views changed unless they find something insufficient in the views they already have. And they are unlikely to be as convinced by arguments which attempt to get them to exchange one conviction for another. Instead, they might be inclined to adopt redescriptions of events that their beliefs no longer can adequately account for. This notion, like contingency, is very Rorty-like, but Laclau offers a clear explanation of how redescription works:

If somebody is perfectly happy and well-installed in a description A, he or she has no reason whatsoever to move to another description B. The only way out of this impasse is if the description B does not come to replace a full-fledged description A but provides *a* description to a situation that had become increasingly indescribable in terms of an old paradigm. That is, the only way the process of conviction can operate is if it moves from lack of conviction to conviction, not from one conviction to another. This means that the function of a new language is to fill a gap. . . . If we agree that the condition of a successful redescription is that it not only replace an old one but also fill a gap opened in the general describability of a situation, then the valid redescription will have a split identity: on the one hand, it will be its own content; on the other, it will embody the principle of describability as such—that is, what we have called the general form of fullness. Without this second order of signification, without

what we could call the hegemonization of the general form of describability by a concrete description, we would be in . . . “separate worlds of thought,” and no interaction between political discourses would be possible. (289)

The implications and importance of thinking of histories as attempts to redescribe phenomena rather than arguments about those phenomena is that we can more easily make sense of how it is that Berlin, Connors, and Johnson can all make reasonable arguments, can all establish and maintain an ethos, without all of them being able to convince us of their description. We can see the function their histories serve—the general form of fullness—but if we already have a content to our histories, if we are “perfectly happy and well-installed” in our description, we can respect the other histories at the second order of signification, and respect their attempts to tell a certain kind of history. Often, however, our histories are sketchy and the histories we read fill many gaps.

More importantly, perhaps, this view also gets around the problem of interpretive incommensurability associated with terministic screens, or what Laclau refers to as the problem of “separate worlds of thought.” Because we don’t interpret the world through a conceptual scheme that determines our interpretations and prevents us from making sense of those who hold radically different views from us, we can see and appreciate, maybe even interact, as Laclau suggests, with those who have disparate beliefs. Our ethos will influence who reads us, how widely we are read, and how often we are read. On this basis, not upon the basis of the community’s jurisprudential function, do we establish authority.

There are, of course, serious problems associated with authorization. How do we ensure that sex, gender, race, class, or age do not give one group an advantage—a wider audience—over another group? How do we deal with the problem that white men already possess much of the power and authority in academia and the larger social world? How do groups traditionally excluded from the academy even begin to establish an ethos or authority within the academy? I don’t have answers to these questions, but if we understand that

interpretation is not a matter of being able to see only what one's terministic screen allows one to be able to see, if all representations are open to questioning and revision, and if ethos and authority can be established without convincing everybody of your position or without always having to speak somebody else's language, then there is hope that the field of historical representation can become a playing field open to interested participants.

Conclusion

What I am describing is not a step-by-step process of doing history, but an act of writing history. The acts of interpreting, representing, and authorizing historical narratives can happen simultaneously: one seeks authorization in the presentation of an interpretation, whether in a conversation or through a publication of an article. We can, of course, think of the acts as separate, as located in various places—the archives, at one's computer, in a conference presentation—but representing and authorizing one's views is never very far removed from interpreting historical material. Redescribing historiography is not meant to radically reform the way historians do their work; my redescription, in fact, has only very general things to say about how I should actually write a history of rhetoric. It does not tell me how to interpret my materials, only that interpretations are intersubjective and not guided by terministic screens. It does not tell me how to represent my history, only that representation is a political act to be questioned and revised. It does not offer me a guaranteed formula for establishing ethos and authority, only that the two are intimately linked and that I am already doing the sorts of things that will establish my ethos.

Why, then, is it important to review "The Politics of Historiography"? One reason is to remind ourselves of the diversity of views on historiography, and not limit our thinking to a few categories that characterize work in the history of rhetoric. A second reason is to rethink our metaphors of work so that we are describing what we do in ways that allow us to argue clearly and cogently about the objectivity of our work, about the relevancy of our evidence, and

about the importance of scholarly communities in validating our work. A third and final reason is that reviewing, and re-representing our historiographies to each other is the politics of historiography. Thinking of the writing of history as communicative interaction—as triangulation—with others and one’s artifacts and not as dialectical exchange may alter, however slightly, the way we value and respond to the voice of others in the making of our histories.

NOTES

Chapter 1

¹ Progressive education was influential on elementary and secondary education in Canada, but despised at the university level. Hilda Neatby's *So Little For the Mind* (1953) is the most sustained attack on progressive education offered by a Canadian intellectual at this time.

² Historian Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* is also very applicable for this study, particularly his account of the role of modern mass education in the modern nation state. Education, he says, provides cadres for government and corporate hierarchies, moral guidance to the nation's youth, and power for colonialists to exert over their colonial subjects (106). All studies of nation-building cite writing and communication as central to the formation and mobilization of a community. See E. J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1870* (117) and Miroslav Hroch "From National Movement to the Fully-formed Nation: The Nation-building Process in Europe" (87-88).

³ Raymond Williams' *Culture and Society, 1780-1950* is the standard account of how "culture" in the woolly and pious sense came to be defined in the nineteenth century by the intellectual and aristocratic classes who were disturbed by the growth in industry and the interest in democracy exhibited throughout the western world.

⁴ Burton Bledstein has described a closely related role for university education in general: "With the creation of the university in America, an institution unlike any in Europe, the middle class succeeded in establishing an institutional matrix for its evolving types of behavior. By and large the American university came into existence to serve and promote professional authority in society. More than in any other western country in the last century, the development of higher education in America made possible a social faith in merit, competence, discipline, and control that were basic to accepted conceptions of achievement and success" (x). Allan Smith argues that Canadians have similarly accepted this role of education in the "myth" of the self-made man (325-58).

⁵ A. B. McKillop's *A Disciplined Intelligence* identifies the following as sources of Hegelian influence in North America: J. Hutchison Stirling's *The Secret of Hegel* (1865), a book which made Hegel accessible to the public; the Hegelian St. Louis School of the 1860s and 1870s which introduced Hegelian idealism into almost every aspect of American intellectual life; and Scotland's brothers Caird, two Hegelians who influenced Canada through their students: philosopher John Watson and literary critic James Cappon, both of Queen's University (171-204). For an overview of German Idealism, see M. J. Inwood's "Introduction" to *Hegel: Selections*.

⁶ See Hubert, *Harmonious Perfection* 122 and Terry Eagleton, *Literary Theory* 22-23.

⁷ I am also deeply indebted to many histories of composition in the US, particularly those that examine the relationship between economics, politics, and writing instruction: Berlin, *Rhetoric and Reality*; Brereton, "Composition" and "Introduction;" Brody, *Manly Writing*, Crowley, *Methodical Memory*; Susan Miller, *Textual Carnivals*; Russell, *Writing In the Academic Disciplines*; and Stewart, "Harvard's Influence" and "Two Model Teachers."

⁸ Carl Berger and Allan Smith both argue that continentalist interpretations of North American history by Canadians, prevalent through much of the twentieth century, ended abruptly during the Cold War because Canadian historians wanted to distant themselves and their country from American neo-imperialist practices (Berger 140-48 and 260-62; Smith 4, 58)

⁹ North 11; Applebee 185; and Berlin, *Rhetoric* 120.

¹⁰ Daniells's papers have been thoroughly indexed and his correspondence is in chronological order; Jones's papers are not as thoroughly indexed, but are organized into topics, and the correspondence is sorted by name.

Chapter 2

¹¹ Malcolm Wallace notes in a memoriam for Alexander, "he had little faith in formal courses in composition" (5); Harris describes Alexander's *Composition for Use in Schools and Colleges* (1894) as a "pre-rhetoric" textbook, i.e. about getting started, not about being critical (45). Toronto's first PhD in English, R. K. Gordon, wrote *A New Composition for Secondary Schools* early in his teaching career at Alberta.

¹² Ontario's public schools went to Grade 13, furthering the University of Toronto's argument that composition did indeed belong in high schools, not universities.

¹³ A standard study of Canada, the US, and Australia as frontier nations is Paul F. Sharp's "Three Frontiers: Some Comparative Studies of Canadian, American, and Australian Settlement."

¹⁴ Brown and Cook provide population figures for Canada's major metropolitan areas between 1891 and 1921 (98-99).

¹⁵ This failure is most evident in the fact that the Arts Building at the University of Saskatchewan was not built until after money from the Canada Council grant of 1957 was procured.

¹⁶ James A. Black, student at the University of Alberta and later professor of English at the University of Calgary, tells a story of Broadus, visibly shaken, entering and interrupting an English class to tell the students that Thomas Hardy, *our greatest poet*, has died. (Interview)

¹⁷ This address was subsequently published in the journal *Science* 39 (1914): 263-74.

¹⁸ Richard Ohmann similarly notes that English was often defined in relation to other disciplines and the needs to the university:

The new universities were making themselves essential to American society: as sources of new knowledge that might have practical application in industry, as transmitters of the skills and attitudes that managers would need, as training schools for the professions. English as a discipline did not put itself forward initially as a critical part of this complex, nor was it quick to adapt its ideology to its function. But the rest of the university valued English, both for its supposed work of teaching students to write and for the high cultural tradition to which English departments laid claim. (*English* 250)

Chapter 3

¹⁹ The feminization of composition, as Susan Miller notes, can have both positive and negative connotations. The predominant negative connotation is that composition as a field attracts and collects women like bugs because of the nurturing nature of the work ("Feminization" 39). The positive connotation is that these women bring vitality and counterhegemonic practices to the otherwise colonizing practice of writing instruction ("Feminization" 51).

²⁰ The Cornell University Archives holds some biographical information on Crawford.

²¹ Social efficiency was a more widely expressed principle of education in the US than in Canada, as David Russell demonstrates in his chapter on "Writing and Social Efficiency" (*Writing* 135-65). American English

departments, however, were no more eager to adopt this principle than were Canadian English departments, preferring instead to assert the teaching of literature as their primary goal (147).

²² Ernest Sirluck, a colleague of Brown's at Chicago in the late forties but an undergraduate at Manitoba between 1935 and 1940, speaks highly of Brown, and notes "that his special distinction in our eyes was the he wrote on Canadian literature as well as more usual literary topics" (40).

²³ Rollo Brown, in an essay on Le Baron Russell Briggs of Harvard, concludes that the composition work of Briggs and Wendell was an attempt, "more or less national, to develop a literary art directly from the soil" (in Brereton, *Origins* 33).

²⁴ Groening relates an anecdote of Brown emulating an image of Wendell he had read about: pacing "up and down [the classroom] twirling a knife on his watch-chain" as a dramatic feature of his pedagogy (18).

²⁵ While Brown leaves the university unnamed, the course is clearly Manitoba's, and he made the address shortly after he had moved from Cornell to Chicago, a fact he addresses in his opening. He also refers to Toronto in his paper, leaving Manitoba the very likely candidate.

²⁶ Her letter to the President is further evidence of her work ethic: she was working and studying in Halifax, and took on extra work to prepare to go to Saskatchewan (USA PR, RG1 Series 1, B.8 Ba, June 16, 1909).

²⁷ Sharon Crowley's *Methodical Memory* convincingly argues that writing instruction throughout the twentieth century, including the work of committed rhetoricians like Fred Newton Scott and Gertrude Buck, was current-traditional in that it attempted to standardized and formalize the writing process, rather than teach writing through "individual effort and attention" (136).

²⁸ Wilson's major contribution to scholarly literature was *The Miraculous Birth of Language*, first published in 1937, and republished in 1942 and 1948 with a preface by George Bernard Shaw. The book, and Shaw's appreciation for its anti-evolutionary argument, confirm the extent to which Wilson was a product of his idealist philosophical education at Queens.

²⁹ Abbot describes this dynamic: "The direct creation of subordinate groups has great advantages for the professions with full jurisdiction. It enables extension of dominant effort without division of dominant perquisites. It also permits delegation of dangerously routine work" (72).

³⁰ John Bently expresses his dismay on July 24, 1944 when he hears that she might retire: "we should all miss Miss Bayer very badly in the Department" (USA PP RG 13 S20 1.2).

³¹ Besides Broadus and Sedgewick, A. S. P. Woodhouse (Manitoba 1923-28; Toronto 1928-64) and fellow Canadian, Douglas Bush (Minnesota 1923-37 and Harvard 1937-66) received their degrees (A. M and Ph.D.) in 1923. This list may appear scant, but most departments in western Canada employed only two men until the 1920s, and the numbers climbed slowly until the 1960s expansion of university students and staffs.

³² Watson Kirkconnell, a Canadian contemporary of Broadus, described him as an "irascible and aristocratic Virginian" (234), and Broadus's love of pugilism was noted in his obituary (Jan. 2, 1937; UAA Minutes 70-91-68). The aristocratic, agonistic nature of his personality suggests that he was in many ways like Barrett Wendell, and for all his dislike of composition, he introduced to the University of Alberta what may have been the first course in creative writing at a Canadian university (Nov. 14, 1934; UAA Minutes 70-107-1). See also note 71.

³³ The Harvard University Archives (HUA) provided much of this biographical information on Broadus.

³⁴ Susan Miller argues that composition and literature were taught together at Harvard as the two “elements that a properly evolving national culture would require” (51). She emphasizes the social and cultural importance of English’s role to “instill in the nonelect the necessary refinements of taste, in the form of correct grammar and spelling, two historically important signs of cultured propriety that Harvard’s way of teaching composition was going to provide” (51-52).

³⁵ Broadus’s theory of writing instruction illustrates exactly the point Sharon Crowley makes about current-traditional rhetorical theory: “I argue that this theory has a decidedly mentalistic bent because of its association with psychology and logic. Thus the pedagogy based on it was centrally, if quietly, concerned about the quality of the authorial minds. . . . The hope was that a well-formed text would reflect a well-oiled mind at work” (13).

³⁶ Miriam Brody’s *Manly Writing* suggests the image of writing instruction as colonization, rather than imperialism: “Ultimately, a man’s work was colonizing the mind, making it render up its content so that one would know its workings in its distinctive and individual shape. It was the triumphant work of mining one’s thoughts for the truth they might yield and the work of composing the text so that it mirrored this truth” (159).

³⁷ September 24, 1928 Minutes (UAA 70-91-63).

³⁸ The Harvard University Archives provided much of this biographical information on Sedgewick.

³⁹ As with most other Canadians who came into contact with the philological tradition at Harvard, Sedgewick had already been strongly influenced by the critical tradition of studying English Literature. Sedgewick himself wonders how MacMechan was able to “issue intact from Johns Hopkins of the 1880s” (“A.M.” 149). MacMechan was not a modern scholar in the sense of Kittredge—the two, in many ways, would have been diametrically opposed. What Sedgewick got from MacMechan, however, was not so much a literary training, as a model for living. He says of MacMechan, “Archie achieved a personality fused and harmonized into a work of art—just as, in fact because, he made a fine art of life” (“A.M.” 150).

⁴⁰ Sept 30, 1948; UBC RDP 6-8.

⁴¹ S. E. D. Shortt characterizes MacMechan as a “romantic idealist,” influenced by Edward Caird, the Scottish Hegelian, but Arnoldian in his belief that “Literature . . . was the highest activity of civilization, an exercise in morality, supervised by the nation’s rightful leader, the poet” (51).

⁴² Sedgewick refers to himself as a Victorian in “Of Disillusionment” and is called a communist in a letter from the Archbishop of Vancouver (UBC GGSP 1-2).

⁴³ November 23, 1918 (UBC PP, Wesbrook 12-8).

⁴⁴ Although Abbott’s account of professionalism emphasizes that it is the work professionals do, and not the professional organizations they belong to that defines a profession, he does not discount these organizations as irrelevant to an emerging sense of professional identity.

Chapter 4

⁴⁵ Daniel Bell introduced this distinction between aristocratic and democratic models of education in *Reforming General Education*: “General education at Chicago has always had the flavor of an aristocratic critique of the democratic—perhaps one should say populist—foundations of American education. What steered Harvard toward general education after World War II—at least as formulated in its famous Redbook (so named after its cover, but actually entitled *General Education in a Free Society*)—was a response to the obligation, assumed in the name

of democracy, of providing for all citizens 'some common and binding understanding of the society which they will possess in common'" (15).

⁴⁶ Frederick Rudolph describes the Wisconsin "Experimental College" as "out of this world" and says its influence on other schools was very limited (*Curriculum* 277).

⁴⁷ Norman Foerster's scholarly work established him as the leading New Humanist of the thirties. His work at Iowa was not always well received, but his ideas were influential throughout North America. According to J. David Hoeveler Jr.'s history of the New Humanists, Foerster was forced out of Iowa in the 1940s (120-22). Gerald Graff identifies a link between Chicago and the University of Kansas which made significant curricular changes and adopted a Western Civilization Program in 1945 (*Professing Literature* 164). Clifford Griffin describes the curriculum in detail in his history of the University of Kansas (559). The University of Nebraska had a direct tie to Chicago in Chancellor C. S. Boucher, former dean at the University of Chicago and author of *The Chicago Plan*. Sawyer McLaran, in his history of the University of Nebraska, compares Boucher to the Chicago President: "Like Hutchins at Chicago, the chancellor of the University of Nebraska denounced those who sought a college degree for economic or social reasons" (69). Boucher's attitude was not representative of the college, but "the potential for vocational programs at the University of Nebraska was not realized because of the economic situation and an unwillingness to discontinue established conventional academic work" (69).

⁴⁸ Eddy identifies the appeal of the Minnesota program for land-grant colleges, and notes how unappealing the Chicago Plan appeared to these schools (156, 210).

⁴⁹ Brown finished his career at Chicago, 1944-51, but had been fascinated by the University of Chicago since the publication of Hutchins' *Higher Learning*. McLuhan visited Chicago in 1946 and prepared a report that his biographer, Philip Marchand, considers an acute analysis of what was wrong with the Chicago Plan (90-91). Ernest Sirluck, another Canadian who taught at Chicago, Toronto, and became president of the University of Manitoba (1970-76), says that McLuhan warned him against going to Chicago because he [Sirluck] would be "a humanist lost in a scholastic jungle." Sirluck says he found McLuhan's report to be "divorced from actuality and . . . self-serving" (164).

⁵⁰ Winnipeg was frequently referred to as "the Chicago of the north" because both cities functioned as gateways to the west and were important centers for agricultural markets.

⁵¹ John Dewey was, like Gideonse, critical of Hutchins plans. Dewey and Hutchins exchanged comments in the journal *Social Frontier* following the publication of *Higher Learning*: Dewey, "Remaking Higher Education" (January, 1937); Hutchins, "Grammar, Rhetoric, and Mr. Dewey" (February 1937); and Dewey, "Was President Hutchins Serious?" (March 1937). See Gideonse 9.

⁵² Gray argues that President Coffman and Dean Johnston, the two key administrators behind these reforms, had been working on educational reform long before Hutchins arrived at Chicago, but his flair for media attention, and his ability to create quick changes at a private institution, overshadowed the Minnesota reforms (312-13).

⁵³ Frederick Rudolph, in *Curriculum*, describes the College as "a two-year program of general studies [that] addressed itself to the challenging problem of what to do for and with young men and women whom the society with some degree of success had labeled as losers" (277). Rudolph seems not to have continued reading Gray's account of the College, for Gray acknowledges this issue, but explains how the College in fact could appeal to even Minnesota's brightest students (315).

⁵⁴ David Russell discusses Dewey and Meiklejohn in his chapter on Progressive Education in *Writing in the Academic Disciplines* (199-201; 226-28). Malcolm MacLean, the first central administrator of the Minnesota General College, had been at Wisconsin with Meiklejohn (Gray 315).

⁵⁵ William Spanos, in a sharp criticism of the educational philosophies of Matthew Arnold, Irving Babbitt, and I. A. Richards (one of the co-authors of the Harvard Report), aligns these contemporary pedagogues with the manly, orderly, and imperialist practices of Roman education (107).

⁵⁶ For accounts of the scandal see Morton (149-50) and Harry Ferns (48-49).

⁵⁷ W. J. Waines, a member of the committee developing the Western Civilization program, says that he and other members of the committee "had little expectation that the courses would ever get off the ground because of the cost of providing competent tutors. The courses were listed in the calendar for a few years and then were quietly dropped" (UA Mss Sc 58, 7). Coming only twelve years after the defalcation scandal of 1932, it is not surprising that financial and human resources were a huge stumbling block. N. R. Wilson, who had been at Chicago in the early Hutchins years, wrote of similar problems in a letter to Roy Daniells, head of the English Department and chair of the Western Civilization Committee. Wilson says:

The primary difficulties are cost, time-table, and distance. The sole definite information that we have on the first is that even Chicago, with all its resources, finds it a heavy burden. A similar programme on a more modest scale was considered in 1926-7 by a small committee of which I was a member. It was abandoned because of these three obstacles. Conditions are worse now than then.

His recommendation was that the plans not be put into effect until money and tutors became available (Oct. 8, 1943; UBC RDP 4-10).

⁵⁸ March 5, 1944 (UA 20 PSP 53-10).

⁵⁹ Bruce Kimball's *Orators and Philosophers* identifies the "liberal free" and "*artes liberales*" traditions as the basic approaches to liberal education.

⁶⁰ March 13, 1946 (UBC RDP 5-4).

⁶¹ Roy Daniells of Manitoba (May 20, 1943) and F. M. Salter of Alberta (October 18, 1952) both wrote long letters to their Presidents in response to criticism that their English departments were not as scholarly active as other departments in the university (for Daniells's letter, see UA 20 41-3; for Salter's letter, see UAA 72-185-12).

Chapter 5

⁶² "We have begun to see that writing courses are not designed exclusively to prepare students for the workplace, although they certainly must do that. Writing courses prepare students for citizenship in a democracy, for assuming their political responsibilities, whether as leaders or simply as active participants" (Berlin, *Rhetoric and Reality* 188-89).

⁶³ See Russell Kirk, *The Conservative Mind*, for an account of Adams's theory of the aristocracy of nature (93-98) and a summary of Babbitt's political views in *Democracy and Leadership* (419-32).

⁶⁴ The standard list of binaries can be found in Seymour Martin Lipset's *Continental Divide*: "Regardless of whether one emphasizes structural factors or cultural values, Canada and the United States continue to differ considerably. America reflects the influence of its classically liberal, Whig, individualistic, antistatist, populist, ideological origins. Canada, at least from a comparative North American perspective, can still be seen as Tory-mercantilist, group oriented, statist, deferential to authority—a "socialist monarchy," to use Robertson Davies' phrase. There can be no real argument" (212).

⁶⁵ Donald Stewart makes this argument in "Two Model Teachers" (124).

⁶⁶ April 12, 1948 (UA 20 PTP 90-19).

⁶⁷ Ernest Sirluck says Daniells's "attitude towards Toronto was ironic" (47).

⁶⁸ Sharon Crowley convincingly argues that *all* major textbooks of the first half of this century employed current-traditional theory to discourse production. See note 27.

⁶⁹ Before compiling his report, he solicited information from R. K. Gordon at Alberta and Garnet Sedgewick at BC, views I will discuss later in this chapter.

⁷⁰ Alan Ryan describes Dewey as "anti-Soviet and anti-Communist," but Dewey also believed strongly "that American capitalism was a dying social order" (30).

⁷¹ A creative writing or advanced composition course was deemed necessary by Broadus: "(1) It should be of value to students in the School of Education; [and] (2) Also to other students who wish training in writing, with a view to journalism, or for other reasons" (Minutes, Nov. 14, 1923; U of A Archives 72-107-1). The course was to include frequent short essays, fewer long essay, some literature as models, no composition textbook "But a book such as C. E. Montague's 'A Writer's Notes on his Trade,'" regular class meetings three times a week but with an option to have conferences, and was to emphasize "freshness and spontaneity; [i]t must be experimental and not over-organized" (Minutes, Nov. 14, 1923; U of A Archives 72-107-1). A list of topics of local or present-day interest was suggested: Fraternities, How the Carnegie Money should be Spent, The President Held up on the Campus, A Convocation Address at the University of Alberta by A Dictator such as Hitler, or A Communities, or A Fundamentalist, and so on.

⁷² American universities faced this same problem. Milton French of Rutgers, writing to Malcolm Ross, says: "I hope that you at Toronto are able to keep the humanities alive in these difficult times. We are still giving courses in literature and the other arts, but we strongly suspect that at the end of the present term we shall have very little work in English except in the introductory "Maid-of-all-work" course in composition" (March 3, 1943; UC MRP 1.6).

⁷³ See McMaster's history of the Department for an account of Salter's influence on creative writers as well as scholars in Canada (10).

⁷⁴ Salter writes, "Many distinguished scientists, known the world over, have let their light shine forth from the University of Chicago; I do not believe any of them would fail to include Mr. Manly in their number" (22).

⁷⁵ In a letter to Mitchell, Salter writes: "I have just learned that my English 2 this summer will have 150 students. If you think 150 freshman essays a week makes me happy you are grossly in error" (May 26, 1945; UC WOM).

⁷⁶ A report on testing foreign students notes that the University Committee on Foreign Students requested that the English department set up a testing committee in 1956 to handle the influx of Hungarian students. Three members of the English department—Dr. Scargill, Dr. Kreisel, and Dr. Godfrey—formed this committee and established tests that were to become standard for the University. The English department, in other words, continued to co-operate with the University in meeting specific needs.

⁷⁷ In 1930-31, UBC had been offering composition in its second year course. Two hours a week were devoted to literature and one hour a week to composition (*UBC Calendar 1930-31*, 129-30).

Chapter 6

⁷⁸ The founding of the Canada Council is a prominent point of discussion in most post-war histories of Canada. I draw most heavily on J. L. Granatstein's *Canada 1957-1967: The Years of Uncertainty and Innovation* (139-68).

⁷⁹ Different governing bodies for evaluating applications and distributing awards have been established, but the root source of money is still the endowment established in 1957. Since 1978, students and scholars in the humanities have been applying to the Social Studies and Humanities Research Council for graduate and post-graduate support. See *Humanities Research Council of Canada/Canadian Federation for the Humanities, 1943-83: A Short History*.

⁸⁰ R. K. Gordon (University of Alberta) and G. G. Sedgewick (University of British Columbia) were the only two scholars of English from western Canada elected to the sixteen member founding Council, indicating the professional status these individuals and their departments had already achieved (Kirkconnell 241).

⁸¹ For an accounts of the establishment of the NEA and NEH see Milton Cummings "To Change a Nation's Cultural Policy: The Kennedy Administration and the Arts in the United States, 1961-1963" (95-120).

⁸² Two other critics of the Canada Council were Marshall McLuhan and poet Earle Birney. McLuhan produced a short and innovative critique of the Council and government involvement in the arts and humanities, *Counterblast*, and Birney produced a visual poem, "Canada Council," depicting the eye of Big Brother as the watchful eye of the Canada Council.

⁸³ Marshall McLuhan and Daniel Fogarty (*Roots for a New Rhetoric* (1959)), Dean of Education at St. Mary's University in Halifax, are the scholars who were most obviously marginalized by the liberal humanist hegemony in Canadian scholarship. See Graves for a discussion of Fogarty (27-28).

⁸⁴ Frye's colleague, A. S. P. Woodhouse, may have been the most vocal Canadian defender of education for the "whole man." The liberal education Woodhouse recommends is the liberal education of John Henry Newman, whose roots he identifies as extending back to Edmund Spenser and the Christian humanists: the education of a gentleman, not a rhetorician ("Humanities" 13). Woodhouse's definition of the humanities, a definition he expounded with great frequency between 1947 and 1959, became, with little resistance, the definition of the humanities in Canada.

⁸⁵ Jonathan Hart provides a succinct summary of Frye's views on education: "In an article in 1945 addressing views that prefigure the debate on technical education for global competition in the 1980s and 1990s, Frye defends liberal education against Conservative politicians and capitalists who want vocational training and says liberal education emphasizes that the great works of culture represent a vision of reality that is human and understandable but a little better than we can have in life. Frye asserts that *laissez-faire* philosophy was once liberating but is now reactionary and that the only coherent form of socialism is one based on the liberal theory of education—which is the tradition in which Frye's theory falls" (169).

⁸⁶ Ian Balfour analyzes the importance of Frye's review work of the *Toronto Quarterly* and other publications in a chapter entitled "Reviewing Canada" (78-88). He also lists Margaret Atwood, Dennis Lee, Margaret Avison, and James Reaney as writers who were students of Frye (82).

⁸⁷ Arthur Applebee's *Tradition and Reform* identifies the influence of Frye on American curriculums (203), as well as the influence of British pedagogies which focused on the personal and linguistic growth of children (229).

⁸⁸ A. C. Hamilton, drawing on an interview Frye did with Imre Salusinszky, describes these post-war years as a period of hope, explaining in part Frye's belief in freedom through education. Graham Good identifies the 1950s and 1960s as Frye's heyday, "when he articulated a vision of social transformation through education which was widely shared, even by governments" (85).

⁸⁹ Robin Harris devotes a chapter to the golden years at Toronto, 1944-64. During this time, the University graduated 82 doctorates and 274 Master's students (131).

⁹⁰ Graves similarly identifies the Woodhouse-Frye-Priestley influence on setting the agenda for English studies in Canada, although he emphasizes the 1950 to 1970 period.

⁹¹ David Shumway's *Creating American Civilization* discusses the significance of these events, and in general provides a valuable analysis of the institutionalization national literatures in the New World (133, 174).

⁹² Brian McCrae considers *Anatomy of Criticism* to be the single most influential text of literary criticism in the twentieth century, and Frank Lentricchia identifies *Anatomy* as the key text between traditional idealist criticism and postmodernist criticism (McCrae 122-23; Lentricchia 26).

⁹³ See Barbara Bailey Kessel's "Free, Classless, and Urbane?" for a response from the early 1970s, and Frederic Jameson's *Political Unconscious* for an influential political critique of Frye.

Chapter 7

⁹⁴ Douglas Owsram discusses many of these points in *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-boom Generation* (91-92; 170-71; 300-01).

⁹⁵ A memo from G. Richardson to Dr. E. Bock dated September 22nd, 1969, indicates that Manitoba was surveying what other universities were doing. Richardson reports to Bock that "Of 34 universities having enrolments of over 1,000 students, only 14 still retain unified Faculties of Arts and Science."

⁹⁶ Warner Rice of The University of Michigan represented the abolitionists in an exchange with Albert Kitzhaber in *College English* (1960). Rice's arguments for ending composition instruction are exactly the arguments of Canadian abolitionists: (1) students who enter college without command of communication skills "waste their time and the time of their teachers"; (2) it is unlikely students will benefit from two semesters of Freshman English; (3) many of the students in Freshman English are ill motivated; (4) Freshman English is a major strain on departments' budgets; and (5) the elimination of Freshman English will improve the working conditions of teachers (361-62).

⁹⁷ See September 8, 1969 memo from R. Hudson to Professor R. Penner for a discussion of space allocation. Although neither of them remark on the symbolic significance of the Writing Clinic being housed with Counseling Services, the association is painfully obvious now (UA 6 70-19).

⁹⁸ The English Department began offering graduate courses in 1960-61 with a seminar on Medieval Drama (including Shakespeare) and Nineteenth-Century Thought (Arnold and Ruskin) (*Calendar of the University of Alberta 1960-61*, 102).

⁹⁹ UBC has had such prominent scholars as Andrea Lunsford, Richard Coe, and Nan Johnson in their English department, and has recently re-instituted a first-year writing course, but it has yet to professionalize rhetoric or writing instruction in the way that American English departments have.

Chapter 8

¹⁰⁰ For the influence of the transnational corporation on universities, see Bill Readings, *The University in Ruins*. For the influence of the transnational corporation on English departments, see J. Hillis Miller, "Literary Study and the Transnational University."

¹⁰¹ The University of Winnipeg has been successful in operating a Writing Centre staffed almost exclusively by full-time professionals, and Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia, has a small staff of professionals who successfully shape their jurisdictional boundaries, but these cases are exceptions rather than the rule.

Appendix

¹⁰² In using the term "antirealist," I am drawing on Richard Rorty's distinction between realists and pragmatists (or antirealists) as described in "Solidarity or Objectivity": "Those who wish to ground solidarity in objectivity—call them "realists"—have to construe truth as correspondence to reality. So they must construct a metaphysics which has room for a special relation between beliefs and objects which will differentiate true from false beliefs. . . . By contrast, those who wish to reduce objectivity to solidarity—call them "pragmatists"—do not require either a metaphysics or an epistemology. They view truth as, in William James' phrase, what is good for *us* to believe" (22).

¹⁰³ "Passing theory" and "prior theory" are two more key terms in Davidson's work, and are intimately related to triangulation. Davidson explains them quite simply: "For the hearer, the prior theory expresses how he is prepared in advance to interpret an utterance of the speaker, while the passing theory is how he *does* interpret the utterance. For the speaker, the prior theory is what he *believes* the interpreter's prior theory to be, while his passing theory is the theory he *intends* the interpreter to use" ("Nice" 442).

¹⁰⁴ Laclau actually deconstructs the modern/postmodern binary in "Power and Representation," but begins this essay by asking how one can be political after modernism.

¹⁰⁵ Fish describes an interpretive community as "not so much a group of individuals who shared a point of view, but a point of view or way of organizing experience that shared individuals in the sense that its assumed distinctions, categories of understanding, and stipulations of relevance and irrelevance were the content of the consciousness of community members who were therefore no longer individuals, but, insofar as they were embedded in the community's enterprise, community property" (141).

¹⁰⁶ Carl Berger briefly describes this process of fulfilling the general form of fullness in *The Writing of Canadian History*. Early Canadian histories were not nationalistic in focus, but local, until certain needs made national histories more important. The English threat to French culture, for example, inspired *Histoire du Canada* (1845-52), while Confederation led to histories that Berger says were "obsess[ed] with responsible government" (2).

¹⁰⁷ I cannot possibly do justice to genre theory in this context, but need to note that Kent sees Bakhtin's work on genre as extending the usefulness of triangulation: "With his well-known conceptions of *genre* and *dialogue*, Bakhtin provides us, I believe, with a description of communicative interaction that helps explain how triangulation operates on the levels of text production and text reception" (127).

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